

**Georgia Commission on Child Support
Parenting Time Deviation Study Committee
Kathleen Connell, Esq., Chair**

**Wednesday, October 6, 2021
1:30 p.m.**

Meeting Summary

The Parenting Time Deviation Study Committee (“Study Committee”) of the Georgia Commission on Child Support (“Commission”) held this meeting via videoconferencing using Zoom. Kathleen “Katie” Connell, Chair of the Study Committee, called the meeting to order and welcomed the 13 Study Committee members, including herself, who attended, as well as one member of the public who attended this open meeting. Study Committee members in attendance were:

Katie Connell	Sarah Mauldin
William Alexander	Mindy Pillow
Pat Buonodono	Mark Rogers
Byron Cuthbert	Johanna Kiehl
Charles Spinardi	Jamie Rush
Erica Thornton	Carol Walker
Adam Gleklen	

Executive Program Manager, Elaine Johnson, Staff Attorney, Noelle Lagueux-Alvarez, and Program Coordinator, Latoinna Lawrence, served as staff for the meeting.

Chair Katie Connell called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Katie Connell asked if there were any corrections needed to the minutes from the last meeting. Johanna Kiehl asked for a small change to the section of the minutes regarding her report at that meeting. Sarah Mauldin moved to approve the Minutes of the September 15, 2021, Parenting Time Deviation Study Committee Meeting as edited by Johanna Kiehl, and Pat Buonodono seconded that motion. A voice vote was held, and that motion was unanimously approved with no abstentions.

Study Committee members gave reports on what they have learned from communicating with experienced family law practitioners in other states. Adam Gleklen spoke with a very seasoned Florida practitioner from the West Palm Beach area. Florida’s motto when embracing a parenting time deviation was “child support flows to where the child goes.” The thorniest issue considered by the Florida legislature when considering adopting a parenting time adjustment was a minimum threshold for when to apply a parenting time adjustment and decided on 20% of overnights. Therefore, a vast majority of Florida child support cases qualify for a parenting adjustment. Mr. Gleklen noted that one ongoing issue in Florida is how to handle situations in which a parent works overnight (nurses, police officers, etc.) so that they do not have their child for many “overnights,” but do have their child for a significant amount of time during the day.

Carol Walker gave an update on Tennessee's parenting time adjustment that is based on a "day" which is defined as a majority of a 24-hour period, but there is flexibility to aggregate partial days to count as a "day." Ms. Walker also discussed the interplay of a self-support reserve and an adjustment for parenting time. Tennessee's threshold for applying a parenting time adjustment is about 25% of the time. Ms. Walker also noted that 68 days or less of parenting time allows for an upward adjustment.

Katie Connell reported on her conversation with a Minnesota practitioner who is a lawyer and mediator. Ms. Connell's biggest take-away from that conversation is to avoid a "cliff effect." Ms. Connell also noted that in Minnesota, a parenting time adjustment is only based on court-ordered parenting time and that parenting time and child support are set by two different courts. The Minnesota lawyer does see posturing both to avoid paying higher child support and to avoid receiving lower child support, although in her experience, the former is more frequent. The Minnesota practitioner is pleased with her state's current parenting time adjustment.

Katie Connell is working on getting in touch with a Nevada practitioner to get feedback from that state.

Ryan Bradley was slated to give a presentation at this meeting but was unable to attend.

Katie Connell asked if Staff could prepare one synthesized document containing the reports from all the conversations had with practitioners in the six sister states that are being reviewed intensively. Study Committee member, Sarah Mauldin, who is also a librarian, volunteered to take on that task and will create a single, page-numbered document.

Katie Connell sees the Study Committee's next meeting as a time to drill down and discuss exactly what will be best for Georgia regarding parenting time as it relates to child support. The Study Committee's next meeting will be on October 27, 2021, at 1:30 p.m. The meeting after that will be held on Monday, November 15, 2021, at noon.