

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING  
AB 2195 (Celeste Rodriguez)  
As Introduced May 22, 2026  
Majority vote

## SUMMARY

Prohibits any license held by someone who owes child support from being suspended if their annual household income is at or below 70% of the median income in their county of residence.

### Major Provisions

- 1) *Removes a prohibition on local child support agencies (LCSAs) issuing a release to remove an obligor from license suspension or denial if the obligor is out of compliance with a judgement or child support order.*
- 2) *Requires LCSAs to provide an obligor that is out of compliance notice instructing them to submit employment and income documentation within 30 days of receiving the notice.*
- 3) *Establishes a rebuttable presumption that an obligor that fails to submit employment and income documentation makes more than 70% of the area's median income, and specifies how an obligor may dispute the presumption. Prohibits this presumption from being relied upon with respect to a noncommercial driver's license or if the notice was returned as undeliverable.*
- 4) *Prohibits an LCSA from requiring additional employment and income documentation for 6 months if the LCSA finds the obligor's annual income is at or below 70% of the area median income unless the LCSA has reason to believe the obligor's income has materially changed. Permits the LCSA to request updated employment after 6 months have elapsed and the obligor is delinquent on child support payments.*
- 5) *Requires an LCSA to comply with the existing release procedure if an obligor provides employment and income documentation to the LCSA after the 30-day period that shows their income is less than 70% of the area median income.*

## COMMENTS

When a noncustodial parent fails to comply with an active child support order, that past-due amount is referred to as "arrear." Once an obligor is out of compliance for 30 days, existing law requires the Local Child Support Agency (LCSA) to include their name and information in a list sent to the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS), which is then compiled by the DCSS and transmitted to the relevant licensing body on a monthly basis. The licensing boards then engage in a notice procedure specific to the individual board to alert the obligor that they will withhold either the issuance or renewal of the obligor's license and issue a temporary license valid for 150 days if the obligor is otherwise eligible. (Family Code Section 17520 (b) – (e), see also: *Licenses and Passports*, California Department of Child Support Services available at: <https://childsupport.ca.gov/drivers-license-passport-release/>.) In other words, two months after failing to comply with an active child support order (one month for the LCSA to report to the department, and another month for the department to report to the relevant board), an obligor may receive notice from their licensing board that they will be operating on a temporary license for the next five months (150 days). Only after the five-month period has elapsed will the

obligor's full license be subject to suspension or revocation unless the obligor has come into compliance with the underlying order. Presumably during that time most obligors could have the capacity to contact their LCSA to either set up a payment plan, request a modification of their child support order, or otherwise determine a path forward to provide child support to the custodial parent.

While somewhat counterintuitive, the license suspension process is intended to incentivize obligors who may fall behind in their payments to make up those arrears, thereby encouraging full payment of support to California's children. Recognizing the potentially outsized impact of suspending the drivers license on a low-income earner, the Legislature enacted SB 1055 (Kamlager) Chapter 830, Statutes of 2022 which prohibited, beginning in January 2025, the suspension of drivers licenses for obligors whose annual income was at 70% or below the median income for their county, effectuated by prohibiting DCSS from transmitting those obligors' names to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The sponsors of SB 1055 argued that ensuring low-income obligors retain access to their drivers' licenses would promote compliance with child support orders: "there is substantial reason to believe that SB 1055 will result in higher collections as more non-custodial parents will not lose their jobs or lose hours after having their license suspended." (Assembly Judiciary Committee analysis of SB 1055 (June 8, 2022).)

This bill prohibits the suspension of *any* license for obligors who fail to comply with their child support order and whose annual income is at 70% or below the median income for their county of residence. *Additionally, the bill requires LCSAs to provide notice to obligors that are out of compliance with an order instructing them to submit their income and employment information within 30 days of receiving notice, and requires that notice to include contact information for their caseworker. In the event an obligor fails to submit their information within the set timeline, they would be assumed to fall above the 70% threshold, and therefore permits LCSAs to proceed with the existing license suspension process. The bill permits an obligor to dispute the presumption by requesting administrative and judicial review pursuant to the existing process in Family Code Section 17520.*

*The bill also prohibits an LCSA that determines that an obligor's income falls below the 70% threshold from requiring additional employment and income documentation for six months, unless they have reason to believe the obligor's income has materially changed. Finally, if an obligor provides documentation after the 30-day period that they fall under the 70% threshold, the bill requires an LCSA to comply with existing license release procedures.*

### **According to the Author**

This bill would remove a barrier to employment and economic stability for low-income parents by ending occupational license suspensions as an enforcement tool for noncustodial parents whose income is below 70% of the Area Median Income (AMI), while still allowing occupational license suspensions as an enforcement tool for noncustodial parents whose income is above 70% of AMI. 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.

The bill is modeled after SB 1055 (2022, Kamlager), which established the same 70% AMI threshold for driver's license suspensions. See Family Code 17520.5.

### **Arguments in Support**

This bill is sponsored by the Western Center on Law and Poverty. It is supported by a number of low-income advocacy organizations and legal services providers. In support of the bill the sponsors submit:

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**

This bill is opposed by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. They submit:

License suspension is a longstanding and carefully calibrated enforcement tool that promotes compliance with child support obligations. Under existing law, individuals with significant arrears may face license denial or suspension only after due process protections and multiple opportunities to resolve their case. Restricting DCSS's ability to suspend or deny licenses would weaken an effective enforcement tool, potentially reducing child support payments to families. In essence, this amounts to selective child support enforcement, to the detriment of children and families of non-compliant obligors with median incomes below 70% of the median income in the county in which they reside.

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors has adopted Vision 2036, a strategic plan for the next decade aimed at enriching the lives of residents through visionary policies and accessible, responsive, and effective services that proactively address the county's most significant challenges. Vision 2036 centers on shared goals, including a Thriving & Resilient Population. AB 2195 would move us further from our vision by steering more families into safety-net

programs, shifting costs to the state and federal governments rather than to the parent responsible for child support payments.

## FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) Operation and administrative workload costs to DCSS of an unknown but likely minor amount (General Fund). DCSS describes these costs as currently indeterminate, but notes that updates to the Child Support Enforcement (CSE) system would be required to modify state license match processes. DCSS anticipates requiring staff training related to financial reviews that would need to be conducted by the caseworkers on license suspension or revocation and outreach in order to inform and educate the public about the changes with occupational and recreational license suspensions or revocations. The operational and administrative workload for DCSS is expected to be absorbed within existing resources.
- 2) Additional possible loss of child support revenue of an unknown but potentially significant amount, to the extent the threat of license suspension increases the likelihood of payment. Based on estimates reported by DCSS in response to prior legislation prohibiting the revocation of driver's licenses for individuals at the same income level as this bill, approximately 84% of people ordered to pay child support have either income below \$40,000 per year, or no income reported at all. As a result, this bill will make the majority of people ordered to pay support ineligible for license suspension under existing law. Therefore, loss of revenue may be minor given that most people ordered to pay support are unable to pay support currently under existing law.
- 3) Existing law, beginning January 1, 2027, prohibits DCSS from seeking the denial, withholding, or suspension of a noncommercial driver's license from low-income child support obligors. This bill would extend the prohibition to all other licenses, and the Department of Motor Vehicles does not anticipate any costs for implementation.

## VOTES

### ASM JUDICIARY: 9-3-0

**YES:** Kalra, Lee, Bryan, Connolly, Harabedian, Pacheco, Papan, Stefani, Zbur

**NO:** Macedo, Dixon, Sanchez

### ASM BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS: 12-6-1

**YES:** Berman, Addis, Ahrens, Bauer-Kahan, Elhawary, Haney, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Lowenthal, Nguyen, Pellerin

**NO:** Johnson, Alanis, Bains, Chen, Hadwick, Macedo

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Caloza

### ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-3-1

**YES:** Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

**NO:** Hoover, Dixon, Tangipa

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Ta

**UPDATED**

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