STATE OF CONNECTICUT, CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES COMMISSION MEETING

*These are draft minutes and have not yet been approved by the Commission

Minutes for the May 7, 2026, meeting held via Microsoft Teams. Agenda items are bolded.
Scribe: Gregory Bennett, DSS/OCSS

5:03pm – Call to order, provision for meeting minutes.

Roll Call

Present: CFSM Michael Ferguson, Chair, Darren Pruslow, Graham Shaffer, Carolyn Signorelli, Allison E Post, Michael Werner, Virginia Brown, Susan Hamilton, .

Not present: Campbell D. Barrett, Gary Winfield, Scott Storms, Amy MacNamara.

Minutes from the April 2, 2026 meeting moved to accept by Graham Shaffer and seconded by Darren Pruslow. The motion carried.

5:05 pm – Review and approve preamble language

Magistrate Michael Ferguson began the meeting by turning it over to Graham Shaffer to go over the preamble language. Graham began by stating that he circulated about a week ago a draft of the preamble language in both redline format showing the changes that were made from the 2015 version and a clean copy version which is easier to read. He stated that this is the time to open it up to see if anybody has any edits to that language, any comments, any suggestions, any concerns that what is stated in there did not actually reflect out process. Magistrate Michael Ferguson stated he had the opportunity to read it and stated it is pretty good and those that participated in writing some of the sections and thanked Graham for all the writing he did. Magistrate Ferguson stated that Graham took sections that no one volunteered to do and then during the process of revising it he noticed he looked at other sections as well and added comments. Graham then stated that going through the 2015 version he noticed he did not realize that there can be a derivative benefit that can be had to social security retirement benefits and we drafted our new language that is specific to SSDI derivative benefits and never contemplated whether the new rules that we established should apply with respect to the dependency derivative benefit paid if you are receiving retirement benefits. Graham stated it may be something for discussion next time around and reading back through the 2015 version they initially put in some rules about dependency benefits because of the *Jenkins* decision and wondered whether this Commission thought this all the way through. He stated that there is probably a basis that we just do SSDI dependency benefits if you read what Darren had drafted in that section was consistent with his own understanding. Graham stated that people who are on disability have a difficult time paying down arrearages. Darren Pruslow stated he has never seen a derivative benefit in the context of retirement benefits, so there is a good chance that it is a very small amount of cases and hopes social security is faster about granting those benefits. Graham went on and stated that there are likely not large lump sum retroactive awards. Carolyn Signorelli stated it is very rare that you are going to deal with lump sum in relation to retirement and it not something that we have to worry about. Magistrate Ferguson thanked everyone for working on it and entertained a motion to accept and approve the revised preamble. Graham Shaffer moved to adopt the preamble language that was circulated to the full commission and Carolyn Signorelli seconded. The motion carried.

Magistrate Ferguson thanked everyone for their efforts. Graham stated that this is not a standing commission and that we need to take a vote to dissolve the commission after looking at the statute. Graham said the statute states that the Commissioner of Social Services must take action to convene the commission when it's time for the review process every four years and that suggests that it is not a standing commission and we do need to dissolve it when our work is done. His suggestion is to take a vote to dissolve the commission on August 2, 2026 which is the date after the new revised guidelines become effective so that if any unforeseen things pop up between now and then we still have time to convene a meeting to resolve those issues. Cara Pavalock D'Amato questioned if that was statutory and if it has ever been addressed in bill language before. Graham stated that he was also concerned about members having conflicts if there were still on the commission at the time and other activities whether the commission is still us for the next four years. Cara Pavalock D'Amato stated that she will contact someone in judiciary and get back. Graham stated that we meet in June and can keep that meeting for purposes of finalizing the commission. Cara Pavalock D'Amato questioned whether we are going to be able to see everything with the preamble, the numbers and chart and everything. Graham stated that he circulated that when he got it from the Secretary of State's office and what will go to the Judicial branch will be the clean copy of the preamble and then the updated codified version of the guidelines. He stated that there is one more level of review before they can formally release it and as soon as he gets the ok he will put together the whole booklet which will go to the Judicial Branch for printing. Magistrate Ferguson stated there will be a June 4, 2026 meeting which will be brief to discuss whether we need to dissolve the commission with receiving copies of what the guidelines will look like prior to.

Magistrate Ferugson thanked Lynn Reeves and Paul Bourdoulous for their efforts, and Carolyn Signorelli's office. Graham Shaffer thanked Greg Bennett and Beth Rude for the meeting minutes and recordings. Susan Hamilton thanked Magistrate Ferguson for his leadership. Michael Werner echoed everyone's comments and thanked Graham Shaffer in particular.

5:18pm – Adjournment

Next meeting: June 4, 2026