

Frequently Asked Questions

(And answers from the
State Court Administrative Office
Friend of the Court Bureau)

FAQ 2025-03 **November 5, 2025**

Child care Obligation End Dates

This FAQ answers common questions related to Administrative Memorandum 2014-03, Uniform Support Orders and options for how to handle situations when a child ages out of childcare. This FAQ also announces the availability of a new tool to help courts and friend of the court (FOC) offices determine the new amount of childcare charges based on the terms of the order. If the court or FOC staff have any questions or would like additional information or clarification, please contact Paul Gehm at gehmp@courts.mi.gov or (517)373-5975.

1. **Q. What can be put in the order to handle child care charges changing when a child ages out of child care?**

   A. Since 2017, the Uniform Child Support Order (UCSO) has included standard language that incorporates a presumption for when child care support obligations should end. From the 2017 through the 2021 version of the Michigan Child Support Formula (MCSF), the rule presumed childcare ends on August 31st following the individual child's 12th birthday.[1] The 2025 MCSF changed that presumption to "the last day of the month in which the child is under the age of 13, unless the court orders the extension of child care due to a child's health or safety needs." In section 2 of the UCSO, under the *Child care* paragraph, the standard language says,

   "**Child Care.** The parties must notify each other of changes in child care expenses and must additionally notify the friend o the court if the child care expenses end. The child care obligation for each child ends the earlier of

   - ☐ the last day of the month that the child is under the age of 13, or if verified, the date when the child care expenses for the child end.
   - ☐ the date provided below, or if verified, the date when the child care expenses for the child end.

   When the child care obligation for each child ends, the total child care obligation reduces by that child's pro rata share unless specified differently below. At the court's discretion, the

[1] MCSF 3.06(D).

child care obligation may continue beyond that date as a child's health or safety needs require."[2]

This language acknowledges that a court may order something more specific, but in the absence of other specific language, it is expected that child care charges will reduce on the last day of the month in which the child was under 13.[3]

If parties or the court want to treat the end date for a child's child care charges differently, it is important to include specific alternative language in the order. Currently, this language could be placed in 2h[4] or in section 13 (*Other*) of the UCSO.

2. Q. How can I determine the appropriate new amount?

A. Often child care changes occur within a tier (column) of the UCSO grid. This typically happens when a younger child ages out of childcare before the older child emancipates. When child care changes occur within a tier, the language of the order (see Question 1 above) controls and the total childcare charges should reduce by that child's pro rata share unless otherwise specified in the order.[5]

Friend of the Court offices may manually adjust childcare amounts in MiCSES to effectuate the language in the UCSO.[6] To make the manual adjustments, FOC staff must determine the new child care amounts under the UCSO's standard language if the order is not more specific. The Friend of the Court Bureau (FOCB) created an Excel calculator tool to help staff determine what the appropriate new amount is.

Before manually adjusting amounts in MiCSES ensure that the order is not on a pre-2017 UCSO and that the order does not include more specific language.

[2] The UCSO language from 2017-2025 read "The child-care obligation for each child ends on August 31, following the child's 12th birthday, at which time the total child care obligation reduces by that child's pro rata share unless specified differently in this order."

[3] A child born on the first of the month is never "under the age of 13" during that month and the end date will be the last of the month prior; all other dates of birth will be the last of that month the child turns 13. Example: a child born on April 1, will have a child care end-date of March 31; a child born on April 2, will have a child care end-date of April 30.

[4] If the court uses 2h to extend the child care obligation beyond the other termination dates it is important to state what other provisions in 2h it intends to supersede to prevent the "earlier of" language from terminating child care before the intended date.

[5] Sometimes the change in child care may indicate a change in circumstance sufficient to begin a review and modification.

[6] Ticket 10018499 has been entered to address MiCSES's current treatment of child care, which reallocates the charge among the remaining children rather than reducing the charge. If it is apparent that the overall charges have changed, it may be appropriate to refer the order for review and potential modification.