



## **California Legislator Introduces New Bill to Amend Child Support Repayment Process for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Parents**

*Root & Rebound sponsors bill to amend the existing Family Code Section 4007.5(b) to better support reentry*

OAKLAND, Calif., February 17, 2023 — [Root & Rebound](#), a reentry legal resource organization based in Oakland, Calif., today announced a new California bill, AB 1148, which will amend Family Code Section 4007.5(b), and extend the resumption of child support for formerly incarcerated parents to the first day of the 18th full month post-incarceration. The current law, section 4007.5(b), requires that child support obligations resume on the first day of the first full month after the release of an incarcerated person. In addition, AB 1148 would add a requirement for a modification hearing to adjust the amount owed by the formerly incarcerated parent to account for their reentry status.

By law, formerly incarcerated parents have approximately one month to begin paying back child support, yet research shows it can take individuals [six months](#) to find stable employment post-incarceration. In reality, it can take up to two to three years for formerly incarcerated people to find stable employment. As a result, formerly incarcerated parents often resort to working in underground economies or under-the-table all-cash jobs out of fear of being unable to sustain their households. Having insufficient income only elongates the reentry journey, especially for women. Furthermore, when child support payments are not received as ordered, it results in harsh punishments, including the suspension of a driver's license or passport, creating additional economic reentry barriers for formerly incarcerated people.

"Requiring a parent to resume paying child support only a month after exiting incarceration ignores many of the systemic barriers that formerly incarcerated people face. Providing a parent enough time to secure stable employment and get back on their feet ensures they can adequately support themselves and their children," said Assemblymember Bonta.

Paying back child support continues to be a reentry barrier for many formerly incarcerated people. Women, for example, are more likely to encounter multiple systems during their reentry journeys, including dealing with family courts and reunifying with children, while at the same time becoming heads of households, all while owing child support. [Research shows](#) the unemployment rate for formerly incarcerated people is nearly five times higher than the unemployment rate for the general United States population.

“Providing parents who are formerly incarcerated with additional time to begin paying child support upon reentry is beneficial to all parties involved, including the child,” said Claudia J. Gonzalez, Central Valley Policy Associate at Root & Rebound. “This amended bill will offer a buffer to impacted parents and provide them with the opportunity to find stable employment and obtain financial stability before they resume paying their obligations. We strongly urge California legislators to sign this bill into law to offer better support to folks reentering.”

If AB 1148 passes in California, it will offer formerly incarcerated parents the opportunity to secure employment and some financial security before being obligated to resume child support payments. To learn more about Root & Rebound and support this effort, please visit <https://www.rootandrebound.org/>.

### **About Root & Rebound**

Root & Rebound is a national reentry organization with offices throughout California and South Carolina. We work to reverse the devastating effects of mass incarceration and over-criminalization and transform the experience of reentry by providing critical legal resources, education, and ongoing support to the individuals, families, and communities impacted.

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