
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Becker, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 2195

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Version: May 22, 2026

Urgency: No

Consultant: Heather Hopkins

Hearing Date: June 29, 2026

Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Child support: license suspensions

SUMMARY

This bill prohibits a license from being suspended for owing child support if the annual household income of the person owing child support is at or below 70 percent of the median income in their county of residence.

ABSTRACT

Existing Law:

- 1) Imposes on states receiving public benefit block grants certain requirements relating to the collection of child and family support, including the requirement that states have and utilize a procedure for withholding, suspending, or restricting the licenses, including the driver's licenses, of those with overdue child or family support obligations. (*42 United States Code 654(20), 666(a)(16)*)
- 2) Requires a local child support agency, as part of the state's license suspension program for obligors owing overdue support, to maintain a list of the persons who are not in compliance with court-ordered child or family support payments and submit an updated version of the list to the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) on a monthly basis. (*Family Code [FAM] 17520(b)*)
- 3) Provides that obligors are not in compliance if they are over 30 days in arrears in making payments in full on a court-ordered child or family support obligation. (*FAM 17520(a)(4)*)
- 4) For purposes of the state's license suspension program, defines licenses to include membership in the State Bar of California; 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; appointment and commission by the Secretary of State as a notary public; any driver's license issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV); 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; and all licenses, certificates, credentials, permits, registrations, or any other authorization

issued by a board that allows a person to engage in a business, occupation, or profession. *(FAM 17520(a)(5))*

- 5) Requires DCSS to consolidate the lists it receives from local child support agencies as part of the state's license suspension program, and, within 30 days of receipt, provide a copy of the consolidated list to each board responsible for issuing licenses subject to suspension. In cases involving licenses other than a non-commercial driver's license, requires a licensing board, if it determines that an applicant for licensure or renewal is on the most recent list but is otherwise eligible for licensure, to withhold issuance or renewal of the license. *(FAM 17520(c))*
- 6) For driver's licenses, other than a commercial license, requires the DMV to notify the obligor of the overdue payments and issue a 150-day temporary license to give the obligor time to pay the overdue child or family support. The 150-day temporary license may be renewed for one additional 150-day period upon a showing of good cause. Allows the DMV to issue a non-temporary license to the applicant only if the applicant pays the overdue child or family support. *(FAM 17520(e)(2))*
- 7) Allows DCSS, when economically feasible, to provide a list of the support obligors who are more than four months in arrears on child or family support payments to the covered licensing boards and request that these obligors have their licenses suspended. The board must provide a notice of the intent to suspend the license in 150 days if the obligor does not pay the overdue child or family support. Provides that this temporary license may not be renewed. *(FAM 17520(e)(3))*
- 8) When an obligor comes into compliance with a support order, requires the local child support agency to issue a notice to the obligor and the relevant board stating that the obligor is in compliance. Upon receipt, requires the board to process the release and issue the requested license for the remainder of the licensing term. *(FAM 17520(l))*
- 9) Requires the Department of Housing and Community Development to set income thresholds for persons or families of low income, moderate income, and median income, based on the median income in the geographic area, for the purpose of determining eligibility for certain public benefits, and to set forth the income levels in regulations. *(Health and Safety Code 50093)*
- 10) Prohibits DCSS from including in the list sent to the DMV pursuant to provisions authorizing DCSS to enforce child support obligations for the purpose of denying, withholding, or suspending a driver's license, the information of a support obligor found to be out of compliance with a support order if the annual household income of the support obligor is at or below 70 percent of the median income for the county in which DCSS or the local child support agency believes the support obligor resides. *(FAM 17520.5(a))*

This Bill:

- 1) Expands the exemption on licensure suspension for parents whose household income is at or below 70 percent of the county median income to all licenses.

- 2) Requires the Local Child Support Agencies (LCSA), when a parent is more than 30 days out of compliance with their support obligation, to send the parent a notice instructing them to submit employment and income documentation to the LCSA within 30 days of receiving the notice to determine the parent's annual household income.
- 3) Provides that when a parent fails to provide employment and income documentation requested by the LCSA they are presumed to earn more than 70 percent of the area median income.
 - a. This presumption is rebuttable and a parent may dispute that determination by requesting administrative and judicial review.
 - b. This presumption cannot be used for a noncommercial driver's license or if the notice to the parent was returned as undeliverable.
- 4) Provides that, when an LCSA has verified the parent's income and determined that they are at or below 70 percent of the area median income, the LCSA shall not require additional employment and income documentation for six months unless the LCSA has reason to believe that the parent's income has materially changed.
 - a. Provides that after the six-month period if the parent becomes delinquent on child support payments, the LCSA may request employment and income documentation.
 - b. If a parent provides employment and income documentation to the LCSA after the 30-day period that shows their income is less than 70 percent of the area median income, the LCSA shall follow the existing process for releasing a licensure suspension.
- 5) Provides that the above provisions do not apply to parents during the first 12 months after the support order is established.

FISCAL IMPACT

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.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Purpose of the Bill:

According to the author, "AB 2195 addresses a counterproductive feature of California's child support enforcement system. Under existing law, a parent who falls behind on child support can be placed at risk of having a license denied, withheld, or suspended, including licenses that allow that parent to work in a business, occupation, or profession. For low-income parents, that approach can make it harder to maintain employment, earn income, and ultimately pay support.

"This bill builds on the policy California already adopted for driver's licenses SB 1055 (Kamlager, Ch. 830, Stats. 2022) by applying the same income-based protection to other licenses. Like SB1055, AB2195 would limit the use of license suspensions to individuals whose income is above 70% of area median income for their county of residence. Individuals under this threshold are considered low-income under state law, and thus more vulnerable to cascading harms from financial instability.

"AB 2195 also includes a process for local child support agencies to request employment and income documentation from an obligor who is out of compliance with a support order. The bill gives the obligor 30 days to provide that information, requires the notice to include direct contact information for the assigned caseworker or designated contact, and allows an obligor to dispute an income determination through existing administrative and judicial review procedures. If an obligor does not provide the requested documentation, the bill establishes a rebuttable presumption that the obligor earns more than the 70 percent threshold, allowing the existing license suspension process to move forward.

"The goal of AB 2195 is straightforward: child support enforcement should help families receive support, not create new barriers that make payment less likely. This bill preserves accountability while recognizing that suspending a low-income parent's work-related license can undermine the very purpose of child support enforcement. By keeping low-income parents connected to work, AB 2195 promotes a more practical, fair, and employment-centered approach to supporting children and families."

Child Support and License Suspension

In California, if a parent falls behind on child support payments, a variety of licenses can be suspended. These include licenses that are critical to employment. Information provided by the bill sponsors from a Public Records Act request provides responses from 7 of the 13 licensing boards (excluding the DMV) regarding the number of license suspensions and denials over 26,000 occupational license suspensions and denials over a five-year period. The boards with the highest levels of suspensions are: Bureau of Security & Investigative Services (16,187); Board of Barbering & Cosmetology (2,784); Department of Insurance (2,378); Commission on Teaching Credentialing (1,349); and Board of Vocational Nursing & Psychiatric Technicians (678). Previously, driver's licenses were included in licenses that could be suspended. This practice ended with the passage of SB 1055 (*Kamlager, Chapter 830, Statutes of 2022*). The Senate Judiciary Committee analysis of that bill wrote in part, "When a car is so vital to maintaining employment, the loss of a car—or a license—can be ruinous. California has already recognized the perversity of suspending a person's driver's license for failure to pay, in legislation enacted in 2017 to prohibit license suspensions for failure to pay traffic fines. As then-Governor Jerry Brown noted, the suspension did not help the state collect on unpaid fines, but could 'send low-income people into a cycle of job losses and more poverty.'" This bill builds on this previous legislation by expanding the limits on license suspension beyond drivers' licenses and to professional licenses vital to employment.

Related/Prior Legislation:

SB 1055 (*Kamlager, Chapter 830, Statutes of 2022*) prohibits, effective January 1, 2025, DCSS from seeking the denial, withholding, or suspension of a driver's license from low-income child support obligors.

COMMENTS

Employment is a key element to a noncustodial parent's ability to make child support payments. Beginning January 1, 2025, California ceased suspending driver's licenses for low-income child support obligors. This change in policy recognized that the ability to drive is critical for employment. This bill expands this policy by limiting the ability to suspend or revoke licenses key to employment for low-income noncustodial parents. A professional license, be it for a security guard, a barber, or a nurse, is key to a parents' ability to work, to make money, and to have the ability to meet their child support obligations. This becomes even more critical for those working low paying jobs. This bill seeks to address this problem by prohibiting a license from being suspended for owing child support if the annual household income of the person owing child support is at or below 70 percent of the median income in their county of residence.

PRIOR VOTES

Senate Judiciary Committee:	12 - 0
Assembly Floor:	56 - 19
Assembly Appropriations Committee:	11 - 3

Assembly Judiciary Committee:

9 - 3

POSITIONS

Support:

Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations (Co-Sponsor)

End Child Poverty California Powered by Grace (Co-Sponsor)

Truth and Justice in Child Support Coalition (Co-Sponsor)

Western Center on Law & Poverty (Co-Sponsor)

Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto

Legal Services for Prisoners With Children

Rubicon Programs

Young Community Developers

Oppose:

None received

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