

## Child Support Terminology: Parents

Since members of both the public and the Task Force have expressed distaste for the phrases “custodial parent” and “noncustodial parent”, it is time to revisit this topic.

The terminology used to describe parents within the realm of child support has gone through many changes. However, it has been difficult to successfully shift away from using labels that focus on a custody designation while also ensuring that the laws surrounding child support, public assistance and taxes make sense.

As noted at the last Task Force meeting, there was a bill in 2001 that sought to neutralize certain terminology within the field of family law. The phrase “visitation” was replaced with “parenting time”, and the phrases “custodial parent” and “noncustodial parent” were removed when a custody designation was not necessary, or replaced with “the parent with whom the child resides” and “the parent without whom the child resides”, when such a designation was required.

The list below are examples of other terms that used in child support:

- Non-residential parent and residential parent
- Obligated parent and other parent
- Obligor and obligee
- Parent A and Parent B
- Parent with whom the child does not reside and parent with whom the child resides
- Parent who pays support and parent who receives support
- Payor and payee or recipient

It may be beneficial for the Task Force to what appropriate action steps, if any, may be taken to achieve the goal of eliminating offensive labels, while still being able to make distinctions based on custody and parenting time when legally necessary.