Child support

Simplified calculation method

INFORMATION

Child support must cover at least the child's **essential expenses**. It is nevertheless possible to set child support below these expenses, in particular in the event of a **deficit**, if the parents' income is not enough to cover their own expenses. The child (or the custodial parent) is, however, entitled to claim the missing amount within **one year** of learning that the paying parent's financial situation has improved.

The court reviews the amount of child support and may refuse to approve the agreement reached by the parents if it considers the amount insufficient.

01 Essential expenses per child

Monthly amounts to be filled in for each child (simple method):

±	ITEM	MONTHLY AMOUNT
	Monthly base amount	CHF
+	Share of rent	CHF
+	Compulsory health insurance premium (after subsidy)	CHF
+	Supplementary health insurance premium	CHF
+	Public transport costs (season ticket)	CHF
+	Childcare / after-school care / nursery costs	CHF
+	Other justified expenses	CHF
=	**Subtotal**	**CHF**
–	Child's income (family allowances, pension, etc.)	CHF
=	**Total**	**CHF**

02 Explanation of the items

Monthly base amount – A fixed amount that depends on the child's age, set by the debt enforcement offices. It is CHF 400.– for a child under 10 and CHF 600.– for a child over 10. In principle, it covers food, clothing, household costs (electricity, gas, etc.) and personal care.

Share of rent – A child is estimated to account for 15% of the rent (charges included) and two children for 30%. With shared custody (one week with one parent and one week with the other), this item is in principle not included.

Childcare, after-school care or nursery costs – These costs are entered per month; if they vary, their average over a full year is used.

Other justified expenses – Regular medical costs not covered by insurance, school fees, training costs, school canteen, tutoring, etc.

03
Leisure and income disparity between the parents

Several solutions make it possible to take account of leisure activities or of any large differences in income between the parents.

In principle, the court grants the child a **share of the surplus** (i.e. the income left to the paying parent after paying all his or her essential expenses) to cover leisure costs and, where appropriate, to offset a difference in standard of living between the parents. This amount represents about **one fifth** of the surplus for one child, **one sixth** each for two children, etc., provided that this does not lead to an objectively unreasonable amount.

These costs, which may change from year to year according to the children's wishes, can also be treated as **extraordinary expenses**, to be shared between the spouses in proportions agreed in advance, usually half each.

Finally, nothing prevents you from including a "**leisure budget**" in the child support.

04
Changes in expenses

Changes in certain expenses, in particular health insurance, should also be taken into account. In principle, it is advisable to opt for **child support in stages** (up to age 5, from 5 to 10, etc.), increasing by about CHF 100.– per stage, or to provide for **indexation** of the child support to the Swiss consumer price index.

05
Division between the parents

How the children's essential expenses are divided between the parents will depend on several factors, in particular the visitation arrangements and the spouses' respective incomes. **The parents must be able to pay the child support set in the agreement.**

Visitation rights – In principle, if visitation rights are set at every other weekend plus one Wednesday, one parent is considered to bear all of the child's essential expenses, while the other parent provides care "in kind", i.e. gives the child essential care and upbringing during the week.

Shared custody – The division must be proportionate to the parents' respective incomes. For simplicity, one spouse is assumed to pay his or her share of child support to the other, who will pay the child's everyday bills. For example, if the mother has a surplus of CHF 6'000.– at the end of the month and the father CHF 4'000.–, the child's essential expenses will be shared 60% and 40%. If the mother wishes to pay the child's monthly bills, the father will pay her his share (40%).