

**GEORGIA CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES COMMISSION,
STATUTE REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE**

Summary of Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Subcommittee Chair, Judge Louisa Abbot, with the Subcommittee Members reintroducing themselves. The Subcommittee Members in attendance were as follows: Judge Louisa Abbot; Judge Debra Bernes; Sadie Fields; Annetta Panatera; Judge R. Michael Key; Judge Tom Campbell; Joy Hawkins and Charles “Chuck” Clay. Staff, special invited guests and members of the public in attendance also introduced themselves.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Judge Abbot again reiterated the purpose of this Subcommittee: assisting in making the statute more understandable, workable and user friendly for the thousands who will be affected by this new statute. While the Subcommittee’s role is not to change the policy in the statute, the Subcommittee will look to make recommendations to the full Commission regarding clarification and interpretation of the statute. Further, Judge Abbot asked if the Subcommittee members had an opportunity to review the minutes for approval. The Subcommittee members unanimously approved the minutes as presented.

Judge Abbot also introduced the morning speakers, Brian Skala and Perry Fletcher. She announced that as the new child support model will have a substantial impact on Georgia Child Support Enforcement, it will be helpful to hear from some of the Georgia Child Support Enforcement attorneys as to their suggestions.

II. Child Support Enforcement Review of House Bill 221

Brian Skala, Assistant District Attorney, Dougherty County, has prosecuted Child Support Enforcement cases since 1992. After reviewing the new statute and canvassing the thoughts of other Assistant District Attorneys and a Special Assistant Attorney General, Brian presented a compilation of concerns or requests for clarifications. Brian strictly focused on the statutory revisions to §19-6-15, beginning with the new definition section. Brian also provided some general comments and suggestions regarding House Bill 221. Further, he presented a list of ten areas in which Child Support Enforcement could be impacted.

Perry Fletcher, Assistant District Attorney, Clayton County at the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (“UIFSA”) Office, spoke on House Bill 221’s impact on interstate cases. Since in these cases the court usually has only one person before it who is a resident of Georgia, both the court and Office of Child Support Enforcement will have a difficult time in obtaining information about the earnings, employment and visitation

concerning the parent in the other state. In addition, the costs of raising a child in Georgia may be different than that of another state. With these concerns in mind, Perry Fletcher provided some technical suggestions for House Bill 221 in light of UIFSA.

III. Overview of Statute

Following the presentation by the Assistant District Attorneys, the Subcommittee went through a section by section analysis, reviewing for any clarification or interpretation issues. The Subcommittee's recommendations for changes in regard to clarification or statutes that may be in conflict with those contained in House Bill 221 will be forwarded to the Child Support Guidelines Commission for their review and possible inclusion in the final report due to the General Assembly in January 2006. At the end of this meeting, the Subcommittee only had the opportunity to review through Section 5(a)(9), which is a part of the new definition section of §19-6-15.

IV. Agenda Items for Next Meeting/Future Meeting Dates

Judge Abbot recommended that the next meeting will be held in mid-August. The Guidelines Commission staff will send out several alternative dates for the next meeting. At the next meeting, which will probably be a full day, the Subcommittee will continue to go through section by section of the statutory provisions of House Bill 221.

The meeting was adjourned.