

**Georgia Child Support Commission
Commission Meeting
Judge R. Michael Key, Chair
Tuesday, May 2, 2023
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

Meeting Summary

The Georgia Child Support Commission held a hybrid meeting, taking place at the Nathan Deal Judicial Center in Atlanta and via Zoom Webinar. Nine (9) Commission members attended. The Commission members in attendance were:

Judge R. Michael Key, Chair
Rep. Houston Gaines
Christina Scott, J.D.

Kathleen B. Connell, Esq.
Justice Shawn LaGrua
Dr. Roger Tutterow

Rep. Chuck Efstrotation
Regina Quick, Esq.
Judge Connie L. Williford

Chair Key acknowledged all of the Commission members, those on Zoom and those in person. Executive Program Manager, Elaine Johnson, 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 by Zoom. Representative Chuck Efstrotation was sworn in as a new Commission member by Chair Key. Justice Shawn LaGrua stated that, regrettably, she will be stepping down from this Commission because of her many other appointments to leadership roles in the judicial branch and professional commitments, but she will always stand ready to help the Commission in any way she can. Chair Key, other Commission members, and staff thanked her for her many years of service to the Commission. Latoinna Lawrence reviewed the Zoom rules for all panelists and attendees.

Minutes from the November 4th, 2022, meeting were approved.

Noelle Lagueux-Alvarez provided the Economic Subcommittee update noting that Georgia's 2022 Economic Final Report was completed in late December and is posted on the Commission website. In January of 2023, that Final Report was sent to the Governor, all members of the Georgia General Assembly, the Division of Child Support Services, the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, the Council of Superior Court judges, the Council of Juvenile Court judges, and the Council of Magistrate judges.

Elaine Johnson gave a PowerPoint presentation on data staff gleaned from the case sampling that was part of the 2022 Economic Study. Ms. Johnson noted common errors and trends found in the orders and worksheets from the 472 cases from across the state that were included in that sampling. Ms. Johnson noted that many errors are a training issue and Justice Shawn LaGrua offered to help staff get on the agenda for an annual Superior Court staff attorney training.

Katie Connell gave an update from the Statute Review Subcommittee and reported that a public survey about the statutory terms custodial and noncustodial parent went live on the Commission website on March 12, 2023. Latoinna Lawrence shared a graph of the results from

that survey through April 15, 2023, with the majority voting to keep the terms the same, i.e., custodial, and noncustodial parent. That survey will remain open for several more months.

Regina Quick gave an update on a new feature of the calculator—deleting shared and expired worksheets—which is functioning well. Ms. Quick also noted that the Technology and Calculator Subcommittee continues to look into ways to simplify and improve the Child Support Calculator, especially as to the low-income deviation.

Noelle Lagueux-Alvarez reported that the Georgia Child Support Commission now has a YouTube channel and asked the Commission how it prefers that recording of meetings be posted, by either live streaming or by uploading recordings after adjournment. Judge Key left the decision up to the staff, the result was to upload recorded videos after each meeting.

The Child Support Commission had hoped for a legislative study committee on parenting time and Commission member, Sen. Brian Strickland, filed SR-159 during the 2023 legislative session to create such a study committee in the Georgia Senate. Judge Connie Williford gave a report on behalf of Sen. Strickland who was unable to attend this meeting, noting that SR-159 did not pass. However, Senator Strickland chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee and is willing to convene meetings on this topic as needed.

Chair Key invited Commission member Katie Connell to speak on how legitimation intersects with the work of the Commission. She noted that it comes up at Statute Review Subcommittee meetings when discussing parenting time and that Georgia is in the extreme minority of states on how we handle legitimation.

Noelle Lagueux-Alvarez spoke on HB-499, filed during the 2023 legislative session, which sought to amend the child support guidelines to extend the duration of support for what that bill termed a “disabled child”. While that bill did not pass into law, Staff wants to ensure that this bill stays on the Commission’s radar, as it may come up again during the next legislative session. Staff will be inviting speakers to the Commission’s August meeting to address ways that bill could negatively impact a disabled child’s federal benefits such as social security and Medicaid.

Elaine Johnson monitors the executive orders appointing members to the Commission. Seven members’ terms will end on July 1, 2023. The Governor’s office is actively working on reappointments for those seven members and a replacement for Justice LaGrua.

A member of the public and frequent attendee at all Commission meetings, Mr. Raja Antone, who runs a non-profit called the LeadOffFoudation, gave a presentation advocating for “parental equality” and revising the negative perception of noncustodial parents. There were no other public comments.

The next Commission meeting will be a hybrid meeting that will take place on August 11, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at the Nathan Deal Judicial Center in Atlanta and via Zoom.

This meeting adjourned at 11:59 a.m.