

Louisiana Child Support Calculator

Installation Instructions – Copying the Template

These instructions assume that you will install the template into a subdirectory C:\My Documents\Child_Support and are using WindowsXP. If you choose to install the template in another subdirectory modify the installation instructions accordingly.

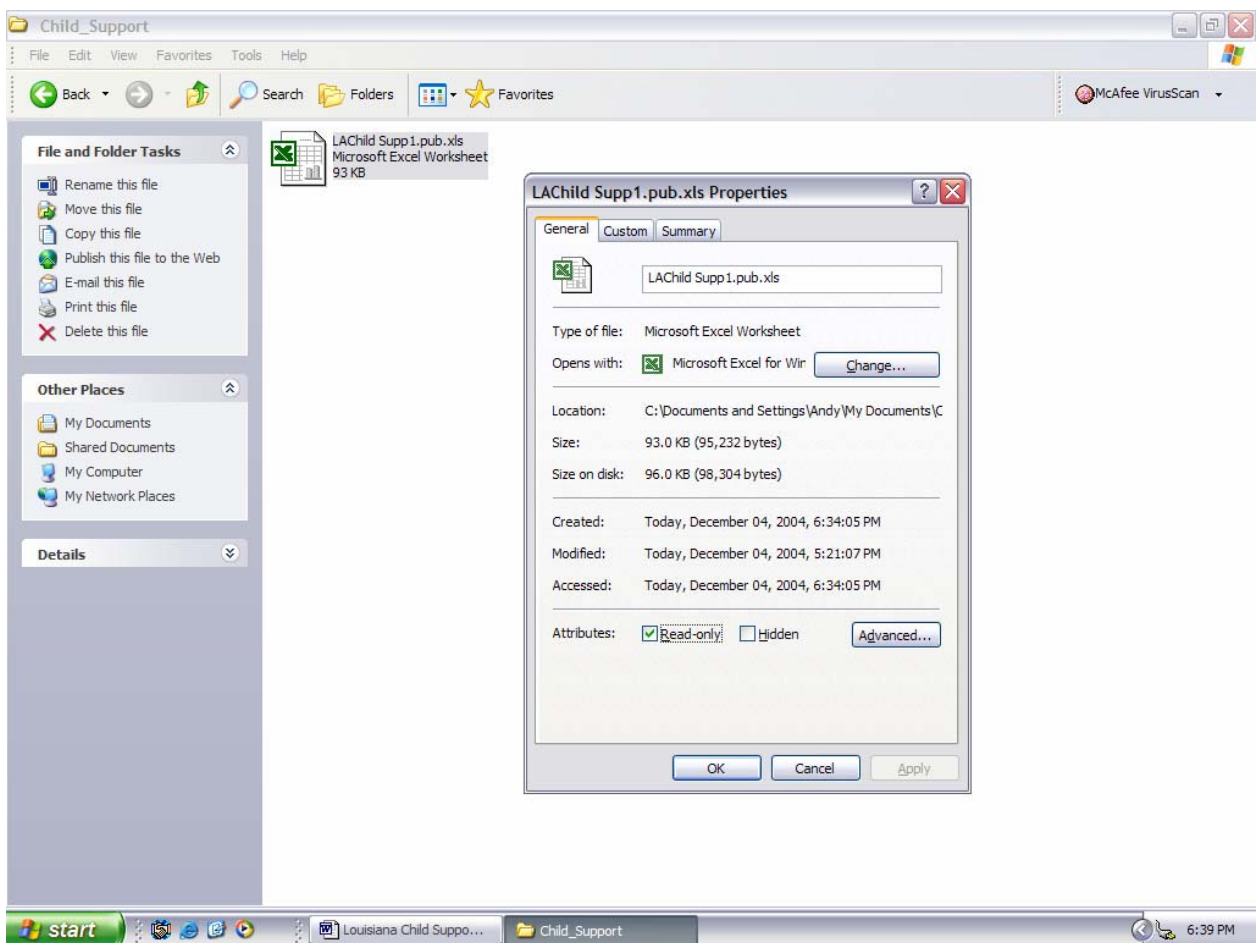
Choose “Start” and “My Documents”.

Under “File and Folder Tasks” choose “Make a New Folder”

Enter the name “Child_Support”

Copy the template LACHildSupp1.pub.xls into the subdirectory C:\My Documents\Child_Support

To make sure that the original template cannot be overwritten when you save a file, right click on the template LACHildSupp1.pub.xls and make sure that the Attributes Read-only is checked. Choose “OK” and close the Child Support window.



Installation Instructions – Desktop Icon

To set up a desktop icon so that you can start the template from the desktop, place the mouse arrow on a space on the desktop. Right click and choose “New” and then “Shortcut”.

In the box “Type the location of the file” enter “C:\Documents and Settings\Andy\My Documents\Child_Support\LACChild Supp1.pub.xls” (or, if you saved the file to a different location, type this name).

Choose “Next” and Type whatever name you wish to give the startup icon. I use “LA Child Support” The icon will now be on the desktop.

If you want to be able to start the template from the start menu place the mouse arrow over the desktop icon, left click and hold, then drag the icon onto the Start Menu holding the left mouse button down.

Starting the Template

Double click on the desktop icon to start the template. If your macro settings in Microsoft Excel™ show that the template has macros choose “Enable Macros”. The template will load and the following screen will appear.

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Excel window titled "Microsoft Excel - LACChild Supp1.pub.xls [Read-Only]". The spreadsheet is titled "MONTHLY DATA ENTRY SHEET" and is organized into columns for "Father" and "Mother". The rows include various data entry fields such as "Standard Calculation", "Shared Custody", "SHARED CUSTODY LIMITED TO STANDARD", "COURT", "CASE NO.", "PARISH", "DIV/CT RM", "FATHER", "MOTHER", "CHILD NAME (1)", "BIRTHDAY (1)", "CHILD NAME (2)", "BIRTHDAY (2)", "CHILD NAME (3)", "BIRTHDAY (3)", "CHILD NAME (4)", "BIRTHDAY (4)", "CHILD NAME (5)", "BIRTHDAY (5)", "CHILD NAME (6)", "BIRTHDAY (6)", "DOMICILIARY PARENT (MOTHER,FATHER)", "MONTHLY INCOME", "PREEXISTING CHILD SUPPORT", "PREEXISTING SPOUSAL SUPPORT", "OTHER CREDITS", "CHILD CARE COSTS (MONTHLY)", and "CHILD CARE CREDIT %". The "MONTHLY INCOME" row shows values of \$0.00 for both Father and Mother. The "CHILD CARE CREDIT %" row shows values of 0% for both. The spreadsheet is displayed in a grid format with columns A through H and rows 1 through 31. The status bar at the bottom indicates "Ready" and shows the taskbar with the Start button and several open applications: "Child_Support", "Louisiana Child Suppo...", and "Microsoft Excel - LAC...". The system clock shows "9:29 PM".

	Father	Mother
Standard Calculation	\$0.00	\$0.00
Shared Custody	\$0.00	\$0.00
SHARED CUSTODY LIMITED TO STANDARD		
COURT		
CASE NO.		
PARISH		
DIV/CT RM		
FATHER		
MOTHER		
CHILD NAME (1)		
BIRTHDAY (1)		
CHILD NAME (2)		
BIRTHDAY (2)		
CHILD NAME (3)		
BIRTHDAY (3)		
CHILD NAME (4)		
BIRTHDAY (4)		
CHILD NAME (5)		
BIRTHDAY (5)		
CHILD NAME (6)		
BIRTHDAY (6)		
DOMICILIARY PARENT (MOTHER,FATHER)		
MONTHLY INCOME	\$0.00	\$0.00
PREEXISTING CHILD SUPPORT		
PREEXISTING SPOUSAL SUPPORT		
OTHER CREDITS		
CHILD CARE COSTS (MONTHLY)		
CHILD CARE CREDIT %	0%	0%

Navigating through the Template

The template is composed of five sheets that show as tabs at the bottom of the template.

1. Data sheet where support information is entered and computed standard and shared custody is displayed.
2. Monthly Income Sheet for more complex cases where either spouse has complex income.
3. Std Calc Sheet where the standard calculation can be printed out.
4. Shared Custody Sheet where the shared calculation can be printed out
5. Guideline Sheet where the Guideline Child Support amounts can be viewed. The template computes child support for up to six children and up to \$20,000 monthly income in compliance with normal guidelines.

To move from sheet to sheet left click on the tabs at the bottom of the template.

The formulas in the template are hidden and protected. If you attempt to enter information in any cell that is protected Excel will warn you that the cell is protected and read only and prevent you from entering information to maintain the integrity of the template.

Entering Data – the Data Sheet

When the template opens the active cell should be in the “B” or “Father” column to the right of the cell marked “Court”. Begin entering the information. As you finish entering information in each cell you can move to the next cell by hitting enter or the up/down/right/left arrows. This information allows the template to calculate the child support and transfers the information to the Std Calc and Shared Custody Sheets. As you enter the Case Information and the family information the standard and shared child support at the top of the sheet remains at zero as no financial information has been entered.

If you get lost hold down the “Control” and “Home” Button together to get back to the beginning of the worksheet. If this doesn’t work try hitting “Escape” a couple of times before trying again.

The program uses the children’s names to calculate the number of children for support. The children’s birthday is an optional entry that will not change the result!

Make sure that you enter “MOTHER” or “FATHER” in cell “B25” to indicate the Domiciliary Parent or the template will not calculate standard child support.

At cell B26 make sure that you do not make an entry if you have a complex income case. Click the tab Monthly Income and enter the income information on this sheet. If you enter income information on the data sheet and later wish to use the Monthly Income Sheet you can reestablish the link to the Monthly Income Sheet by typing

=+'Monthly Income'!B49” in the father’s column (Cell B26) and “=+'Monthly Income'!C49” in the Mother’s column (Cell C26).

You are only able to enter the father’s shared custody percentage; the mother’s shared custody percentage is calculated by the program as 100%, less the father’s share, when computing the shared custody support. This is to avoid children being more than 100% under the combined parents’ custody!

Enter other data as needed. The template will display the calculated child support at the top of the screen. As you enter changes the support calculation will automatically change at the top of the screen.

Data Sheet – Power Tips

The data sheet allows you and your staff to quickly work through support options. You will always be able to see the difference between the two calculated support methods and very quickly work through the financial effects of taking into account support changes and what ifs. Some power tips to help you in your use of the template:

1. Print out as many data sheets as necessary to document your child support discussions with your client. While not necessary, it is strongly recommended that you print the data sheet to support how you calculated the final child support for your records.
2. Throw away your calculator! Excel will allow you to make mathematical calculations in each cell. For example, if the husband’s bi weekly gross income is \$3333 enter “=3333*26/12” in the husband’s monthly income cell and the template will calculate the monthly income. The equal sign turns a single cell into a calculator. Excel basic math commands (there are many more!) are as follows:
+ = add (= $2+2$ would equal 4)
- = subtract (= $4-3$ would equal 1)
* = multiply (= $4*3$ would equal 12)
/ = divide (= $22/2$ would equal 11)
3. If you wish to the data sheet to have certain defaults contact Andrew Hoffman at 985-373-8855 or lacdfa@bellsouth.net. Andrew is always ready to have lunch with an attorney.
4. *Little red arrows* will help you as you navigate through the template. Place the mouse over them and a box will appear with some (hopefully) helpful information.

Standard Calculation and Shared Custody Calculation Sheets

The information you enter into the Data and Monthly Income Sheets will automatically transfer to both sheets. **At the bottom of each sheet is a text box where you can type in information supporting the calculation. The box is below line 8 of the standard calculation and below line 14 of the shared computation.** The rest of the template is protected and no entry can be made.

Saving the file

Choose “File” then “Save” to save the file. If you have properly made the template “read-only” when installing the template then you will be forced to save the file with a new name. When you click “OK” the Child_Support subdirectory will be displayed and you will be able to name file. One suggestion is to name the file with the family’s last name and the case number and the Judicial District. So an example might be “Jones 2004-0000 22JDC”. The name of the file also appears at the bottom of the support calculation and monthly income spreadsheets. If you wish to save more than one copy of a support calculation then the file name should be changed.

Printing

The data, monthly income, standard calculation and shared custody spreadsheets can be printed out. The data sheet is output on letter and the other sheets on legal. A full printout of the guidelines has been disabled.

License to Use

This is a free program. Please feel free to share it.

Support

No support is offered. If you catch me in the office I’ll try to help but remember I’d have to pay you to use the template to make it any cheaper!

Limited Liability

This template is a mathematical interpretation of the Louisiana Child Support Guidelines and is no substitute for legal advice from an attorney.