

Date of Hearing: April 21, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS
Marc Berman, Chair
AB 2195 (Celeste Rodriguez) – As Introduced February 19, 2026

NOTE: This bill is double referred and passed out of the Assembly Judiciary Committee on April 7, 2026, on a 9-3-0 vote.

SUBJECT: Child support: license suspensions.

SUMMARY: Prohibits the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) from notifying the Department of Consumer Affairs, the State Bar of California, the Department of Real Estate, the Secretary of State, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife that a license holder owes child support for the purpose of withholding or suspending a license, if the person's annual household income is at or below 70% of the median income for the county in which they reside, effectively barring the suspension of any license by anyone who meets that criterion.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires states receiving public benefit block grants to have and (and uses in appropriate cases) procedures to withhold or suspend, or to restrict the use of driver's licenses, professional and occupational licenses, and recreational and sporting licenses of individuals owing overdue child or spousal support obligations. (42 USC § 666(a)(16))
- 2) Establishes the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) within the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency. (Business and Professions Code (BPC) § 100)
- 3) Specifies that "board," as used in any provision of the Business and Professions Code, refers to the board in which the administration of the provision is vested, and unless otherwise expressly provided, shall include "bureau," "commission," "committee," "department," "division," "examining committee," "program," and "agency." (BPC § 22)
- 4) Authorizes a board to suspend a license if a licensee is not in compliance with a child support order or judgment. (BPC § 490.5)
- 5) Specifies that the DCSS and the local child support agency have the responsibility for promptly and effectively collecting and enforcing child support obligations. (Family (FAM) § 17500)
- 6) Requires local child support agencies to maintain a list of those who are more than 30 calendar days in arrears in making paying child support payments and to submit a certified list with the names, social security numbers, individual taxpayer identification numbers, or other uniform identification numbers, and last known addresses of these persons and the name, address, and telephone number of the local child support agency who certified the list to the DCSS monthly. The local child support agency shall verify, under penalty of perjury, that the persons listed are subject to an order or judgment for the payment of support and that these persons are not in compliance with the order or judgment. The local child support agency is authorized to enforce orders for spousal support only when the local child support

agency is also enforcing a related child support obligation owed to the obligee parent by the same obligor. (FAM § 17520(b))

- 7) Requires the DCSS to consolidate the certified lists received from the local child support agencies and, within 30 calendar days of receipt, provide a copy of the consolidated list to each board that is responsible for the regulation of licenses. (FAM § 17520(c))
- 8) Requires all boards to implement procedures to accept and process the list provided by the DCSS. (FAM § 17520(d))
- 9) Requires each board, as defined, promptly after receiving the certified consolidated list from the DCSS, and prior to the issuance or renewal of a license, to determine whether the applicant is on the most recent certified consolidated list provided by the DCSS, and specifies that the board shall have the authority to withhold issuance or renewal of the license of an applicant on the list. (FAM § 17520(e)(1))
- 10) Specifies that if an applicant is on the list, the board shall immediately serve notice on the applicant of the board's intent to withhold issuance or renewal of the license, as specified. (FAM § 17520(e)(2))
- 11) Requires the board to issue a temporary license valid for a period of 150 days to any applicant whose name is on the certified list if the applicant is otherwise eligible for a license. (FAM § 1750(e)(2)(A))
- 12) Specifies that upon the request of the local child support agency or by order of the court upon a showing of good cause, the board shall extend a 150-day temporary license for a period not to exceed 150 extra days, only in the case of a driver's license, other than a commercial driver's license. (FAM § 1750(e)(2)(D))
- 13) Allows the DCSS to, when it is economically feasible for the DCSS and the boards to do so, provide a supplemental list of these obligors to each board in cases where the DCSS is aware that certain child support obligors listed on the certified lists have been out of compliance with a judgment or order for support for more than four months. Upon request by DCSS, the licenses of these obligors shall be subject to suspension, provided that the licenses would not otherwise be eligible for renewal within six months from the date of the request. The board shall have the authority to suspend the license of any licensee on this supplemental list. (FAM § 17520(e)(3)(A))
- 14) Requires the board to immediately serve notice on the licensee that the license will be automatically suspended 150 days after notice is served, unless compliance is achieved. (FAM § 17520(e)(3)(B))
- 15) Requires the DCSS to prescribe release forms for use by local child support agencies. When the obligor is in compliance, the local child support agency must mail to the applicant and the appropriate board a release stating that the applicant is in compliance. A board that has received a release from the local child support agency shall process the release within five business days of its receipt. (FAM § 17520(l)(1))
- 16) Provides that when the local child support agency determines, subsequent to the issuance of a release, that the applicant is once again not in compliance with a judgment or order for

support, or with the terms of repayment, the local child support agency may notify the board, the obligor, and the DCSS that the obligor is not in compliance. (FAM § 17520(1)(2))

- 17) Authorizes the DCSS, when it is economically feasible for the DCSS and the boards to develop an automated process for complying, to notify the boards that the obligor is once again not in compliance. Upon receipt of this notice, the board must immediately notify the obligor that the obligor's license will be suspended on a specific date, and this date shall be no longer than 30 days from the date the form is mailed. The obligor shall be further notified that the license will remain suspended until a new release is issued. (FAM § 17520(1)(3))
- 18) Defines "board" to mean an entity specified in Section 101 of the Business and Professions Code, the entities referred to in Sections 1000 and 3600 of the Business and Professions Code, the State Bar of California, the Department of Real Estate, the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Secretary of State, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and any other state commission, department, committee, examiner, or agency that issues a license, certificate, credential, permit, registration, or any other authorization to engage in a business, occupation, or profession, or to the extent required by federal law or regulations, for recreational purposes. (FAM § 17520(a)(2))
- 19) Provides that "license" includes membership in the State Bar of California, and a certificate, credential, permit, registration, or any other authorization issued by a board that allows a person to engage in a business, occupation, or profession, or to operate a commercial motor vehicle, including appointment and commission by the Secretary of State as a notary public. "License" also includes any driver's license issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles, any commercial fishing license issued by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and to the extent required by federal law or regulations, any license used for recreational purposes. (FAM § 17520(a)(5))

THIS BILL:

- 1) Expands the existing prohibition on the DCSS notifying the Department of Motor Vehicles of obligors found to be out of compliance with a judgment or order for support, if the annual household income of the support obligor is at or below 70 percent of the median income for the county in which the support obligor is believed to reside, to all boards, as defined in FAM § 17520.
- 2) Repeals an exemption for commercial driver's licenses that was to take effect on January 1, 2027.
- 3) Deletes an obsolete date and makes other technical and conforming changes.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown; this bill is keyed fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS:

Purpose. This bill is sponsored by the *Truth and Justice in Child Support Coalition*, which includes the *Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizers*, *End Child Poverty California*, and *Western Center on Law and Poverty*. According to the author:

[This bill] addresses a counterproductive feature of current child support enforcement law. Today, occupational license suspension can be used against working parents, even when losing that license may prevent them from working and earning the income needed to make child support payments in the first place. If we truly want to improve compliance and support families, we should not be undermining a parent's ability to maintain employment. [This bill] would end occupational license suspensions as an enforcement tool for noncustodial parents whose income is below 70 percent of the Area Median Income. This bill follows the model established by SB 1055 in 2022, which adopted the same 70 percent threshold in the driver's license context. [This bill] extends that same commonsense approach to occupational licenses and moves child support enforcement in a direction that is more fair, more practical, and more aligned with the goal of supporting children and families.

Background.

Child Support Order. Child support is the ongoing financial contribution to help pay for a child's or children's living and medical expenses until they are adults. The amount that must be paid is set by a court and is called the child support order. A child support order is enforceable by suspension of one's driver's license, passport, professional or occupational licenses, and recreational (e.g., fishing and hunting) licenses; bank and property liens; interception of tax refunds and lottery winnings; and civil contempt charges.

License Suspension. When a noncustodial parent is more than 30 days in arrears on child support payments, the local child support agency includes their name and information on a certified list provided to the DCSS. DCSS consolidates the certified lists from local child support agencies. Pursuant to existing law, DCSS and DCA have an Inter-Agency Agreement to effectuate the suspension of occupational licenses issued by a board or bureau under DCA. Every month, DCSS provides DCA with two lists: one list identifies individuals who are not in compliance with a child support order or judgment, and the second list identifies individuals whose licenses have been suspended previously for failure to pay child support and who are non-compliant with a child support order or judgment again. Upon receipt of the certified lists from DCSS, the Family Support Unit in DCA's Office of Information Services automatically processes the lists for all licensing entities under DCA. When matches are identified, notification letters are automatically generated. Notification letters specify one of the following:

- The board or bureau's intent to withhold the issuance of a new license or the renewal of a license, and to issue a temporary license valid for 150 calendar days if the individual is more than 30 days in arrears on child support payments but has never had their license suspended for failure to pay child support.
- The board or bureau's intent to automatically suspend the license in 150 calendar days if the individual has been out of compliance for more than four months, but the license has not been suspended previously for failure to pay child support.
- The board or bureau's intent to automatically suspend the license for 30 days if the license has previously been suspended for failure to pay child support and the individual is out of compliance again.

Licenses are suspended indefinitely until the license expires or until compliance with the support order is achieved and the applicable local child support agency initiates the release of the license, whichever occurs first. If the applicable local child support agency initiates a release, the board or bureau will issue a new license, renew a prior license, or reinstate a suspended license within five business days if the individual is otherwise eligible for a license.

Driver's Licenses. Existing law prohibits DCSS from sending the Department of Motor Vehicles, for the purposes of denying, withholding, or suspending a driver's license, the information of someone who is out of compliance with a child support order, if their annual household income is at or below 70 percent of the county median income where they reside. Beginning January 1, 2027, this prohibition will apply only to noncommercial driver's licenses.

This bill would expand this prohibition to all boards and bureaus under DCA, the State Bar of California, the Department of Real Estate, the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Secretary of State, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and any other state commission, department, committee, examiner, or agency that issues a license, certificate, credential, permit, registration, or any other authorization to engage in a business, occupation, or profession, or to the extent required by federal law or regulations, for recreational purposes. In effect, this bill would prohibit suspending an occupational or recreational license if the license holder falls below the 70 percent income threshold. According to the author's office, this would help reduce inequities by preventing low-income parents from losing the licenses they need to work and earn income.

Prior Related Legislation. AB 1383 (Ortega) of 2023 would have required the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) to adopt regulations to suspend or withhold a license if an applicant or the qualifying individual, responsible managing officer, or responsible managing employee for the license is not in compliance with a child support order. *That bill died pending a hearing in this committee after the hearing was canceled at the author's request.*

SB 1055 (Kamlager), Chapter 830, Statutes of 2022, prohibits the DCSS from seeking the denial, withholding, or suspension of a driver's license from low-income child support obligors, as specified, until January 1, 2027, after which this restriction only applies to noncommercial driver's licenses.

AB 923 (Speier), Chapter 906, Statutes of 1994, required district attorneys to maintain lists of individuals not in compliance with a child support court order or judgment and to submit those lists with specified information to the State Department of Social Services; required the State Department of Social Services to consolidate the lists received from the district attorneys, and within 30 calendar days of receipt, provide a copy of the consolidated list to each board which is responsible for the regulation of licenses; required the boards to implement procedures to accept and process the consolidated lists provided by the State Department of Social Services; authorized boards to suspend a license if a licensee is not in compliance with a child support order or judgment; and required boards to notify an applicant of the board's intent to withhold issuance or renewal of the license.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:

As co-sponsors of this bill, the *Western Center on Law and Poverty, End Child Poverty California*, and the *Coalition of Welfare Rights Organizations* collectively write in support:

Current law requires occupational boards, upon receiving a list of names from the Department of Child Support Services, to deny or suspend licenses of any parent who is behind in making child support payments, regardless of any other circumstances. AB 2195 will end the overbroad and punitive impact of existing law, and it will reform an ineffective, costly and administratively burdensome requirement that creates distrust between parents and the child support system, undermining the state's goal of improving the well-being of children and families. Current law is illogical and counterproductive. If we want families to receive child support payments, we must not hinder the ability of the noncustodial parent to earn a decent wage.

This bill is modeled on the successful passage of SB 1055 (Kamlager) in 2022 which limited driver's license suspensions as an enforcement action for unpaid child support to cases where parents' income was above 70% of the Area Median Income (AMI). An Orange County evaluation of SB 1055 found that after implementing SB 1055, Orange County's child support agency experienced no significant impact on collections—in fact, collections increased. Additionally, limiting license suspensions to parents resulted in significant administrative savings for the county agency, equal to two full time case workers. California has other more effective tools to collect child support, such as wage garnishments and tax refund offsets.

Interfering with a parent's ability to earn income by suspending their occupational license, hamper's their ability to pay child support. It is time to end this policy which does not support children and families.

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION:

In opposition, the *California Child Support Association (CalCSA)* writes:

CalCSA shares the Legislature's interest in ensuring enforcement tools are used appropriately and do not create unnecessary barriers to employment. However, [this bill] goes too far by broadly exempting an expansive category of licensing consequences for child support noncompliance based solely on an income threshold, undermining a longstanding accountability tool that can be critical to securing support for children. [This bill] would apply the exclusion to the full scope of "licenses" described in Family Code section 17520, an expansive definition that reaches well beyond driver's licenses.

CalCSA's standard practice is to work directly with participants to resolve cases in a way that supports continued employment which most often results in timely license releases so there is no suspension. We do not want to create barriers to work. When license suspension authority is used, it is typically to help ensure a non-paying parent is formally seeking employment and, where appropriate, accessing free vocational training and job-placement assistance through their local workforce job center. For those less familiar with the child support program, the primary value of this longstanding authority is that it helps initiate meaningful discussions about realistic options to better support children, taking into account the actual circumstances in a person's life.

CalCSA's concerns with [this bill] include the following:

1. Selective enforcement that harms children in the lowest-income families. By exempting enforcement consequences for obligors under the 70% county median income threshold, [this bill] risks reducing the tools available to secure compliance for families who may already receive lower support orders reflecting ability to pay yet still rely on that support for basic necessities.
2. Increased reliance on public assistance and cost shifting to taxpayers. When child support collections fall, more families may turn to safety-net programs (including CalWORKs/TANF and CalFresh/SNAP), shifting costs to the state and federal governments rather than the responsible parent which runs contrary to the child support program's goals of reducing poverty and increasing family self-sufficiency.
3. Potential equal protection and fairness concerns. The bill creates disparate treatment between obligors who exceed the 70% income threshold and would remain subject to license enforcement, and those who fall below that threshold and would be exempt from enforcement. This disparate treatment raises concerns about fairness and consistency in application of the law to all child support obligors.
4. May discourage earnings potential and compliance. The proposal may incentivize some obligors to minimize earnings to preserve professional or occupational licensing privileges, at the expense of their children which runs contrary to California's policy that both parents share responsibility to support their children.
5. Operational and fiscal impacts across state licensing entities. Expanding this exclusion to all licensing boards may create additional administrative complexity and workload across numerous licensing and regulatory bodies; fiscal and operational impacts should be carefully evaluated as the bill moves through the process.

REGISTERED SUPPORT:

Truth and Justice in Child Support Coalition (Co-sponsor)
Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations (Co-sponsor)
End Child Poverty California (Co-sponsor)
Western Center on Law & Poverty (Co-sponsor)
Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice
Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto
Good+Foundation
Rubicon Programs
University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law Homeless Advocacy Clinic
Young Community Developers

REGISTERED OPPOSITION:

California Child Support Association

Analysis Prepared by: Kaitlin Curry / B. & P. / (916) 319-3301