

The new child support guidelines are currently out, but not in effect until August 1, 2013. Some of the highlights of the new child support guidelines in Massachusetts are that it can be calculated in different ways; including, depending on how much time a parent spends with his/her child and how expenses are split where it can be less than 1/3, 1/3 more than 1/3, but less than 50% and equally approximately equal.

Generally, what they will be doing is an Income for Means Test Benefits for example: SSI TAFDC and Snap Food stamps are excluded from calculated available income; and where income is to be attributed, the employment at the attributed income level must be considered. The new guidelines will also show when second jobs or overtime should or should not be considered in the history of these earnings and how to determine income when combined income is greater than \$250,000.00. There are also some issues with regard to clarifying; if the child support or college contributions when the children are over 18 and the consideration of any order for college in any weekly child support order.

There are also some additional reasons for not following the guidelines; including very high health insurance expenses or childcare costs that are not proportionate to the parent that is paying income and when one party is providing less than 1/3 of the parenting time.

It also recognizes the parties might benefit from calculating alimony before child support or child support before alimony when considering differences in

## **The New Child Support Guidelines Effective August 1, 2013**

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the parties' tax bracket.