

**Commission on Child Support
Approved Minutes
Kneip Conference Room 3
700 Governors Drive, Pierre, SD 57501
Thursday, August 21, 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: 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; Tiffany Wolfgang, Chief of Children and Family Services; Jeremy Lippert, Director of Legal Services; Tracy Mercer-O'Daniel, Special Projects Coordinator; Caroline Srtksa, UJS Staff Attorney; members of the public present Zac Martin, Madison Lee, Derek Gulbrandson, Senator Tom Pischke;

Call to Order: Chair Strawn called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

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

Approval of Agenda: Weideman moved to approve the agenda of the August 21, 2025, meeting. The motion was seconded by Althoff, and the motion was approved.

Approval of the Minutes: Motion to approve June 26, 2025, minutes by Weideman, seconded by Althoff. Motion carried.

Child Support Referee Proposed SDCL Amendments: Weerheim presented the suggested amendments to § 25-7-6.4, § 25-7-6.26, § 25-7-6.19, and § 25-7-14 as well as adding two new sections to code. Althoff inquired if the amendments were shared with LRC. The response was they had not but could be. Stevens recommends not removing the language from § 25-7-14 that states, the burden is on the noncustodial parent to demonstrate the increased costs that the noncustodial parent incurs for non-duplicated fixed expenditures, including routine clothing costs, costs for extra-curricular activities, school supplies, and other similar non-duplicated fixed expenditures. Weideman commented on one of the new sections that she would like the referee hearing exhibit retention requirements spelled out. Althoff asked if there was anything UJS could do to help. The commission discussed different options that might help reduce the burden of the referees. Hulse requested that LRC review the proposed amendments before the committee acts. DSS will make the submission to LRC.

Discussion Public Comment Topics: Wetz summarized the public comments into six key topic areas. 1. Child Support Payments: Many comments discuss the need for adjustments in child support payments, including considerations for inflation, income levels, and the financial responsibilities of both parents. 2. Incarcerated Parents: Several comments address the issue

of child support obligations for incarcerated parents, suggesting that they should still be required to contribute financially. 3. Parenting Time Adjustment: There are discussions about the need to adjust child support based on the amount of time each parent spends with the child, with suggestions to lower the threshold for adjustments. 4. Financial Accountability: Some comments emphasize the need for better tracking and accountability of how child support payments are used. 5. Legal and Systemic Issues: There are concerns about the fairness and effectiveness of the legal system in handling child support cases, including biases and the need for reform. 6. Enforcement: There are comments with opposing views on enforcement actions taken by the Division of Child Support and their efficacy in child support payment collection.

The Commission discussed the public comments to date taking each topic area separately.

Public Comment: Senator Tom Pischke provided the commission a summary of his bill drafts that include a revision to the abatement of child support obligation, revision of related factors considered for deviation from the child support obligation schedule, and revision and repeal of provisions related to the shared parenting child support cross credit.

Questions about the abatement range were asked and Wetz agreed to do research. Strawn asked why the 1.5 multiplier was created. Venohr said it stems from that it costs more to raise a child in two households than one. Wetz agreed to do research to find the origin.

Zac Martin provided the commission with his background and understanding of what was adopted by Wyoming in 2018. They moved away from the 180 days and considering both parents' income.

Derek Gulbrandson with the National Parents Organization spoke to their submitted recommendations to the South Dakota Child Support Commission that focused on promoting shared parenting and equitable child support guidelines. Key proposals include revising the Parenting Time Adjustment to cover 0–100% parenting time with a smoother, more equitable model; increasing the Self-Support Reserve (SSR) to reflect updated poverty levels and adjusting it annually; implementing a more robust ability-to-pay test to prevent obligors from falling below subsistence levels; preserving judicial discretion on setting minimum order amounts; incorporating the Child Tax Credit into child support calculations; and improving data collection for future policy reviews.

Commission Discussion: The commission discussed abatements and shared parenting and requested additional information on Wyoming's experience.

Wetz reminded that public comment was open until Aug. 31 and comments should be sent to dcsc@state.sd.us.

Adjournment: Wiedeman moved to adjourn the meeting. Olson seconded. Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Next Meeting – September 18, 2025, 1:00 p.m.