

When Payors or Recipients Reside Outside Alberta

Each province in Canada has a separate maintenance enforcement program with its own legislation and tools to collect court-ordered maintenance or maintenance payable by enforceable agreements. If either party, named in a court order, lives in Alberta and the other party lives outside the province, the file may be registered for enforcement in both jurisdictions.

Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act

Often referred to as the ISO Act, this legislation authorizes Alberta's Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) to monitor and enforce court orders when a person responsible for paying support (payor) or a person receiving these payments (recipient) resides outside Alberta. The MEP has reciprocal agreements with numerous other jurisdictions, including all Canadian provinces and territories.

Reciprocal Registration

Reciprocal registration occurs when court orders or enforceable agreements from one jurisdiction are filed in another jurisdiction that recognizes the originating court's authority to make child or spousal support orders. Court orders from outside Alberta's jurisdiction are reciprocally registered in Alberta's Court of Queen's Bench before they can be enforced and collection action can begin. If orders were granted outside Canada, there is a 30-day waiting period during which payors may apply to court to object to Alberta enforcing them.

When Payors Live Outside Alberta

Enforcement action occurs in the jurisdiction where the payors reside. When payors live outside Alberta, the MEP forwards orders/agreements and file information for registration with the enforcement program in the payors' jurisdiction.

The role of Alberta MEP, when payors reside outside Alberta, is to provide accounting and communication services between the reciprocating jurisdiction and recipients. Any funds collected by other programs are routed through Alberta MEP and forwarded to recipients to ensure that payments received from the payors are secure.

When Recipients Live Outside Alberta

When recipients live outside Alberta, Alberta MEP may send court orders/agreements for reciprocal registration in the recipient's jurisdiction or Alberta MEP may be asked by the recipient's jurisdiction to register the file in Alberta for enforcement if the payor lives here.

The role of Alberta MEP, when recipients live outside Alberta, is to monitor and enforce court orders and agreements for child and spousal support and receive payments directly from payors. Alberta MEP also provides accounting and communication services between reciprocating jurisdictions and payors. Any funds collected are routed through Alberta MEP to ensure payments are secure prior to forwarding them to reciprocating jurisdictions.

Both Parties Live in Alberta – Out-of-Province Court Order

If a court order was granted in another jurisdiction and both parties reside in Alberta, the MEP may be able to file the order with the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench. Once the order has been filed here, the MEP can begin to monitor and enforce payment on the order.

Both Parties Live Outside of Alberta – Alberta Court Order

If both the payor and recipient have moved out of Alberta, the MEP will close the file and the parties will need to register with the enforcement program in the area where they live.

Contacting the MEP From Other Parts Of Canada

Parties who are registered with another Canadian provincial or territorial maintenance enforcement program should always communicate with their own program. However, recipients in other provinces who have time-sensitive matters such as advising the MEP of a payor's whereabouts or needing information by a specific deadline can call MEP toll-free at 1-844-637-2255. This toll-free phone number is available for recipients who are outside Alberta, and within Canada. Recipients may speak to staff at the MEP or request a callback only during the MEP's regular business hours.

Reciprocating Jurisdictions

Canada – Alberta has reciprocal enforcement agreements with all other Canadian provinces and territories

Other Jurisdictions – Alberta has reciprocal enforcement agreements with the following jurisdictions:

American Samoa
Australia
Austria
Barbados
Czech Republic
Fiji Islands
Germany
Great Britain
Guam

Isle of Man
Jersey
New Zealand
Northern Ireland
Northern Mariana Island
Norway
Papua New Guinea
Poland
Puerto Rico

Scotland
Singapore
Slovak Republic
South Africa
Switzerland
United States
Virgin Islands
Wales

- The MEP has other Information Sheets, on a variety of helpful topics. To see them, visit the MEP's website at alberta.ca/mep
- To contact the MEP, phone 780-422-5555 or toll-free in Alberta at 310-0000.
- To view information about your MEP file, go to the MEP's website at alberta.ca/mep and select "MEP Accounts Online"