

**Georgia Commission on Child Support
Technology & Calculator Subcommittee
Regina Quick, Esq., Chair
Wednesday, August 3, 2022
10:00 a.m.**

Meeting Minutes

The Technology & Calculator Subcommittee (“Subcommittee”) of the Georgia Commission on Child Support (“Commission”) held this hybrid meeting in person at the State Bar building in Atlanta and via Zoom webinar. Four (4) Subcommittee members attended in total, one (1) in person and three (3) via Zoom. Subcommittee members in attendance were:

Regina Quick, Chair
Deborah Johnson

Ryan Bradley
Rep. Bonnie Rich

Executive Program Manager, Elaine Johnson, Staff Attorney, Noelle Lagueux-Alvarez, and Program Coordinator, Latoinna Lawrence, served as staff for the meeting. Senior Assistant Attorney General, Jason Naunas, Legislative Counsel, Holly Carter, two (2) potential new Subcommittee members, Jung Wook Lee, and Anna Bolden, four (4) staff members from the Administrative Office of the Courts, Carole Collier, Kristy King, Christina Liu, and Angela He, and eight (8) members of the public also attended virtually.

Chair Regina Quick opened the meeting and welcomed all. Staff member, Latoinna Lawrence, reviewed procedures for this hybrid meeting. At the beginning of the meeting, Staff Attorney, Noelle Lagueux-Alvarez, noted that a quorum had not yet been reached, but a few minutes later confirmed that a quorum of four (4) of the six (6) Subcommittee members had been achieved. Chair Regina Quick noted that the last time this Subcommittee met was on August 23, 2017, and that there were no meeting minutes to review or approve at this meeting.

Chair Regina Quick noted that this Subcommittee had consisted of eight (8) members, but that two (2) of the members recently requested they be removed from the Subcommittee. Ms. Quick recommended three new members—who all have expertise in family law and extensive experience using the child support calculator—be added to this Subcommittee. The names were submitted to Chair of the Commission Judge Key for his approval. The recommended individuals are Yung Lee, Judicial Officer for Fulton Family Division, Anna Bolden, Municipal Court Judge, private practitioner, and Jacquelyn Fortier, a former Associate Magistrate Court Judge, part time solicitor, and private practitioner. Staff will report to Ms. Quick if Judge Key approves the three new members.

Ms. Quick asked Executive Program Manager, Elaine Johnson, to present on a functional issue in the calculator that does not permit the archiving or deleting of certain shared worksheets by the user of the account in which those worksheets remain indefinitely. Ms. Johnson explained that the current functionality of the calculator does not allow a person who received a shared worksheet that has since expired to archive and delete that worksheet from their calculator folders, and that changing this process is a decision this Subcommittee should consider. She explained

that the cost would be negligible to effectuate the change. The Subcommittee held a discussion on this topic. Rep. Bonnie Rich moved to recommend to the Commission that the calculator be changed to allow individual users to archive and/or delete any shared worksheets in their own account, including those worksheets that have expired. Mr. Ryan Bradley seconded that motion and it passed unanimously. This recommendation will be made to the Commission for final approval.

Executive Program Manager, Elaine Johnson, gave a report to bring members of the Subcommittee up to date on the status of the calculator. Ms. Johnson noted that the calculator was moved in 2019 to AWS hosting to provide enhanced security and that JC/AOC IT developers work with staff to support the calculator. She also acknowledged that the developers who support the calculator were able to join us for this meeting and she acknowledged their presence. Ms. Johnson also noted that the last deployments of the calculator were made in January 2022, to upgrade security features, and to update the self-employment taxes paid formulas used on Schedule B, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 19-6-53(a)(7). Ms. Johnson closed by adding that some maintenance updates to the calculator are planned and should be deployed by the end of August 2022.

Chair Quick continued with the next item on the agenda. She shared that during the July 15, 2022, Statute Review Subcommittee meeting there had been discussion on the current functionality of adding preexisting orders on Schedule B of the calculator and whether there may be a way to make that process clearer. She explained that this item would not be addressed as a change in the statute, but that this Subcommittee should review the matter in more detail. Chair Quick asked staff to demonstrate how one adds a preexisting order on Schedule B. Staff gave a demonstration using the child support calculator to show how the adjustment for a preexisting child support order currently functions, including decisions that must be made pursuant to the definition of a preexisting order at O.C.G.A. § 19-6-15(a)(18). Subcommittee member, Deborah Johnson, suggested there is room for improvement in this area, especially noting that many times people do not read instructions in the calculator and suggested that fields be better labeled and that additional fields be added to improve ease-of-use. Other members of the Subcommittee also added their ideas to the discussion around how this part of the calculator could be improved. Chair Quick noted that improvements to this section of Schedule B would support accountability, and the ability of a judge to do something if someone is intentionally gaming the system with a preexisting order. Chair Quick tasked staff with communicating with the developers and discuss what would be necessary to do any of these things that the Subcommittee has brought up for consideration and stated that we'll discuss this further at our next meeting.

Chair Quick observed that the child support worksheets are not sworn statements and someone preparing a worksheet could intentionally misrepresent the amount that they're paying on a preexisting order. She would like to see some discussion on how the worksheet could be electronically signed.

Staff continued and noted that the next demonstration stems from the work of the 2018 Low-Income Deviation Study Committee, and its decision to create a Work Group to consider how to improve the functionality and ease-of-use of the Low-Income Deviation on Schedule E of the child support worksheet. Staff gave a demonstration using the child support calculator to show how the low-income deviation currently functions in the calculator. Elaine Johnson noted that

many people will use the “nonspecific deviation” to adjust the child support amount rather than use the low-income deviation. The low-income deviation functions to prevent the calculation from dropping below the minimum amount of child support when this deviation is used as required in the statute. It was noted that other deviations may still be applied that may increase or decrease the amount of child support in the case and by statute judges have discretion with all deviations. Staff demonstrated how the low-income deviation on Schedule E is formulated by the calculator based on the statute. Staff noted that people see the deviation amount populated in the dialog box as a mystery amount, but they explained that this amount is simply the difference in the presumptive child support amount and the minimum order amount for the number of children in the current case. Chair Regina Quick noted the several suggested changes to the low-income deviation proposed by the Low-Income Deviation Workgroup that had been provided to the Subcommittee for their review. She asked Subcommittee members to reach out to her about which of those suggestions they’d like to review to make assignments for them to complete for a more in-depth discussion at the next meeting.

Chair Regina Quick explained that public comments are only taken at Commission meetings, but that if a member of the public wished to add to this conversation, they could use Zoom’s Q & A feature. Ms. Quick also asked Subcommittee members for days on which they could not meet in the coming months, and she will set two meeting dates for later this year before the legislative session begins. Chair Quick noted that August 19, 2022, is the next full Commission meeting at the Nathan Deal Judicial Center, and August 12, 2022, is the next meeting of the Statute Review Committee and encouraged members to attend. Chair Quick concluded the meeting by stating that she would make sure that members have her cell phone number as the best way to reach her.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.