

The State's Attorney's Office is Involved in My Case: What Does That Mean For Me?

The Cook County State's Attorney's Office does not represent either parent in your case.

Who does the State's Attorney Represent?

The Cook County State's Attorney's Office represents the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) through the federal IV-D program. Where HFS becomes involved in the collection of child support, they do **not** act as the attorney for the parent receiving child support. They act on the state's behalf as a separate party to the action, just like each parent is a separate party to the action.

What legal issues does the State's Attorney address?

- Establishment of paternity and child support
- Establishment and enforcement of medical insurance
- Collection, enforcement, and modification of child support

Either parent can visit www.illinois.gov/hfs/childsupport or call HFS at 1-800-447-4278 to learn more about the program and whether the State's Attorney may be able to participate in your case.

The State's Attorney does not address any other legal issues that may arise in your case.

You or the other party may choose to bring other legal issues to the Court's attention, such as:

- Parenting time (formerly known as visitation)
- Allocation of parental responsibility (formerly known as custody)
- Collection of college or post-secondary educational expenses

The State's Attorney will not present these questions to the court. Rather, bringing these issues to the court's attention requires you to prepare, file¹, and present your own pleadings.

There are many resources available in Cook County that may help you through this process, including:

- CARPLS at (312) 738-9200 or at their Help Desk located in room CL-16 at the Daley Center.
- The Illinois Armed Forces Legal Aid Network at (855) 452-3526 (available for veterans, active military personnel, their spouses, and their qualified dependents).
- www.illinoislegalaid.org for legal information and guidance in drafting pleadings.
- <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/Forms/approved/Circuit.asp> for information, forms, and templates that are designed to help clarify what needs to be included in common pleadings.
- The Chicago Bar Association at (312) 554-2055 for a referral to a private attorney.

¹ Please note that you will need to file these pleadings into your existing case.

DISCLAIMER: This guide serves as a court-process navigation tool. It does not contain legal advice. Litigants are encouraged to consult an attorney if possible and the Illinois Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act (IMDMA) at 750 ILCS 5/ *et seq.* for more information. Note that the IMDMA and all accompanying statutes have been interpreted and explained by the Illinois Appellate Court and the Supreme Court of Illinois; and their decisions are equally as binding on the trial court as the statute itself. To research and review those cases via a legal research database commonly used by judges and attorneys, please visit any of the Circuit Court of Cook County's Law Libraries (e.g. 29th floor of the Daley Center).