

Georgia Child Support Commission
TRAINING SUBCOMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes

August 25, 2006

The meeting was called to order at @12pm by Training Subcommittee Chair, Judge R. Michael Key. Subcommittee members in attendance were as follows: Annetta Panatera; Judge Debra Bernes; and Joy Hawkins. Child Support Commission Chair Earl Ehrhart was also in attendance. Staff, special invited guests and members of the public including representatives of the Family Law Section of the Georgia State Bar were also in attendance.

I. Preliminary: Computer Lab—Calculating Child Support with the Electronic Worksheet

Prior to the start of the Training Subcommittee Meeting, a demonstration of the Electronic Worksheet (the question-driven, litigant version) was provided to members of the Child Support Commission and the public. The Commission Members were each provided with a laptop to follow along with the demonstration. Introductions were provided by Rep. Earl Ehrhart, Chairman of the Commission, and Cindy Moss, Director of Office of Child Support Services. The demonstration was led by Elaine Johnson, Office of Child Support Services, and Jill Radwin, Staff Attorney, Child Support Commission. The participants were provided with a fact situation, and instructed on how to input the information into the Electronic Worksheet. When the calculation was almost complete, the same fact situation was demonstrated using the Excel downloadable version.

II. Welcome and Introductions Regarding the Training Subcommittee Meeting

Judge Key welcomed everyone to the Training Subcommittee Meeting. Judge Key called on Jill Radwin to give a status report on the child support guidelines' training. Jill said we are now coming down to the last few months prior to the effective date, so this is when the intensive training will take place. Jill said when looking at the duties of the Commission in regard to training, the Commission is not held responsible for conducting all of the training but to "collaborate with the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education, the Institute of Continuing Legal Education, and other agencies for the purpose of training persons who will be utilizing the child support obligation table and child support guidelines..." (§19-6-53(8) and (9))

III. Update of Training Plans

A. TRAINING TASK FORCE

Jill Radwin reported that in light of the Commission's role of collaborating and coordinating with other organizations and agencies, a training task force was initiated this past summer. A meeting was held in June in which the mission of the task force was discussed, and common training dates were identified. [See attached list of dates.] Those invited to participate are persons and organizations which have been identified as organizing training, such as Family Law Section members, ICLE and ICJE staff. It was decided that a follow up meeting will be held after the Council of Superior Court Judges' Summer Seminar. Thus, another meeting will

be held shortly to coordinate trainings and materials in the Fall. Toward the end of the meeting, September 22nd was identified as a possible training task force date.

B. TRAINING FOR JUDGES

Jill said that she has been setting up training dates with the District Court Administrators to train the judges. As we head toward the effective date, the judges are very interested in working with the Electronic Worksheets and develop familiarity on how to calculate child support under the new guidelines. To that end, Jill will provide computer labs, giving the judges' hands on experience. The labs will be an expanded version of what the judges received at their Summer Seminar in St. Simons. Most of the Judicial Administrative Districts have already reserved dates for these seminars.

C. TRAINING FOR ATTORNEYS

Both the State Bar and local bars have already begun setting up workshops and seminars for the Fall. The Cobb Bar Association has scheduled a day long seminar at the end of September, and the Family Law Section of the State Bar has reserved October 13 for a statewide training. Jill also announced that on October 14, a Superior Court Judge in the Griffin Circuit has organized and sponsored a computer lab for his local attorneys. On November 1 in Augusta, a basic repeat of the October 13 attorney training will be held. Jill invited other groups to let her know about their training and she will post it on the Child Support Commission website. Jill also introduced Jennifer Sarginson, who is assisting the Commission with training and training materials, including the development of the website.

IV. Training Materials

The other role of the Commission in regard to training is to “develop training manuals and information to educate judges, attorneys, and litigants on the use of the child support obligation table and child support guidelines.” Jill Radwin provided a summary of some of the training materials being produced. She said one specific training device is the Child Support Commission website. The website will include forms, access to the electronic worksheet versions, frequently asked questions, the statute, power points on step by step of how to calculate and how to use the worksheet/schedules, and the implementation guide for the frequent user. Other training materials will be the distribution of the implementation guide, bench cards and a card for the litigant providing step by step guidance on processing child support. Jill also explained packages of materials she will provide to the Superior Court Clerks and the Georgia Library Association.

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned.

