

Child Support Task Force Minutes

June 12, 2019

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

180 State Office Building

100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Saint Paul, MN 55155

Members Present: The following task force members were present on Wednesday, June 12, 2019:

<input type="checkbox"/> Beth Assell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shaneen Moore	<input type="checkbox"/> Rep. Peggy Scott
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rahya Iliff, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rep. Laurie Pryor, by phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Jason Smith
<input type="checkbox"/> Sen. Mary Kiffmeyer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melissa Rossow	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Victoria Taylor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lisa Kontz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joseph Russell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sen. Melissa Wiklund
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jodie Metcalf	<input type="checkbox"/> Rachel Sablan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mia Wilson

DHS Staff:

<input type="checkbox"/> Tara Borton
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Julie Erickson

Other Meeting Participants:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jessica Raymond	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stacy Sjogren, facilitator
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Jane Venohr, economist, by phone
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amy Anderson

Welcome, Announcements and Meeting Objectives

Agenda review and introductions of the group.

Review and approval of April Meeting Minutes

Minutes approved: The May meeting minutes were approved and will be posted on the Child Support Task Force website.

Reminder of Task Force Purpose and Decisions to Date

Jessica went over a recap of the task force's decisions surrounding the update of the basic support table and issues relating to multiple families and non-nuclear families.

Presentation on Low-Income Adjustment Issue, Discussion with Dr. Venohr and Decisions

Jessica went over the issue that Dr. Venohr identified in the new basic support table at incomes of \$6,000 and below as well as the proposed "shaded area" solution. Jessica presented some graphs that demonstrate that when the obligor's income is in the range of \$1,500, (above the self-support reserve), and \$3,500 per month, the support obligation can increase as the obligee's income increases. Jessica also shared examples of how the parenting expense adjustment interacts with the low-income adjustment and shaded area approach.

The task force discussed the issue and the shaded area approach with Dr. Venohr, who appeared by phone, and Amy Anderson. Amy, who developed the low-income adjustment, explained that the increased support amounts occur because the support amounts when the obligor's income is at \$3,500 have been decreased to make them more manageable for low-income families and also take into account the fact that has the obligee has more income, he or she is likely not receiving or eligible for public assistance and requires more support for the children. The task force reframed the decision to be made and discussed whether there is a problem with the low-income adjustment that needs to be addressed. The majority voted in favor of keeping the low-income adjustment as is and agreed that a detailed explanation of why the majority of the task force voted this way

should be included in the final report. Amy Anderson stated that she will also draft an explanation of how the low-income adjustment was developed for the final report, to be included as an appendix.

Decision: The low-income adjustment as it is does not pose a problem for the guidelines and the issue identified by Dr. Venohr does not need to be addressed.

Presentation on Non-Nuclear Families, Discussion and Decisions

Jessica gave presentation on non-nuclear families, continuing the discussion of how Minnesota could calculate support when the child is residing with a non-parent caretaker. The three methods compared and contrasted were:

- Minnesota's current method of 100% of the guideline amount for each parent's individual PICS;
- Tennessee's method, which uses the parents' combined PICS; and
- Minnesota's current method, but decreased to 75% of the guideline amount for each parent's individual PICS

The task force discussed the support obligation amounts using the various methods and some members noted surprise that the TN method results in a higher support amount for low-income parent than the current MN method. The group ultimately voted against using the TN and the MN method decreased to 75%.

The task force also discussed the possibility of creating a new deviation factor for cases where the children are residing for nonparent caretaker, or at the least clarify in statute that the current deviation factors apply to nonparent caretakers as well as parents.

Decision: Support for nonparent caretaker cases will continue to be calculated by using 100% of the guideline amount for the individual parent's PICS and it should be clarified that deviations from the guidelines set forth at Minn. Stat. § 518A.43 also apply to cases where the child is residing with a nonparent caretaker.

The task force also revisited the decision made at the May meeting to create a deviation factor for out-of-home placement cases where family reunification is the goal. The task force clarified that the deviation is meant to address cases where:

- Foster care, where child support is assigned to the state;
- Child is not with parent;
- Reunification plan (voluntary or court-ordered); and
- Parent(s) cannot afford expenses related to plan and pay child support to reimburse the government

The task force discussed the option of adding specific language to the deviation factor for out-of-home placement cases to clarify that expenses associated with a parent's reunification plan may be considered. The task force also discussed that to better serve these families, there should be an overall shift in policy and statute that prioritizes family reunification over reimbursing the government for the cost of foster care. This recommendation should also appear in the final report.

Decision: The report will recommend that there be policy and statute changes for out-of-home placement cases where family reunification is the goal. Family reunification should be prioritized over reimbursing the government.

Review of Second Draft of Task Force Report

Per the task force's request at the last meeting, Jessica shared information about other states' child support guidelines commissions. The task force discussed the advantages of having a permanent advisory body, but also acknowledged that it may be difficult to pass legislation creating such an entity. The task force did,

however, agree to recommend that a permanent commission be created in the report and one member stated that an additional duty of the commission would be to review proposed legislation that may impact child support.

The task force shared feedback with Jessica about the second draft of the report. Jessica will send out the final draft by June 19th, 2019, so the task force has a week to review it before the final meeting.

Wrap Up and Look Ahead

Jessica will provide the final draft of the task force report prior to the June 26th meeting.

Public Comment

1. Diane
 - Report is not accurate on issue of multipliers for 3 or more children
 - Obligor's support obligation will increase as obligee's income increases when obligor makes less than \$6,000 per month, this issue should be fixed
 - Obligor will oppose this basic support table

2. Michael
 - Income Shares model presented as fair, but it is not
 - Child support is not an entitlement
 - Public policy change is needed for equal shared parenting and no child support
 - There should be a minority report

3. Gretchen
 - New table will benefit low income obligors
 - New table is better than current table, even if it's not perfect

New Action Items

1. Jessica will send out the final draft of the report to the task force by June 19th, 2019.
2. Amy Anderson will draft an explanation of how the new table was developed to be included in the report as an appendix.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Room 400S of the State Office Building, St. Paul, MN