

**Statute Review Committee Meeting Minutes
Georgia Commission on Child Support
May 31, 2016**

Attendees:

Ms. Wendy Williamson, chair (via telephone)
Mr. Ryan Bradley (via telephone)
Ms. Deborah Johnson (via telephone)
Mr. Philip Ladin (via telephone)
Ms. Patricia Buonodono
Ms. Elaine Johnson
Mr. Bruce Shaw

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Review/Approval of Minutes of Last Meetings – 01/12/16

III. Old Business

a. Update on web-based calculator

Mr. Philip Ladin gave an overview of the web-based calculator stating that all requests made to this point have been adapted and a final security audit was performed requiring only two the more changes on his end before testing which is scheduled to start next week. Several items from the audit are also in the process of being mediated on the Administrative Office of the Courts side.

b. Schedule for web-based calculator

IV. New Business

a. Discussion of “submit to judge” option on web-based calculator

Ms. Pat Buonodono relayed to the Committee an issue that was brought up at the Family Law Institute by Representative Regina Quick. Rep. Quick questioned whether or not the “submit to judge” function of the new calculator could constitute ex parte communications. Rule 3.5, Impartiality and Decorum of the Tribunal, which clearly says ex parte communications are prohibited except where permitted by law. Ms. Buonodono stated that the statute could be changed and sought the Committee’s advice.

Ms. Deborah Johnson suggested that the solution is for the worksheet to be shared to the other side when it is submitted to judge. Ms. Buonodono had concerns about whether or not this function was setting judges up to accidentally having ex parte communications with pro se litigants in particular. Ms. Williamson suggested a pop up box instructing the user of their responsibility to send a copy to the opposing party. Mr. Ladin pointed out that the “submit to judge” feature doesn’t directly send a worksheet to a judge rather it only makes it available to be found and accessed by any judge. If a judge

accesses worksheets while sitting at a hearing it wouldn't constitute ex parte communications. After discussion about the need for service and the real world practice of pro se litigants it was determined that a certificate of service should be made available for users to print or save upon submitting a worksheet to a judge.

Two email votes were sent out to the committee, Ms. Laurie Dyke abstained, all other committee members voted in favor of both motions. The motions were as follows:

1. Motion to approve the minutes of our 1/12/16 meeting;
2. Motion to approve the following feature in the online child support calculator: when the user clicks on "make available to judge," there will be instructions on the obligation of the user to serve the child support worksheet on the opposing party, and a certificate of service template in .pdf form will be provided to print out to assist the user. The certificate of service form will contain instructions that this form and the child support worksheet are to be filed with the court.

V. Close of meeting schedule of the next meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled at a later time.