

**Georgia Commission on Child Support
Commission Meeting
Judge R. Michael Key, Chair**

**Friday, April 29, 2022
1:30 p.m.**

Meeting Summary

The following Georgia Child Support Commission (“Commission”) members were present at the Child Support Commission meeting held virtually via Zoom on Friday, April 29, 2022:

Judge R. Michael Key, Chair
Kathleen B. Connell, Esq.
Justice Shawn Ellen LaGrua
Dr. Roger Tutterow

Charles C. “Chuck” Clay, Esq.
Rep. Houston Gaines
Rep. Bonnie Rich
Judge Connie L. Williford

Judge Lisa G. Colbert
Judge Lisa Jones
Christina Scott, J.D.

Executive Program Manager Elaine Johnson, Staff Attorney Noelle Lagueux-Alvarez, and Program Coordinator Latoinna Lawrence served as staff and 19 guests attended this open meeting.

Welcome & Housekeeping

Judge R. Michael Key, Chair of the Commission, called the meeting to order and welcomed all. Commission staff member, Latoinna Lawrence, gave instructions for attendees to indicate when they wish to speak, including giving public comment, during this virtual meeting.

Judge Key posthumously thanked Mark Rogers—an economist who served on many Child Support Commission subcommittees—for his decades of dedicated service, including most recently on the Parenting Time Deviation Study Committee and the Economic Subcommittee. Dr. Tutterow, Chair of the Commission’s Economic Subcommittee, also acknowledged Mark Rogers’ many contributions.

Review and Approval of Minutes from Commission Meeting on December 10, 2021

Ms. Lagueux-Alvarez confirmed that a quorum of nine Commission members was present and the minutes of the Commission’s December 10, 2021, meeting were approved. Two Commission members—Rep. Gaines and Mr. Chuck Clay—joined the meeting after the approval of the minutes, ultimately bringing the number of Commission members in attendance to eleven.

Update from Economic Subcommittee

Chair Dr. Roger Tutterow gave an update on the 2022 economic study, noting that good progress had been made. To ensure a comprehensive view of Georgia, Dr. Tutterow developed an algorithm and identified 15 counties to use for the case sampling and, to ensure a high enough sample size, child support orders from those counties were pulled for the months of September and October 2021. To gather those orders, staff communicated extensively with the Clerks of Superior Court in those counties and traveled to two counties to ensure proper collection of the needed court orders, child

support worksheets, and other related documents. Staff contacted DCSS directly and worked with Ryan Bradley to secure the DCSS orders/worksheets and payment summaries. Staff started receiving orders/worksheets from clerks and DCSS at the end of January 2022 and began data entry in a spreadsheet. That spreadsheet contains data from approximately 400 court orders—more than in any prior economic study—for the case sampling. The AOC executed the contract with Dr. Jane Venohr, Center for Policy Research, Inc. (CPR), to conduct the 2022 Economic Study at a cost of \$60,000, which includes \$15,000 for an updated study by Dr. Betson as part of the Betson/Engel study. A draft report from Dr. Venohr is expected by July 1, 2022. The Economic Subcommittee will meet in early July and review that draft report. The final report from Dr. Venohr will be furnished by July 31, 2022, and Dr. Venohr plans to present her report to the Commission via Zoom on Friday, August 19, 2022. Dr. Tutterow commended the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts (“AOC”) and the Commission’s staff for its excellent work thus far.

Public Comment Opportunity

Judge Key reminded all guests who wished to make public comments at the end of this meeting to type their name in the Zoom chat feature.

Update from Technology & Calculator Subcommittee

Chair Regina Quick was unable to attend this meeting and asked Elaine Johnson to give this report. Developers in the AOC’s IT Department worked with Commission staff to conduct two successful deployments of the Child Support Calculator in early January 2022. The first deployment was to update security for the calculator and the second was to update the Schedule B self-employment taxes paid formula as required in OCGA 19-6-53(a)(7). Staff is currently working with those developers on a few functionality upgrades for the calculator, and an enhancement to the self-employment calculator, but there is no confirmed date yet for the next deployment.

Report from the Parenting Time Deviation Study Committee

Chair Kathleen Connell thanked the members of the Parenting Time Deviation (“PTD”) Study Committee and staff for their many efforts over the last few years. Chair Connell honored the contributions of Mark Rogers, a PTD Study Committee member, who sadly passed very recently, especially noting his patience and expertise. Chair Connell noted that a report from the PTD Study Committee had been circulated to all Commission members prior to the meeting and that it suggests changes to the way parenting time is handled in the calculation of child support, especially that the process for doing so be more formulaic. Chair Connell asked that the issue of parenting time be handed off to the Commission’s Statute Review Subcommittee for further consideration.

Judge Key directed staff to have the PTD Study Committee Report posted to the Commission’s website. Before review and discussion by the Child Support Commission, there was no objection to sending the PTD Study Committee Report to the Statute Review Subcommittee for review and to consider whether any PTD Study Committee recommendations should be acted upon.

Subcommittee Appointments

A discussion was had regarding appointments to subcommittees.

Public Comments

Judge Key opened the floor for public comment and three guests spoke. Among several topics, Mr. Raja Antone expressed his pleasure at seeing “traction” on the issue of parenting time and noted that fathers should also benefit tax wise from paying child support. Among other things, Mr. Gil Freeman was troubled by the PTD Study Committee, questioned the make-up of that Study Committee especially for its lack of a mental health professionals and racial diversity among the membership, and suggests that if a noncustodial parent gets a second job, such second job should not be counted toward child support in the same way as his or her first job. Tracy Palma thanked the Commission for time to speak and the PTD Study Committee for its work, although she was disappointed by what she perceived as that Study Committee making fun of noncustodial parents. Ms. Palma is also very concerned about the ramifications of imputing incoming when calculating child support as she finds such a practice makes noncustodial parents “immediately behind” on their child support.

Next Meeting

The next Child Support Commission meeting will be on Friday, August 19, 2022, at 9:30 a.m. at which time it is expected that Dr. Jane Venohr will present her economic study. Judge Key would like for that meeting to be in person or hybrid. Justice LaGrua offered the Nathan Deal Judicial Center as a possible location for this meeting, if those logistics can be worked out.