

Ref: VTR 396

E FOI.FOCALPOINT@CSA.GSI.GOV.UK
W www.childmaintenance.org

Date: 22 April 2009

Ian Tyes [request-8803-e4ccb386@whatdotheyknow.com]

Dear Mr Tyes,

Thank you for your e-mail dated 5 March 2009 in which you made a request for Child Support Agency's information. Your request has been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please find below a copy of your request together with a corresponding response.

Request

It is my understanding that from April 2010 none of the money collected from fathers by CMEC will be used to offset benefits paid to mothers, but 100% will be transferred direct to mothers. Since the existing running costs are already £240 million MORE than collected for the Treasury, what is the budgeted running costs and hence cost to the public purse for CSA/CMEC and the appeals service for the first financial year after this change?

Response

The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission took over responsibility for the Child Support Agency on 1 November 2008.

The Government's Welfare Reform Green Paper, *No one written off: reforming welfare to reward responsibility*, published in July 2008 set-out the proposal to disregard child maintenance fully in all out-of-work benefits from April 2010.

The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission Business Plan 2008/9 sets out the agreed funding for the current three year spending review period. The funding estimates set out in the business plan were based on the best estimates, trends and evidence available at the time. The funding requirement was estimated as £625 million for the current year to March 2009 and indicative funding requirement of £1,137 million for the following two years to March 2011. This funding covers both the Commission's spend on developing new services, creating the future statutory maintenance scheme and the full running costs of the Child Support Agency for the three years to the end of March 2011.

Appeals against decisions made by the Child Support Agency are heard by the First-tier Tribunal (Social Security and Child Support). The First-tier Tribunal is part of the Tribunals Service, an Executive Agency of the Ministry of Justice. Information about making a freedom of information request to them can be found at the following link.

<http://www.appeals-service.gov.uk/GenericPages/freedomofinformation.htm>

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request please tell us why, to the e-mail address above, within two calendar months of the date of this letter. The Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission will then arrange for someone to conduct an internal review of your request and its handling/decision. The review will be conducted by a senior officer. This person will have taken no part in the original decision. You will be advised of their decision in writing.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner to look into the way your request has been handled. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission's own complaints procedure.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

FOI Complaints Resolution
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Fax: 01625 524510
email: xxxx@xxx.xxx.xxx.xx

Yours sincerely

**Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission
Freedom of Information Act Focal Point**