

Commission on Child Support

Draft Minutes

Kneip Conference Room
700 Governors Drive, Pierre, SD 57501
Thursday, October 16, 2025
1:00-3:00 p.m. CDT

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

Members Absent Representative Mike Stevens.

Others Present: Dr. Jane Venohr, Center for Policy Research, Caroline Srtska, UJS Staff Attorney; DSS employees - Max Wetz, Director Division of Child Support; Nichole Brooks, Assistant Director Division of Child Support; Tiffany Wolfgang, Chief of Children and Family Services; Jeremy Lippert, Director of Legal Services; Tracy Mercer-O'Daniel, Special Projects Coordinator; members of the public; Senator Tom Pischke; Lee Ann Pierce, Jessica Steidl and Zac Martin.

Call to Order: Chair Strawn called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

Roll call: Mercer-O'Daniel called the roll. Stevens absent; all other members present. (Weerheim joined shortly after roll was taken).

Approval of Agenda: Motion to approve agenda by Althoff, seconded by Strawn. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes: Motion to approve September 18, 2025 minutes by Althoff seconded by Strawn. Motion carried.

Public Comment: No public comment was given.

Age of Emancipation: Hulse felt the language needed to be tightened up. She did not agree with changing to age 19. She suggested finding a definition of 12th grade to make it easy to administer. Weideman asked if the Department of Education could help with defining. Strawn re-opened public comment. Zac Martin stated in the case of a student graduating early, noncustodial parents should not have to continue to pay after a child is out of the house. Lee Ann Pierce, former child support referee, asked that the commission not change current statute resulting in modification of thousands of decrees that contain the current language. She suggested instead adding a statute defining secondary school as a traditional school. Jessica Steidl commented that in her children's cases she paid child support through graduation. Discussion continued. Althoff requested on behalf of the department to withdraw the emancipation concept. Chair Strawn recognized the recission.

Service by email: Srtska suggested that the language be changed to financial and legal documents. It would now read, "If a party files an objection to the referee's report, the referee shall file with the court all financial and legal documents required by the referee entered into the record in the hearing before the referee. The referee shall file the financial and legal documents received by the referee within ten days after receiving notice of the objection. The referee shall maintain the financial and legal documents received by the referee for thirty days following a signed order."

Motion to recommend what was considered prior with the new language was made by Weerheirm. Seconded by Althoff. Motion carried.

Strawn asked that the revised amendments and the final report be available for the commissions review.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.