

Child Support Task Force Minutes

Wednesday, September 28, 2016

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Room 10, State Office Building

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

Members Present: The following task force members were present on Wednesday, September 28, 2016.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jimmy Loyd, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Senator Melissa Wiklund	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Senator Mary Kiffmeyer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Representative JoAnn Ward	<input type="checkbox"/> Representative Peggy Scott	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tammie Campbell
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laura Vang	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jason Smith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeffrey Jorgenson
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melissa Rossow	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lisa Kontz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jodie Metcalf
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melinda Hugdahl	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pamela Waggoner	<input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Rep. (vacant)

Other Meeting Participants: Charlie Petersen, facilitator and Brian Rosenblatt (for Representative Peggy Scott)

DHS Staff: Brynn Rhodes, Jennifer Sommerfeld, Bruce Erickson and Tara Borton

Other Attendees: Kathleen Heaney, Anna Andow and members of the public

Welcome: Introduction from Charlie Petersen and role of MMB as facilitator. Welcome and background of creation of task force from Jeff Jorgenson.

Introductions: Name, the organization that each person represents, one expectation for the work of the task force. Highlights of member expectations:

- Focus on children
- Open dialogue/work together
- Learn about child support
- Fairness/parity between parents
- Impact for minorities/people of color

Scope of Task Force:

- Five goals of the task force as set out by legislation: (1) serving in an advisory capacity to the DHS Commissioner; (2) reviewing the effects of implementing the parenting expense adjustment enacted by the 2016 legislature; (3) at least every four years, preparing for and advising the commissioner on the development of the quadrennial review report; (4) collecting and studying information and data relating to child support awards; and (5) conducting a comprehensive review of child support guidelines, economic conditions, and other matters relevant to maintaining effective and efficient child support guidelines.

- Additionally, task force must review, address, and make recommendations on seven priority issues:
 1. the self-support reserve for custodial and noncustodial parents;
 2. simultaneous child support orders;
 3. obligors who are subject to child support orders in multiple counties;
 4. parents with multiple families;
 5. non-nuclear families, such as grandparents, relatives, and foster parents who are caretakers of children;
 6. standards to apply for modifications; and
 7. updating section 518A.35, subdivision 2, the guideline for basic support.

Ground Rules:

- Group members should speak up and share their ideas at the meetings.
- Members should listen and engage in respectful back and forth dialogue.
- Everyone in the group will be treated equally. Facilitator to use first names.
- Preference for consensus decision making. If not possible, super majority will prevail. If no super majority is possible, then group will advise on options.
- Though meetings are open to the public, conversation will be at the table between task force members only. Appointed alternates may sit at the table when members are absent.
- Meeting minutes will be provided to the task force members prior to the next meeting. Members will have an opportunity to amend the minutes for accuracy and clarity, but issues will not be rehashed during the review. After minutes have been approved by the members, they will be posted on the task force's public website.
- Recording (discussion divided in two parts to allow input from member of public who was absent when discussion began). The following issues were raised:
 1. Bruce Erickson from DHS would like to take photos for the purpose of website and e-publication.
 2. DHS would like to make audio recordings for note purposes. The recording would be destroyed when notes completed.
 3. A member of the public was present with video recording equipment, including lighting equipment. Cited First Amendment concerns when asked about the purpose of his recording.

Discussion: Many members expressed concern over the bright light which accompanied the video recording equipment. Some members were concerned about the possible chilling effect of having cameras in the room, especially for those members who are not public figures. Other

members expressed the belief that a meeting open to the public should not restrict recording because doing so could create the impression that the task force is secretive. Charlie Peterson noted that the task force is not a decision making body and is not subject to Minnesota's open meeting law, though the intention is to follow the spirit of that law. Senator Melissa Wiklund will request that Senate Counsel research whether the task force is required by statute to allow public recording of its meetings. The group will readdress the issue at the next meeting.

Election of Chair: The chair will help keep group on task, plan agendas including meeting with MAD/DHS, may serve as the public face of the task force, may be called on to address process concerns and has other authority/duties as assigned. Jimmy Loyd, one of the non-custodial parent task force members, nominated himself. Nomination was unopposed. Jimmy Loyd is chair of the task force.

Future Meetings: Meetings will initially be scheduled for the whole day, but may be adjusted as necessary. General preference is for morning meetings. More discussion will follow about when/how to receive public comment. Meeting dates:

October 26, 2016
November 30, 2016
December 21, 2016
January 25, 2017
February 22, 2017
March 29, 2017
April 26, 2017
May 31, 2017
June 28, 2017
July 26, 2017
August 30, 2017
September 27, 2017
October 25, 2017
November 29, 2017
December 20, 2017

Following discussion, the task force members determined the first issue to be considered would be the guidelines grid in state statute because it affects the other issues assigned to the group, and will provide a good knowledge base going forward. This will require input from the economist, who is likely to be Dr. Jane Venohr, Center for Policy Studies. If retained, it is unlikely Dr. Venohr will be able to participate in the October meeting. Therefore, the October meeting will focus on learning and identifying issues. A member requested that a copy of the report done by Dr. Venohr in 2007 regarding income shares be distributed to the group. A member expressed concern that using Dr. Venohr as single source of professional analysis could be limiting, and the task force should seek alternate sources. Members are requested to bring any information to the next meeting that they would like the task force to consider along with any economic research provided to the task force by the economist. A link to the report from the previous Work Group was previously sent to members and will be resent prior to the next meeting.

Next item after guidelines will be the self-support reserve because it plays an important role in the calculator and makes sense to look at together with the guidelines.

Third items which the group will look at are simultaneous child support orders, obligors who are subject to child support orders in multiple counties, and parents with multiple families as they are all interconnected (instances involving multiple child support orders).

If someone raises a new issue, there needs to be lead time before it is discussed, and there should be a second before the group takes it up.

DHS staff will send staff contact information for questions. Staff is available outside of meetings to review the issues with task force members. Other interested parties may keep up with the task force on the website. DHS will look into whether a listserv or email service is appropriate.

History of Child Support: Presentation by Jennifer Sommerfeld, DHS.

Meeting adjourned 12:00 p.m.