

RCW 26.19.065 Standards for establishing lower and upper limits on child support amounts. (Effective until January 1, 2026.) (1) **Limit at forty-five percent of a parent's net income.** Neither parent's child support obligation owed for all his or her biological or legal children may exceed forty-five percent of net income except for good cause shown.

(a) Each child is entitled to a pro rata share of the income available for support, but the court only applies the pro rata share to the children in the case before the court.

(b) Before determining whether to apply the forty-five percent limitation, the court must consider whether it would be unjust to apply the limitation after considering the best interests of the child and the circumstances of each parent. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to, leaving insufficient funds in the custodial parent's household to meet the basic needs of the child, comparative hardship to the affected households, assets or liabilities, and any involuntary limits on either parent's earning capacity including incarceration, disabilities, or incapacity.

(c) Good cause includes, but is not limited to, possession of substantial wealth, children with day care expenses, special medical need, educational need, psychological need, and larger families.

(2) **Presumptive minimum support obligation.** (a) When a parent's monthly net income is below one hundred twenty-five percent of the federal poverty guideline for a one-person family, a support order of not less than fifty dollars per child per month shall be entered unless the obligor parent establishes that it would be unjust to do so in that particular case. The decision whether there is a sufficient basis to deviate below the presumptive minimum payment must take into consideration the best interests of the child and the circumstances of each parent. Such circumstances can include leaving insufficient funds in the custodial parent's household to meet the basic needs of the child, comparative hardship to the affected households, assets or liabilities, and earning capacity.

(b) The basic support obligation of the parent making the transfer payment, excluding health care, day care, and special child-rearing expenses, shall not reduce his or her net income below the self-support reserve of one hundred twenty-five percent of the federal poverty level for a one-person family, except for the presumptive minimum payment of fifty dollars per child per month or when it would be unjust to apply the self-support reserve limitation after considering the best interests of the child and the circumstances of each parent. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to, leaving insufficient funds in the custodial parent's household to meet the basic needs of the child, comparative hardship to the affected households, assets or liabilities, and earning capacity. This section shall not be construed to require monthly substantiation of income.

(3) **Income above twelve thousand dollars.** The economic table is presumptive for combined monthly net incomes up to and including twelve thousand dollars. When combined monthly net income exceeds twelve thousand dollars, the court may exceed the presumptive amount of support set for combined monthly net incomes of twelve thousand dollars upon written findings of fact. [2018 c 150 s 401; 2009 c 84 s 2; 1998 c 163 s 1; 1991 c 367 s 33.]

Effective date—2018 c 150 ss 201-401: See note following RCW 26.23.065.

Effective date—2009 c 84: See note following RCW 26.19.020.

Severability—Effective date—Captions not law—1991 c 367: See notes following RCW 26.09.015.

RCW 26.19.065 Standards for establishing lower and upper limits on child support amounts. (Effective January 1, 2026.) (1) **Limit at 45 percent of a parent's net income.** Neither parent's child support obligation owed for all his or her biological or legal children may exceed 45 percent of net income except for good cause shown.

(a) Each child is entitled to a pro rata share of the income available for support, but the court only applies the pro rata share to the children in the case before the court.

(b) Before determining whether to apply the 45 percent limitation, the court must consider whether it would be unjust to apply the limitation after considering the best interests of the child and the circumstances of each parent. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to, leaving insufficient funds in the custodial parent's household to meet the basic needs of the child, comparative hardship to the affected households, assets or liabilities, and any involuntary limits on either parent's earning capacity including incarceration, disabilities, or incapacity.

(c) Good cause includes, but is not limited to, possession of substantial wealth, children with day care expenses, special medical need, educational need, psychological need, and larger families.

(2) **Presumptive minimum support obligation.** (a) When a parent's monthly net income is below 180 percent of the federal poverty guideline for a one-person family, a support order of not less than \$50 per child per month shall be entered unless the obligor parent establishes that it would be unjust to do so in that particular case. The decision whether there is a sufficient basis to deviate below the presumptive minimum payment must take into consideration the best interests of the child and the circumstances of each parent. Such circumstances can include leaving insufficient funds in the custodial parent's household to meet the basic needs of the child, comparative hardship to the affected households, assets or liabilities, and earning capacity.

(b) The basic support obligation of the parent making the transfer payment, excluding health care, day care, and special child-rearing expenses, shall not reduce his or her net income below the self-support reserve of 180 percent of the federal poverty level for a one-person family, except for the presumptive minimum payment of \$50 per child per month or when it would be unjust to apply the self-support reserve limitation after considering the best interests of the child and the circumstances of each parent. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to, leaving insufficient funds in the custodial parent's household to meet the basic needs of the child, comparative hardship to the affected households, assets or liabilities, and earning capacity. This section shall not be construed to require monthly substantiation of income.

(c) (i) When a parent's income is greater than the self-support reserve of 180 percent of the federal poverty level for a one-person household, neither parent's basic child support obligation owed for all of the parent's biological or legal children may reduce that parent's income below the self-support reserve of 180 percent of the

federal poverty guideline for a one-person household except for the presumptive minimum of \$50 per child per month.

(ii) Each child is entitled to a pro rata share of the income available for support but the court only applies the pro rata share to the children in the case before the court. Before determining whether to apply this limitation, the court should consider whether it would be unjust to apply the limitation after considering the best interests of the child and the circumstances of each parent. Such circumstances may include leaving insufficient funds in the custodial parent's household to meet the basic needs of the child, comparative hardship to the affected households, assets or liabilities, and earning capacity.

(3) **Income above \$50,000.** The economic table is presumptive for combined monthly net incomes up to and including \$50,000. When combined monthly net income exceeds \$50,000, the court may exceed the presumptive amount of support set for combined monthly net incomes of \$50,000 upon written findings of fact. [2025 c 272 s 1; 2018 c 150 s 401; 2009 c 84 s 2; 1998 c 163 s 1; 1991 c 367 s 33.]

Effective date—2025 c 272 ss 1-3 and 14: "Sections 1 through 3 and 14 of this act take effect January 1, 2026." [2025 c 272 s 16.]

Rule-making authority—2025 c 272: See note following RCW 26.09.345.

Effective date—2018 c 150 ss 201-401: See note following RCW 26.23.065.

Effective date—2009 c 84: See note following RCW 26.19.020.

Severability—Effective date—Captions not law—1991 c 367: See notes following RCW 26.09.015.