

WAC 388-14A-3700 When is it appropriate to vacate a default order?

(1) If a party fails to appear at a hearing, the administrative law judge (ALJ) must, upon a showing of valid service, enter an initial decision and default order or proceed in the absence of the defaulting party as provided in WAC 388-14A-3131, 388-14A-3132, or 388-14A-3140.

(2) The ALJ must state in the decision that the:

(a) Support debt and the current support obligation stated in the notice are assessed, determined, and subject to collection action;

(b) Health insurance provisions of the notice are subject to direct enforcement action; and,

(c) Relief sought in the notice served by the division of child support is granted.

(3) Decisions and orders on default become final twenty-one days from the date of mailing under WAC 388-08-464 or chapter 388-02 WAC.

(4) Any party against whom the ALJ has entered an initial decision and order on default may petition the secretary or the secretary's designee for vacation of the default order, subject to the provisions, including time limits, of civil rule 60.

(5) DCS must:

(a) Request that the office of administrative hearings (OAH) schedule a hearing to determine whether or not the petitioner has good cause for vacating the default order; and

(b) Give any other parties to the hearing notice of the time and date of the hearing. OAH must send the notice to the last known address of the party.

(6) If, in a hearing under this section, the ALJ finds that the petitioner has good cause for vacating the default order, the ALJ:

(a) Must conduct a hearing on the merits of the petitioner's objection to the notice that was the basis for the hearing at which the petitioner failed to appear; and

(b) May stay any further collection to the extent provided for under the regulations authorizing the notice the parent originally objected to.

(7) The ALJ must apply civil rule 60 to determine whether the petitioner has good cause. Before vacating an order of default at the request of the NCP or CP, the ALJ must consider the prejudice to the non-DCS party that did appear for hearing.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 74.08.090, 34.05.220(1), 74.20A.055, 74.20A.056. WSR 01-03-089, § 388-14A-3700, filed 1/17/01, effective 2/17/01. Formerly WAC 388-11-120.]