

**Commission on Child Support
Kneip Conference Room 3
700 Governors Drive, Pierre, SD 57501
Thursday, June 26, 2025
1:00-5:00 p.m. CDT
Microsoft Teams**

Members Present: Rhyann Gaddis Cudmore, Secretary Matt Althoff, Judge Eric Strawn, Christi Weideman, Nathan Olson, Tom Weerheim, Senator Amber Hulse, and Representative Mike Stevens.

Others Present: Presenter Dr. Jane Venohr, Center for Policy Research, DSS employees - Max Wetz, Director Division of Child Support; Nichole Brooks, Assistant Director Division of Child Support; Cheriee Watterson, Policy Strategy Manager; Jeremy Lippert, Director of Legal Services; Tracy Mercer-O'Daniel, Special Projects Coordinator; Caroline Srtka, UJS Staff Attorney; members of the public present Amy Erickson, Loren Eich, Jessica Steidl, Senator Tom Pischke;

Call to Order: Chair Strawn called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. New member Nathan Olson introduced himself.

Roll call: Mercer-O'Daniel called the roll. All members present.

Approval of Agenda: Stevens moved to approve the agenda of the June 26, 2025, meeting. The motion was seconded by Weideman, and the motion was approved.

Approval of the Minutes: Motion to approve May 29, 2025, minutes and April 29, 2025, minutes by Stevens, seconded by Weideman. Motion carried.

Case Study Presentation by Dr. Jane Venohr: Dr. Venohr gave a review of the two options for updating the child support schedule that were presented during the May meeting. She explained that Option one updated for changes in Midwest prices only, while option two updated for changes in Midwest prices and has more current data on SD-US income differences. The existing schedule realigned national data to SD Incomes using 2019 Census data while Option two would use 2023 Census data. Venohr noted last time the commission went with income alignment. Price parody might be better because of SD's larger middle class. The weakness is it assumes every income level has the same increases. She recommends option one with revisiting it in the future. Althoff expressed concern about rising family costs and questioned staying with outdated data. Venohr responded that she is not as comfortable with the income realignment in two as it creates some anomalies. Althoff said we are always chasing lagging data why don't we shorten the lag? Venohr answered the bias is always on the conservative side. Option one retains the income realignment from 2019 data when there were more low-income persons. The 2023 data shows a larger middle class. Strawn commented that we should move with a measure that they can use in the future. If there is a difference in the options maybe we should move to two unless there is not a strong reason to go with one.

The commission requested that Venohr create a chart that includes the updated self-support reserve. Strawn requested a motion to table the reserve discussion until Dr. Venohr could provide the comparison. Stevens made the motion to table the discussion, seconded by Olson. Motion carried.

Commission Discussion: The commission discussed the consolidated options for prior period support sent out by Wetz. Cudmore stated she leans toward option one. Weerheim said the referees agreed in support of option one. Hulse asked if there were concerns about any of the options. Stevens would like a fourth option that includes the language discussed. It was moved by Weideman, seconded by Stevens to bring all four options to public comment. Motion carried.

The commission revisited the options for Emancipation. Discussion centered on simplifying definitions in light of evolving education models. Most members supported Option 1: "Until the child attains the age of nineteen." Motion to move Option 1 forward for public comment made by Weideman, seconded by Olson.

Next the commission discussed the two options to the changing minimum order for incarcerated payors of support. Both options state the obligation amount should be no less than the base obligation amount of \$79 however option one includes the language incarcerated for more than 180 days. Motion to move forward to public comment made by Stevens, seconded by Weideman. Motion carried.

Venohr returned to the meeting with the additional data on the child support schedule. Discussion resumed on the two options. Weideman stated she believes there should be an adjustment to the self-support reserve. Weideman made a motion to move the self-support reserve update to public comment. Olson seconded. Motion carried. Both guideline options will be moved forward for public comment.

Public Comment: Three members of the public spoke. Senator Tom Pischke expressed frustration that the payors have no say in how support is used. He also expressed frustration with how much the commission's conversations are spent on the lower income and not enough on middle income. He added that he sent a draft bill idea towards the Federal Tax Credit. He also opposed the proposed emancipation change to age nineteen. Jessica Steidl spoke next. She also disagrees with the change to age nineteen and feels it should be eighteen or when the child graduates. She also felt too much time is spent on the lower income and would like real life case examples other than the bottom six percent. Amy Erickson shared her situation. Her income went up and so did her payments. Her ex's remained the same, however he remarried. She believes it should be taken into consideration that her ex has a two-income household. Stevens thanked Erickson for her comment and said it is good to hear how differently these things impact people.

Althoff moved to adjourn, seconded by Olson. Motion carried and meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting – August 21, 2025, 1:00 p.m.