

Georgia Child Support Commission
Commission Meeting
Judge R. Michael Key, Chair
Friday, November 22, 2024
10:00 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

The Georgia Child Support Commission (“Commission”) held a hybrid meeting at the Nathan Deal Judicial Center in Atlanta, Georgia and via Zoom Webinar. Seven (7) Commission members attended. The Commission members in attendance were:

Judge R. Michael Key, Chair
Judge Emory Palmer
Dr. Roger Tutterow

Kathleen B. Connell, Esq.
Regina Quick, Esq.

Judge Benjamin Land
Christina Scott, J.D.

Program Manager, Kurt Bryan, Staff Attorney, Noelle Lagueux-Alvarez, and Program Coordinator, Latoinna Lawrence, served as staff for this meeting. Several members of the public also attended this open meeting via Zoom. Judge Key warmly welcomed all who joined the meeting and Latoinna Lawrence discussed the Zoom meeting rules.

Seven (7) out of fifteen (15) Commission members attended the meeting. As a quorum was not met, Judge Key authorized an e-vote for the review and approval of the minutes from the previous Commission Meeting, which took place on August 23, 2024. Judge Key then moved to the business of the commission, starting with the Economic Subcommittee.

Dr. Roger Tutterow provided an update for the Economic Subcommittee. The Subcommittee last met on August 11, 2023. This subcommittee will start preparing for the 2026 economic study in early 2025.

Katie Connell reported on the Statue Review Subcommittee. The Subcommittee last met with quorum on October 3, 2023. Two subsequent meetings had been scheduled for September 10, 2024, and October 30, 2024, however, the Subcommittee did not meet quorum on those dates and thus was precluded from conducting business. The next meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2024, and the purpose of this meeting will be to discuss any clean-up of O.C.G.A. 19-6-15 following the passage of Senate Bill 454. Ms. Connell acknowledged the informational video on the parenting time formula tool that she and Judge Connie Williford recorded, which has been uploaded to the Commission website. This video provides an example of the tool’s usage. Commission staff has continued to conduct an educational campaign regarding the changes brought forth by the passage of Senate Bill 454, most recently presenting at the ADR Institute which took place on November 21, 2024. Ms. Connell discussed a possible amendment to O.C.G.A. 19-6-15, to explicitly state that the parenting time adjustment and the low-income adjustment that will become effective on January 1,

2026, will constitute a substantial change in circumstance to authorize a modification of an existing order. Judge Key asked that the subcommittee draft language pertaining to Ms. Connell's suggestion and present said language to the full Commission. This language may potentially be provided to the Georgia General Assembly for amending O.C.G.A. 19-6-15 during the 2025 legislative session.

Regina Quick provided an update for the Technology and Calculator Subcommittee. The Subcommittee last met on October 18, 2024. The subcommittee recommended adding the parenting time formula tool to the current calculator homepage, as it is posted on the Commission homepage, and Commission staff has completed this task. This subcommittee is also discussing a suggestion to have uninsured healthcare expenses on the Basic Information Worksheet Tab of the calculator auto-populate to match line three of the worksheet (the pro rata shares of each parent). The Subcommittee is working to develop language that would appear to notify the calculator user that the auto-populated values may be edited by the user. Ms. Quick also reported that work on the Calculator Modernization Project continues. The projected deployment time for the modernized calculator is on track for January 2025. The modernization will look as similar as possible to the current calculator's look, feel, and functionality. Ms. Quick asked that if anyone is interested in testing the new calculator, to let the Commission staff know and they will be added to the testing group. Kurt Bryan gave a quick PowerPoint presentation of a few slides to preview the new calculator.

Ms. Lagueux-Alvarez provided background on the issue of child support in Juvenile court dependency cases, and how the issue was raised to the Commission. Ms. Lagueux-Alvarez also spoke about the joint letter received from the Children's Bureau and the federal Office of Child Support Services, discouraging across-the-board policies that automatically require a referral of dependency cases from DHS/DFCS to DHS/DCSS. Dianne Kelly, Regional Program Manager, Children's Bureau Region 4 in Atlanta, spoke to a new policy on this issue recently updated by DFCS, noting that the new policy supports the reduction of referrals to child support for children in the foster care system. Regina Quick advised she would send this policy out to the Commission members, noting that DCSS has also updated their corresponding policy. Judge Neal Brunt is the President of the Council of Juvenile Court Judges (CJCJ) and spoke on the topic as well, stating he believes ordering child support in dependency cases can be detrimental in the reunification of families, but that there should be a system to collect child support from parents who are not working their reunification plan or parents of older teenagers who have voluntarily surrendered their children to DFCS. Judge Key asked for Judge Brunt to share the DFCS and DCSS policies to the Dependency Committee of CJCJ to obtain that Committee's comments and opinions.

Judge Key discussed revisiting the subcommittee assignments, stressing the important work of the subcommittees, and the issues these subcommittees face when trying to reach quorum to conduct business. Judge Key noted if any subcommittee members are unable to commit due to life changes or time constraints, to please let the Commission staff know. Kurt Bryan read aloud the list of subcommittees and the current members who are serving on the subcommittees. Mr. Bryan advised he will send out this list to all subcommittee members. Dr. Tutterow suggested shrinking the size of subcommittees to make it easier to achieve quorum. Judge Key also suggested amending the by-laws of the Commission to change the number of members needed to achieve quorum. Regina

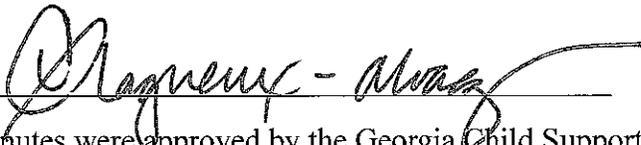
Quick suggested the issue of quorum may be addressed by resetting the composition of the subcommittees. Judge Key suggested zero-based committee assignments and requested staff create an email for all committee members, requesting that all subcommittee members reaffirm their desire to remain on their corresponding subcommittee. Judge Key also noted the appointment of Judge Connie Williford as Vice-Chair of the Commission.

There were no verbal public comments, however, one attendee placed a written comment in the Zoom chat, and Ms. Lagueux-Alvarez read it out loud to the Commission.

The next Commission Meeting is set to be held on March 21, 2025, as a hybrid meeting, in person at the Nathan Deal Judicial Center and via Zoom Webinar.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Reviewed by: Noelle Lagueux-Alvarez, Staff Attorney

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lagueux-Alvarez", is written over a horizontal line.

Minutes were approved by the Georgia Child Support
Commission during a scheduled meeting on 03/21/2025