

P2215 CHILD SUPPORT (Reach Up rule 2232)

P2215A Assignment of Child Support Rights (23-12)

Child support must be pursued from any parent that is not in the household. These parents are considered the "Absent Parent" (ABSP) or "Non-Custodial Parent" (NCP).

Example: A person is married to their second spouse and lives with the two children from a previous marriage. Pursue support from the first spouse, the birth parent of the children.

Caretakers must agree to pursue any support for children they are caring for. The Office of Child Support (OCS) can clarify how this process works for caretakers.

Determining who to list as Head of Household

If household is applying and only one parent has a child or children with an absent parent, and that parent is not the Head of Household according to the application, ask if the household minds if that parent is listed in ACCESS first. If they agree, enter a voluntary withdrawal for the Head of Household and APPL the household under the other parent's name. Ask the Application & Document Processing Center (ADPC) to mirror the documents in both cases.

If the family does not want us to switch the Head of Household in our system, see below under Signing the Child Support Authorization ([form 137](#))

Example: Pat and Sam are newlyweds. Pat's son is 5 years old from a previous marriage. When the family submitted their application, Sam was listed as the Head of Household. Since Sam is not the birth parent, it would be easier for OCS to direct the payments to the department if Pat was the Head of Household.

Determining who to list as the Absent Parent

Ask the household to list any and all possible absent parents to the child. OCS will assist the household through the process of identifying the birth parent if necessary.

If the household claims they cannot identify a parent, ask them for the names of all potential parents, complete 137's for each of them, and create an ABSP panel for each possibility in ACCESS.

Voluntary Acknowledgement of Parenthood (VAP)

Effective July 1, 2018, the Vermont Parentage Act (VPA) (15C VSA 305(a)) expanded the categories of individuals recognized as parents under Vermont

law. The VPA also allows courts to determine that a child has more than two parents.

This means that a Reach Up applicant or participant completing a 137 must list anyone who has signed a VAP and/or falls into one or more of the categories below as a noncustodial parent.

The VPA recognizes the following individuals as parents:

- A person who gave birth to the child
- A person who is the alleged genetic parent of the child
- A person who is an intended parent of the child.
An intended parent is a person who has manifested an intent to be legally bound as a parent of child resulting from assisted reproduction or surrogacy.
- A person who has adopted the child
- A person who was married to the person who gave birth to the child when the child was born
- A person who was married to the person who gave birth to child and the child was born not later than 300 days after the termination of the marriage
- A person who was married to the person who gave birth to the child after the child's birth and is named as a parent on the birth certificate
- A person who lived in the same household with the child for the first two years of the child's life and, together with the child's other parent, openly acknowledged the child as their child
- A person who has been adjudicated to be a parent of the child (a court has issued an order adjudicating the person as a parent)

Sperm, egg and embryo donor

If applicant reports the child was conserved using a sperm egg, embryo donor, or if there was a gestational carrier (surrogate) under the Vermont Parentage Act, they are not parents and Child Support Form is not needed.

In most situations the Department can accept the information reported by the applicant. However, due to the variety of donor situations and unformal contract it is best practice to look at each case individually. If the case is questionable, please forward it to AOPS. Under rule 2208.3 the Department can request additional verification.

Deceased Absent Parent

Initial Reach Up applications must have one Child Support Authorization ([137](#)) that indicates ABSP is deceased. Ask the household if they would like to work with OCS to pursue parentage of the deceased absent parent. There are times when a child may be eligible for survivors' benefits if parentage is established.

Enter code 3 for Absent Parent Assign Code on the ABSP panel. Enter a CATN and a WARN on case. If the household is interested in working with OCS, send an email to AHS.DCFOCS137Submission@Vermont.gov.

If household has been on Reach Up before, and a copy of the original Child Support Authorization is available in OnBase, print the original 137 that indicates parent is deceased and then rescan with current date to demonstrate it has been documented. Enter a new CATN and update WARN as needed.

Absent Parent Removal Reasons

Certain individuals have been ruled out as having an obligation to a child. This occurs when someone has had their parental rights terminated, or when OCS has determined through DNA testing that an individual is not considered a parent.

OCS enters the correct removal reason. The child's name will have to be removed from the absent parent panel, or the panel should be deleted if there are no other children listed.

New Child Support Authorizations ([137](#)) will need to be collected if there are other potential parents.

For households where parental rights have been terminated, enter 1 or more ABSP panels using the name "Unknown Unknown" with a temporary social Security number. Code the Absent Parent Coop Code 7 for a lifetime waiver.

Assigning child support rights to the department

Signing the Child (and Medical) Support Authorization ([form 137](#)) assigns child support rights of the parent/caretaker to the Department for Children and Families (DCF). It is also an application to work with the Office of Child Support (OCS).

If the household refuses to assign support attempt to get the refusal in writing. The document will then be scanned into OnBase. Make a note in CATN and deny the application.

Children receiving SSI

Signing the Child Support Authorization ([137](#)) does NOT assign child support rights related to a child that receives SSI. However, cooperation with OCS is required for any child of an individual receiving Reach Up, regardless of whether the child is included in the Reach Up household. In addition, OCS collects information about all children living with the custodial parent to ensure that they distribute child support correctly.

Child support received while applying for Reach Up

Explain that until a decision is made on the grant, the household may use any child support received for living expenses but must report it to the department. All support received after a grant has been made must be forwarded to the department.

Past due child support

Any past-due support owed to the household by any noncustodial parent prior to application may be used after the household is approved to reimburse the department for any benefits paid to the household or to pay off any money owed to the department that accumulated while the household was on benefits. Amounts more than the department's reimbursement will be paid to the household.

Requesting a child support waiver

Explain what a waiver of cooperation is. Households can request a waiver by marking off Waiver Request in Section 8 of the Child Support Authorization (137), and completing a Waiver of Cooperation for Child and Medical Support ([form 137W](#)). See Reach Up procedure [2215B](#) for more information.

Information required for the Child Support Authorization (137) to be considered valid

In order for the 137 to be considered valid, the following information must be filled out by the person signing the form:

- The name of the head of household or custodian parent;
- The name of the ABSP (non-custodial) parent;
- The name of all the children shared between the head of household/ custodian parent and the ABSP (non-custodial) parent;
- Signatures on both pages requiring signatures (page 6 and page 7);
 - See notes below about signing the 137
- If a waiver was requested on the 137, and it was determined a waiver was not wanted—a new 137 or an updated 137 would be required.
 - If the household marked the waiver box incorrectly, have the household cross it out, initial and date the change; or collect a new 137 on which the waiver box is not checked off.

Other missing information on the 137

If ESD knows other information about the ABSP whose name is listed on the Child Support Authorization (137) some information can be added to the physical form or a "sticky" note can be added to the document in OnBase. Update the ABSP panel correctly. Indicate in the note what information was completed by the Department.

Information that can be added to the 137 by the Department includes: address, place of employment, date of birth or social security number.

Signing the Child Support Authorization (137)

The Head of Household/custodial parent should complete the Child Support Authorization (137).

Two parent household absent parent associated with second adult

The custodial parent must co-sign the Child Support Authorization (137) if they are not the Head of Household but are included in the Reach Up household.

Example: Tom and Jane are not married but have a child (Rowan) in common. Jane also has a child (Maya) that lives with them from a previous relationship. They apply for Reach Up with Tom as the Head of Household (listed first on the application). Tom and Jane must both sign the Child Support Authorization (137) for Maya's absent parent, Bill.

Minor parents

If the applicant is a minor, their guardian must also sign and date the Child Support Authorization (137) for the paperwork to be considered valid by OCS.

Legal caretakers and parents living together

In households where the caretaker remains the payee because they have legal guardianship and have agreed to add the birth parent to the Reach Up benefit, the Child Support Authorization (137) will have to be completed and signed by all parties that have either a legal or parental relationship to the child.

Example: Melissa took in her niece Shelley of whom she has legal custody per court order; she has a Reach Up child only grant. Shelley's mom, Renee moved into Melissa's home. Melissa agrees to have Renee added to the Reach Up household but remains the payee of the benefit. Child Support Authorization should be signed by both Melissa and Renee.

Assigning a temporary SSN for an absent parent

If a Social Security number (SSN) of the absent parent is unknown, a temporary (666) number will have to be assigned.

Follow the local district procedure for obtaining a temporary SSN. Do not assign a temporary number until you have thoroughly checked for a known number (either a Social Security number or a previously assigned temporary number) for the absent parent.

Places to look:

- Look up the Head of household or custodial parent's name in PERS D to see if the noncustodial parent is listed.
- Look up the Head of household or custodial parent's name in CUST D (this is the child support side of ACCESS) to see if the noncustodial parent is listed.
- Look up the child in PERS D to see if the noncustodial parent is already listed from another case.

Sharing information with OCS

When a Reach Up/PSE case is approved, enter a CATN in ACCESS and send a copy of the CATN/TODO to the OCS Record Center worker number FMU.

Include the following information in the CATN/TODO:

- *Which program is approved (Reach Up/PSE)*
- *137 Status in OnBase (137 is available in OnBase/137 being scanned to OnBase)*
- *If applicant is requesting a waiver include: Waiver has been requested.*

If there are more than one ABSP also indicate:

- *Name of HOH*
- *Number of 137s*
- *Initials of each ABSP*

Examples of CATN/TODO to FMU if there is only one ABSP/137s:

Reach Up is approved. 137 is in OnBase.

Or

PSE is approved. 137 is being scanned to OnBase today. Waiver has been requested.

Examples of CATN/TODO to FMU there are multiple ABSPs/137s:

Chris Dorer (HOH/CP SSN) has been approved Reach Up. Two 137s available in OnBase for BS and JJ.

Use the top portion of the CATN screen to enter the CATN/TODO so that a copy remains available in CATN.

The CATN/TODO should only be sent to FMU. Delete the worker number that pre-populates in the "Send Reminder to workers" field and replace it with "FMU"*.

Do not enter the CATN/TODO while the case is pending Reach Up/PSE.

Example:

```
05/22/19 13:35                CASE ACTION LOG                ASPATC
TYPE OF CONTACT: C Person Contacted: D_ _____
MSG: Reach Up is approved. 137 is in Onbase. _____
_____
_____
List IVD Cases? _
CS Worker: 621
*** REMINDER FUNCTION ***    CS Supv: 648
BPS Supv: 183
Reminder Date: 05 22 2019    ('*' in first M = Today's date) Case Mgr:
Send Reminder to workers: FMU  _____    RU Supv:
SF Worker: GN1
Of the above entry (if any) OR of the following:
Msg: _____
_____
USER: 430 FNX: CATN MODE: C RPTGRP:                PERIOD: 05 19 COMMAND: _____
DO: N IMS: GN1 REPORTING ADULT:
F8= 'MORE'    Shift-F3= 'EXIT'    Shift-F12= 'HELP'
```

*If the ESD worker number is left in the reminder section it will not send to the OCS worker number.

Reach First applications

If a household is granted Reach First, do not request a 137. Enter information in an ABSP panel as it is listed on the 202 application or as it was previously known to the department. If the absent parent information is unknown, enter it as UNKOWN. Enter code 4 in the Absent Parent Assign Code.

If a case transitions from Reach First to Reach Up, request a 137 using a 202V. If Reach Up is approved enter a CATN and send a copy of the CATN/TODO to the OCS worker number FMU when transfer is complete. Indicate if 137 form is available in OnBase or is being scanned. Indicate if a Waiver has been requested.

Changes to Reach Up household

Adding a child with an absent parent

If, at some future date, a child whose parent is absent enters the household, a new 137 must be obtained using a 202V for the new absent parent before the child is added to the benefit.

If the child is added, enter a CATN and send a copy of the CATN/TODO to the OCS worker number FMU, that a new child has been added to a Reach Up benefit. Indicate if 137 form is available in OnBase or is being scanned. Indicate if a Waiver has been requested.

137 for new child not returned

If the 137 is not returned, the household's Reach Up must close.

Unborn children with absent parent

Unborn Children should not have the 137's gathered until that child is born.

When the birth of the child is reported, mail the 137's to the parent with a 202VCR with a 10-day time frame to return the 137's.

Inform OCS as done above for adding a new child.

137 for new baby not returned

If the 137's are not returned, the household's Reach Up must be closed or denied.

ABSP joins Reach Up household

If the absent parent of a child joins the Reach Up household, delete the ABSP panel, and send a TODO to the OCS worker indicated on the CATN C screen.

```
08/15/19 12:07                CASE ACTION LOG                ASPATC
TYPE OF CONTACT: c Person Contacted:
MSG: ABSP panel for Bob Smith has been deleted as he has joined the RU HH.
-----
List DVD Cases?
CS Worker: 614
CS Supv: 781
BPS Supv: 090
Case Mgr:
RU Supv:
SF Worker: GR1

*** REMINDER FUNCTION ***
Reminder Date: *M DD YYYY  (** in first M = Today's date)
Send Reminder to workers: 614

Of the above entry (if any) OR of the following:
Msg:

USER: 934 FNX: CATN MODE: C RPTGRP: PERIOD: 08 19 COMMAND:
DO: R IMS: GR1 REPORTING ADULT:
F8= 'MORE'  Shift-F3= 'EXIT'  Shift-F12= 'HELP'
```

Child ages out of Reach Up Household

When a child ages out of the Reach Up household and the Reach Up benefit is adjusted, ACCESS will automatically delete the ABSP panel if the child is the only

one listed on it. Send a TODO to the OCS worker indicated on the CATN C screen letting OCS know the child is no longer on Reach Up.

```
08/15/19 12:07                CASE ACTION LOG                ASPATC
TYPE OF CONTACT: C Person Contacted.
MSG: Child John Smith has been removed from the RU HH as of 8/31/19. He is
now 18.
List TWD Cases?
CS Worker: 614
CS Supv: 781
BPS Supv: 090
Case Mgr:
RU Supv:
SF Worker: GR1
*** REMINDER FUNCTION ***
Reminder Date: *M DD YYYY ('*' in first M = Today's date)
Send Reminder to workers: 614
Of the above entry (if any) OR of the following:
Msg:
USER: 934 FNX: CATN MODE: C RPTGRP: PERIOD: 08 19 COMMAND:
DO: R IMS: GR1 REPORTING ADULT:
F8= 'MORE' Shift-F3= 'EXIT' Shift-F12= 'HELP'
```

Checking absent parent information at time of recertification

At every annual recertification check that a Child Support Authorization (137) is available in OnBase. If one is not available, request a new one using a 202RL2.

Review with the household the current information about the absent parent available in ACCESS, such as:

- an address or employment change for the absent parent.
- a change in the financial circumstances of the absent parent.
- Social Security Number of the absent parent if previously unknown.
- a divorce since last review.
- court orders since last review.
- the addition of a child of the same noncustodial parent.

A source of information to assist in this check would be the "common update" (COMM) screen in ACCESS. To view this screen, type in the command COMM/D and the head of household and/or custodial parent's SSN and C as the tenth digit. This will give the latest information OCS has on the absent parent such as his/her most recent employment. Review the information on the screen with the household.

If any information from the household is more current than what OCS has on COMM or what is in the ABSP panel, send a TODO or email message to the OCS worker.

BPS Support

Adding an ABSP panel

See the ACCESS Eligibility Training video: [Entering an Absent Parent Panel.](#)

ABSP

```
01/14/16 15:16 ABSENT PARENT          QUESTION 11 ( ABSP . 01 )
                                      (LAST UPDATED: 05/05/15 12:46 ; ASPADM )

      NAME OF ABSENT PARENT          SUPPORT
** FIRST ** I **** LAST ***** MOD ASSIGN  *** SSN ***   COOP  BIRTHDATE  SEX
CHARLES   W KING                    1      666 66 6666   1    09 15 1980  M

      CHILDREN OF THIS ABSENT PARENT
** FIRST ** I *** LAST *** MOD P RR      ** FIRST ** I *** LAST *** MOD P RR
1 BRYAN   F KING                    Y          2
3                                     4
5                                     6
7                                     8
9                                     10

      O T H E R   A B S E N T   P A R E N T   I N F O R M A T I O N

      MARITAL STATUS X                ADDRESS INFORMATION
RELATION TO APPLICANT M              STREET ADDRESS
WAIVER REVIEW DATE                  C-O OR APT ADDRESS          153 MARSH LANE
      A-C PHONE EXT                  CITY JERICHO                STATE VT ZIP 05465
PHONE 802 555 9966
USER: 084 FNX: STAT MODE: D RPTGRP: XXX XX XXXX PERIOD: 01 16 COMMAND: _____
DO: M IMS: GM1 REPORTING ADULT:                                           3
```

Absent parent assignment codes

```
ASHADMCR
| ABSP Assign Codes
|
| 1 Assigned.
| 2 Refused Assignment - case closed or denied.
| 3 Absent Parent Deceased - no IV-D case.
| 4 No assignment needed- R First or R Ahead.
```

Absent parent removal reasons

```
ASHADMCT
Removal Reasons

D1 ON ANFC - OVER AGE FOR 4D
D2 ON IV-D - OVER AGE FOR PA
D3 CHILD WITH AP OR OTHER REL
D4 EMANCIPATED MINOR
D5 AP EXCLUDED BY BLOOD TEST
D6 ADOPTED
D7 TERMIN OF PARENTAL RIGHTS
D9 OTHER
```

IV-D (or 4D) = Child Support side of ACCESS
PA = TANF funded public assistance

Removal reasons D1, D3, and D9 are only informational and will allow you to continue. All other codes will require the child to be removed from the panel, or for the panel to be deleted.