



Should I enrol in the Yukon Maintenance Enforcement Program?

— who is the MEP for?

The Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) is for people who pay or receive child or spousal support.

— what is the MEP?

The MEP is all about financial support for children of divorced or separated parents and support for spouses after a relationship breaks up. The program is for people who pay or receive support.

— why should I register?

If you register, the program works on the basis of your court order to collect support and pay it to the claimant. The MEP may be used to collect on-going support as well as arrears (money that is owing from the past).

Some people register because they are having trouble getting support payments and they need enforcement action. Others want a better way to make support payments. Still others want to make sure that support payments are made, but they don't want to deal with a former spouse or partner over money matters.

— who may register?

If you are either the claimant (the person who is owed the support) or the respondent (the person who must pay the support) you may register with the Yukon MEP if you live in the Yukon and have a legal support order or filed agreement from any court in Canada or some other countries. It doesn't matter if you are a claimant or a respondent; you may use the MEP to deal with your payments.

— how do I register?

When you register with the MEP, staff follow set procedures that work in the best interests of all parties. Constant calls to the office by either the claimant or the respondent do not make the process work any faster.

To register, get a copy of the registration package from the MEP office in the Justice Building at 2130 Second Avenue in Whitehorse, from any Territorial Agent or from your lawyer. Or, phone the MEP office at (867) 667-5437 or 1-800-661-0408, local 5437 (toll free outside Whitehorse).

Fill in the Registration Form and send it or take it to the MEP office.

The office mailing address is Maintenance Enforcement Program, Box 2703 (J-3M), Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6.

— will the MEP help me get a court order?

No. The MEP will do what it can to collect support payments ordered by the court, but it is up to the parties to get a court order or change an order.

— if you receive support...

If you are entitled to receive support, the MEP can help you get your payments. When your court order or agreement is registered with the MEP, the respondent is given a chance to make payments voluntarily. (If the respondent does not pay voluntarily, the MEP can enforce the order to try to get the money that is owed.)

The MEP will do everything it can to get your support payments, but the program can't guarantee that a payment will be collected, the amount collected, or its regularity.

The MEP can:

- garnish wages;
- intercept Employment Insurance or income tax returns;
- register liens against property; or
- seize property.

Respondents can also be refused a driver's licence.

A Yukon support order can be enforced anywhere in Canada as well as in some other countries. The Yukon MEP can help to have the court order enforced where the respondent is living as long as a reciprocal agreement is in place with that jurisdiction.

— if you pay support...

If you pay support, the MEP can help you make payments on time. The MEP also keeps a record of your payments. You can have the MEP deduct payments automatically from your wages, or you can pay by cash post-dated cheques, VISA, MasterCard or debit card.

The MEP will work with you to find a payment method that suits you and allows you to meet your financial obligations to your children.

If you think that your payments are not being used in the best interest of your children, it's up to you to take appropriate action. The MEP has no control over how payments are used, but can help you review your options.

You should also know about the Child Support Guidelines...

Courts use the Child Support Guidelines to set the amount of child support based on a table for each province or territory. Parents negotiating an out of court agreement may also use the guidelines. For details about the guidelines, contact your lawyer or call the Yukon Public Legal Education Association (YPLEA) — the Law Line — 867-668-5297 (1-866-667-4305 toll free).

The Yukon Department of Justice also has information about the federal and territorial Child Support Guidelines. Contact the Family Justice Office at 867-667-3066 (1-800-0408 local 3066 toll free). The Family Justice Office is in the Yukon Justice Building on Second Avenue in Whitehorse.