

Child Support Guidelines Review Panel

September 26, 2011

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Amy Atkinson
Craig M. Burshem
Heather A. Cooper
Hilton W. Graham, II
Jennifer D. Oram-Smith
The Honorable Wilford Taylor, Jr.
The Honorable A. Ellen White
Michael Woods

Members Not Present:

Delegate William K. Barlow
Jennifer Crown
Delegate G. Manoli Loupassi
Reeves W. Mahoney
Paul McLean
Senator Frederick M. Quayle
Delegate Ron Villanueva

Staff Members Present:

Alice G. Burlinson
Cynthia G. Coiner
Melody C. McKinley
C. Robert Owen

I. Welcome and Introductions

Craig Burshem

Mr. Burshem welcomed everyone and asked Panel members to introduce themselves. Ms. Burlinson introduced Jane Venohr, Ph.D., from the Center for Policy Research (CPR) in Denver, Colorado, who will present her economic review of Virginia's guidelines to the Panel today. Dr. Venohr has a doctorate in economics and is considered the national expert on child support guidelines. Ms. Burlinson noted that the Panel's report is due to the General Assembly in December 2013.

II. Economic Review of Virginia Guidelines

Jane C. Venohr, Ph.D.
Center for Policy Research

Dr. Venohr said she has been with CPR since 2007. CPR is a non-profit organization which was started by several university professors over thirty years ago. CPR is currently working with several states and the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement on a variety of issues. Prior to working with CPR, Dr. Venohr worked at Policy Studies, Inc., which was founded by Bob Williams, who developed the income shares guidelines model and was a member of the original national child support guideline task force.

Dr. Venohr gave to the Panel an extensive and detailed PowerPoint presentation entitled "Virginia Child Support Guidelines Review: Economic Basis of the Schedule." Dr. Venohr noted that the objectives of the discussion were to: (1) fulfill the federal requirement that the Panel consider economic data in relation to the guidelines, (2) assess the appropriateness of Virginia's existing guidelines, and (3) obtain input and direction from the Panel to develop up to two updated guideline schedules for Virginia.

Dr. Venohr presented a detailed analysis of the history of the guidelines; a comparison of different guideline models and economic bases; typical adjustments, such as updating child-rearing expenditures to current price levels and addressing items considered elsewhere in the guidelines calculation (i.e., childcare expenses, etc.); state-specific adjustments (i.e., Maryland's adjustment for high housing costs); high income extrapolation; determination of gross income; and self-support reserves. She noted that the Panel has determined it would recommend keeping the income shares model as the basis for the schedule. She also noted that, in general, Virginia's guideline schedule amounts are low in comparison to other states. The Panel discussed several of these issues with Dr. Venohr during her presentation.

Dr. Venohr's PowerPoint presentation will be posted in the Meetings section on the Panel's website at <http://dls.state.va.us/childsupport.htm>.

III. Survey

Craig Burshem

Mr. Burshem explained to the Panel that the Child Support Guidelines Survey 2011, which solicits input on the current guidelines and suggestions for possible changes, has been sent to various stakeholders throughout the state. The survey will remain open until October 31, 2011. The survey can be found at the following link:

<http://fs16.formsite.com/Whippet10/2011childsupportsurvey/index.html?1314023853126>

IV. Discussing Plans for November Meeting

All

Ms. Burlinson noted that the Panel's next meeting is on November 16, 2011, at 10:00 a.m. A motion was made and seconded to invite public comment at the November meeting. Panel members passed the motion. In addition, the Panel will review the raw data results from the Child Support Guidelines Survey 2011.

V. Administrative Issues

Alice Burlinson

Ms. Burlinson advised the Panel that someone sent an email to the Panel website asking for members' individual email addresses. The Panel agreed that persons can write to the Panel website and staff will forward to individual members any emails directed specifically to them.

Ms. Burlinson also reminded members to submit travel vouchers and expense reimbursement forms as appropriate.

Action Items for Staff:

- Post Dr. Venohr's presentation on the Panel's website.
- Analyze, summarize and distribute to members the raw data from the Child Support Guidelines Survey 2011 for the November meeting.
- Publicize and prepare for public comment at the November meeting.

Adjourned at 2:00 p.m.