

COA Opinion: Despite parental-right termination child-support obligations continue

7. March 2010

On March 4, 2010, the Michigan Court of Appeals issued its published opinion in *Department of Human Services v. Beck (In re Beck)*, No. 293138. The court held that the trial court properly terminated father-respondent's parental rights while continuing his child-support obligations. The court's opinion may be found [here](#).

Father-respondent did not appeal the order terminating his parental rights; he appealed only the continuation of his child-support obligations, arguing that his due-process rights were violated. However, he failed to explain how his procedural or substantive due-process rights were violated. Consequently, the court instead inquired into whether the trial court had the authority to terminate parental rights while preserving child-support obligations.

The court noted that MCL § 712A.19b permits courts to terminate parental rights, but is silent regarding child-support obligations. It is well settled that parents have an obligation to support their children. No Michigan statute links the two, and public policy counsels against releasing parents from their obligation to support their children. Thus, the court held that a parent has a responsibility to support his child, regardless of whether he continues to hold parental rights.