

Essay Prompt 1

“What information must you elicit from your client before you can advise them about the likely amount and duration of an initial child support award under the statutory guidelines?”

This short essay evaluated the applicant’s understanding of the statutory factors and adjustments relevant to a child support award under C.R.S. § 14-10-115. The question did not call for analyses of C.R.S. §§ 14-10-123 (commencement of an allocation of parental responsibilities), 14-10-124 (best interests of the child), or 19-4-101 to -130 (Uniform Parentage Act); however, applicants who discussed these issues did not lose points. Applicants did not have to write their answer in any particular format. Points were allocated based on the number of below-listed statutory factors and adjustments the applicant identified.

- The **child’s age**.
- Whether either parent is **employed** full-time.
- Whether either parent is **unemployed** or **underemployed**.
- The **parents’ gross incomes** from employment (or imputed income, if applicable).
- Whether either parent has any **other income** (e.g., investment, rental, second job).
- Whether either parent is legally responsible for **other children**.
- Whether either parent pays **child support for another child** (not of this relationship).
- Whether either parent pays or receives **spousal maintenance**.
- The **number of overnights** each parent will have with the child.
- Whether either parent has work- or education-related **childcare costs**.
- Whether either parent pays **medical or dental insurance**.
- The amount of the **child’s portion** of any medical or dental insurance premium.
- Whether the child has any **extraordinary medical expenses**.
- Whether the parents agree on **extraordinary expenses** (e.g., horseback riding lessons).
- Whether the child has **tuition or educational expenses** (e.g., private school).
- Whether the parents incur **transportation costs** for the child associated with parenting time.
- The **child’s income**.
- Whether either **parent** receives **disability benefits**.
- Whether the **child** receives **disability benefits**.
- Whether **any other factors** diminish the child’s basic needs (e.g., a third person pays certain expenses on behalf of the child).