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Child Support After the 2026 Reform: How Much, How Long, and What If They Don't Pay

How child support is calculated after the 2026 Czech reform, what to do when the other parent won't pay, and when to request a reduction.

MGR. BÁRA BARTOŇKOVÁ

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I know that child support is a topic that stirs strong emotions. On one side, the parent who cares for the child and needs financial certainty. On the other, the parent who pays and wants to know it is fair. And in the middle, a child who chose none of this. Let's break it down calmly — step by step, without adding unnecessary stress. The broader context of the reform is in [What changed in Czech family law in January 2026](#); if you want to see how courts treat unreasoned child-support rulings today, section 9 of [Child custody disputes — what parents need to know](#) is the place to look.

How child support is calculated

Czech law does not prescribe any table or calculator for child support. This surprises many people, because such tables exist in numerous other countries. In the Czech Republic, the court assesses each case individually based on three main criteria:

The income and financial circumstances of the obligated parent. Not just current income, but also what is known as "earning capacity" — meaning how much the parent could earn if they made an effort. The court can therefore take into account situations where a parent deliberately reduces their income to pay less.

The child's justified needs. These depend on the child's age, health, education, extracurricular activities, and the overall standard of living the child was accustomed to during the marriage.

The parent's standard of living. The law states that a child has the right to share in the parents' standard of living. If one parent lives comfortably, the support should reflect that.

In practice, amounts vary widely — from a few thousand crowns a month for ordinary incomes to tens of thousands for high-earning parents. There is no single "correct" figure that applies across the board.

What the 2026 reform changed

The reform introduced several important changes worth noting:

More precise income assessment. Courts now have broader tools to establish the true financial circumstances of the obligated parent. This is particularly important for self-employed individuals, whose income is often less transparent than that of employees.

Higher statutory default interest. If a parent does not pay support on time, the accruing interest is now higher than before. This is intended to motivate timely and regular payment.

Assignment of claims. This is a new mechanism that can significantly help parents who have been waiting in vain for support payments. It is now possible to assign the maintenance claim — that is, to transfer the right of enforcement to a third party, typically a specialised company. The company recovers the support, and the entitled parent receives the money without having to go through enforcement proceedings themselves.

Narrower criminal liability. The criminal offence of neglecting mandatory maintenance has been refined by the reform. The aim is to distinguish genuinely wilful non-payment from situations where the parent objectively cannot pay — for instance, due to job loss or illness.

When the other parent does not pay

This is, unfortunately, an extremely common situation. Here is what you can do:

Enforcement (execution). If you have a final court judgment or an approved maintenance agreement, you can file a motion for enforcement. The enforcement officer can garnish wages, seize bank accounts, and liquidate the obligor's assets. It is an effective tool, but it requires time and patience.

Criminal complaint. If a parent has failed to pay support for more than four months, it may constitute a criminal offence. After the reform, however, it must be shown that the non-payment was intentional — that the parent could pay but chose not to. A criminal complaint is not revenge — it is a last resort when everything else has failed. If you are considering this step, or conversely someone has filed such a complaint against you, see [Criminal complaint — what happens when someone files one against you](#).

Assignment of claims. The new option I described above. It can be a practical solution for parents who lack the energy or resources to enforce support on their own. Read the terms carefully before proceeding — the company that purchases the claim will charge a fee.

State substitute maintenance. In certain cases, it is possible to apply for substitute maintenance paid by the state. The amount is limited and the conditions fairly strict, but for parents in dire circumstances it can be an important safety net.

When you are paying but circumstances have changed

Life changes. Job loss, illness, new family circumstances — all of these can affect your ability to pay. And the law accounts for that.

Motion to reduce support. If your financial circumstances have significantly worsened, you can file a motion with the court to reduce the support amount. It is important that the change is substantial and objective — not deliberate.

When it makes sense. If you lost your job and are actively seeking a new one. If you became seriously ill. If you had another child and your maintenance obligations expanded. These are all legitimate grounds.

When it does not. If you voluntarily left a well-paying job. If you transferred assets to someone else to avoid payment. Courts recognise these situations and will not grant a reduction.

Important: Until the court rules on the reduction, the original amount applies. You cannot unilaterally decide to pay less. Arrears accumulate and can lead to enforcement proceedings.

Child support is not a battle

I understand that child support is often a source of tension between parents. But it is important to remember whom it is for — the child. It is not a tool for punishment, retaliation, or manipulation. It is a financial contribution toward the needs of a person who cannot provide for themselves.

If you cannot agree on support, two steps will help: a consultation with a lawyer who can tell you what is realistic in your situation, and possibly mediation, where you can seek a solution that works for both sides — and above all, for the child.

A final word

I know this is a stressful topic. But that is precisely why clear information and a calm mind matter. Child support has its rules, its procedures, and its limits. And whichever side you are on — enforcing or paying — you have rights that will help you manage the situation.

If you are unsure what to do, talk to a lawyer. Not because this is a "war," but because everyone deserves to know where they stand.

Enforcing child support, or seeking to adjust what you pay? In our [family law practice](#) I'll help you find the fastest legal route — from filing for enforcement to a well-documented motion to reduce. [Get in touch.](#)

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