

STATE OF CONNECTICUT – CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes for the 3/7/24 meeting, *via Microsoft Meetings*. Agenda items bolded. Scribe: Beth Rude, DSS/OCSS

5:00 pm - Call to order, provision for meeting minutes

Roll call, Present: Chair CFSM Ferguson, Graham Shaffer, Carolyn Signorelli, Campbell Barrett, Scott Storms, Cara Pavalock, Virginia Brown, Amy MacNamara, Rose Colon, Darren Pruslow, Susan Hamilton. Not present: Gary Winfield.

Michael Werner is replacing Steven Hernandez – he is in attendance but not yet received formal confirmation of appointment yet.

Those in attendance but not on the commission were requested to put their names in the chat. They are: Mark Peabody, Michael Werner, Lynn Reeves, Andrew Celinski, Paul Bourdoulous, Colleen Michelson. Maria Lopez, Amy Guido.

Graham Shaffer moved to accept the minutes for the last meeting, seconded by Darren Pruslow. Motion to accept minutes carried.

5:03 pm - Information gathering for “Gender and Racial Composition Report” to Secretary of the State pursuant to CGS Sec. 4-9b

All those who have not yet self-disclosed their race and gender for reporting to the Secretary of State please email Graham Shaffer with this or if not wishing to disclose please let him know by email as well.

5:04 pm - Recommendation of Chair, Vice Chair and attorneys Shaffer, Signorelli, and Colón concerning crediting other orders

Graham Shaffer explained that under the current guidelines' definition section, 46B-215a-1 subparagraph K of the Guidelines (see attachment) is the allowable deduction for a previously established order is given credit only to the extent that payment is being made on that order. It is the unanimous recommendation of the subgroup that the previous child support order should be fully credited regardless of payment. This credit should not apply to alimony and alimony should still be required to be paid in full to get the deduction.

Additionally, the group also recommend that out of court agreements should be credited provided there is proof of regular and continuous payments being made on this agreement. The deduction would be capped at the amount of the qualified child deduction, a qualified child is one living with you.

Chair broke the issues into two parts, firstly giving credit for the prior child support order and discussion ensued.

Graham Shaffer moved to amend Section 46B-215a1, subdivision I, paragraph 1 of the Regulation of Connecticut State Agencies in conformity with the draft language shared with the commission and made part of the record. Seconded by Carolyn Signorelli. More discussion ensued. Amy MacNamara experienced Teams connectivity issues and had questions on this topic so the commission moved on to the next topic while awaiting her reconnection with the meeting to fully participate in discussion.

The second part of this issue, as explained by the Chair, is to give private child support agreements being paid and documented credit when computing the child support order for the case at hand, up to the amount of the qualified child credit. This would be a new paragraph for this section labeled K.

Amy McNamara rejoined the meeting and discussion ensued about the language for the first section of this recommendation.

Vote on first section to give full credit for other child support orders of the court, removing language to the extent of payment (full language in attachment): unanimously approved.

5:22 pm Second part, child support payments not court ordered but voluntarily paid for child other than the child subject be given full credit for support payments up to the amount of a qualified child deduction provided verification of consistent payment and not grounds for downward modification (see attached). Discussion ensued. Chair tables this portion of the topic at 5:45 pm and the subgroup will meet again with others to continue the discussion.

5:47 pm - Recommendation of Chair, Vice Chair and attorneys Shaffer and Signorelli concerning establishment of an age at which the childcare contribution portion of a support order terminates under section 46b-215a-2c(g)(1) of the Guidelines

Carolyn Signorelli explains the proposal to make childcare payments automatically end at age 12 unless otherwise ordered by the court (see attachment). Discussion about age related childcare termination, percentage v. flat orders for childcare. Chair table the issue for now and will reach out to Support Enforcement Services to request more information about the issues they experience with regard to childcare orders.

6:17 pm - Recommendation of Chair, Vice Chair and attorneys Shaffer and Brown concerning the low-income adjustment

Darren Pruslow presented the subcommittee majority recommendation regarding the low-income portion of the guidelines. Discussed the two models Jane Venohr provided as 1) a fixed 10% of Obligor income in the shaded portion of the guidelines – incomes from \$150/wk to \$360/wk and 2) a gradual increase of \$3/wk from 10% to 21.13% over the same income, contrasting it with the existing guidelines. Presently 8% of all orders are in this area and the argument is that this area will become less relevant as minimum wage increases. For low-income obligors on a fixed low-income, perhaps disability, costs of living are going to continue to rise. Discussion on right-sizing orders in this section of the guidelines ensued.

6:23 pm - Motion to adopt option A.125.4, 10% in the shaded section of the guidelines moved by Rose Colon and seconded by Darren Pruslow. Motion carried with one no vote from Graham Shaffer.

6:24 pm - Open Discussion

No matters brought forward by members.

6:26 pm – Adjournment



Termination of
childcare - Draft language



Crediting other child support orders - Draft language