

**Child Support Guidelines Advisory Committee**  
**Minutes**  
**Wednesday, July 16, 2025, 10:00 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.**

**Facilitator:** Dawn Marquardt

**Minutes:** Erik Durant

**Members:** Kelly Evans, Luciana Fontanini, Jeremy Gibons, Martin Herbest, Christine Hill, Trena Klohe, Dawn Marquardt, Sabrina Owen, Keith Raines, Mike Ritchey, David Rivera-Vernazza, and Amanda Thorpe.

**Guests:** Chris Bowers, Jason Chappell, Annette Casper, Amy Croucher, Erik Durant, Annie Engel, Marci Hamilton, Lenny Kistler, Alicia Mahan, Dan Meyers, Alexandra Popescu, Krista Smyth, Charlene St. Jules, Michelle Underwood, and Lori Woltring.

**Absent:** Erin Biencourt, Donna Brann, Tabitha Fish, Heath Hattaway, Natalie Otero, Marisa Salinas, Jessica Thomas, and Monica Whitaker.

<b>Call to Order</b>	<b>Dawn Marquardt</b>
Dawn brought the meeting to order and conducted a roll call of the members present.	
<b>Minute Review and Approval</b>	<b>Dawn Marquardt</b>
The minutes were approved without edits. They will be posted on the public website.	
<b>Parenting Time Rule Revisions</b>	<b>All</b>
<p>Lori displayed the Parenting Time Credit rule and noted the major changes that were made based on the six objectives the group discussed. First, the commentary was updated to clarify what is meant by averaging the two consecutive years of overnights. Next, the language around “blocks of time” was updated—the group decided to retain flexibility to break up a full day. Instead of defining a <i>half day</i> as between 4 and 12 hours, the group decided to simplify it as “equal to or less than 12 hours.” Next, the group considered explaining how specific expenses are to be shared. Initially, they considered adding this to the Rebuttal rule, but the group realized that parenting time credit already accounts for those routine costs. A rebuttal is appropriate for extraordinary costs, not routine ones. As a result, the group agreed not to make any changes. Next, the commentary was updated to better clarify that if the parenting time isn’t being exercised, it qualifies for a modification.</p> <p>Amanda noted that she sees a lot of people that come to her to modify the parenting plan because they have sought a modification of child support because the parent is not exercising their time and they are not able to get it. Are participants able to anecdotally say that the other parent isn’t exercising their parenting time to get more child support? Mike responded that if it is obvious that they are not following their parenting time agreement, such as when custody swaps, and giving them credit would be inappropriate, the court or an administrative law judge can calculate support based on the amount of parenting time that's actually being exercised. To get a truly accurate order, they need to either request an administrative hearing or go to court to convince the judge that the amount of parenting time being exercised is not consistent with the agreement. The program did not want child support program employees having to make a judgment call on what is actually going on in the parties’ families. Lucci added that Amanda’s anecdotal experience lines up with questions the Policy Team gets internally from program employees asking how to handle these situations.</p>	

Keith noted that adding clarification to commentary helps when you go to court. If it is in the commentary, the court will rely on that.

Lori continued explaining the changes in the rule. The group discussed what to do when the obligation flips due to equal or near equal parenting time. Do we continue with the status quo of flipping the obligation, which would result in the parent with more parenting time becoming the paying parent? Or, in those situations, do we want to do a modification to zero? The group agreed to continue with current practice of flipping the obligation but only when the new receiving parent requests that we flip the obligation. If they don't want it to flip, we would continue to do a modification to zero. This decision did not result in any changes to the rules.

The group also discussed whether to apply the minimum order when there is parenting time. The group decided to keep the status quo, which means an exception to the minimum order would only apply in cases where there is 50/50 parenting time.

Lori is working on drafting the recommendations to summarize the changes and hopes to have it ready for next month.

Dawn brought up her comment about updating the footnotes in the rule to say *Parent A* and *Parent B* (or *Parent 1* and *Parent 2*). This question was raised because Donna suggested similarly updating the terminology in the online calculator. Jeremy suggested that the decision to use *Mother* and *Father* was deliberate and was an effort to make the experience more customer-friendly and human-centric. He suggested keeping *Mother* and *Father* and adding a third *Parent* option for those not wishing to specify. Chris supported using more plain language but noted that we do interact with families that do not fit the heteronormative mother/father roles. Lucci suggested allowing for the use of the participants' names in the calculator instead of a label, which the group agreed would be most human-centric.

Michelle Underwood noted that there is an option in the calculator now for *Alleged Father*, which we would need to decide if it is still appropriate or even necessary. Mike responded that *Alleged Father* should still work in all cases except in rare situations where someone who was biologically male doesn't self-identify as a father, but *Alleged Parent* could also work. Dawn noted that there is a design workgroup that will begin soon that may address this. She suggested we could leave the terminology in the commentary as-is and have a placeholder to be re-reviewed based on the final direction we take. Martin supported using gender neutral terminology like *Parent A* and *Parent B* (or *coparents*) in the commentary to be more inclusive to all families.

**Action Item:**

- Lori to write up the workgroup recommendations.

**Workgroup Updates (Health Care Coverage & Child Care Costs, Income, Parenting Time Credit)**

**Workgroup Representatives**

**Health Care Coverage & Child Care Costs:**

Alex noted the workgroup had been contemplating making a recommendation to no longer automatically issuing a National Medical Support Notice (NMSN) to receiving parents. It was confirmed that enforcing medical support by NMSN is optional in federal law and permissible

in Oregon law. The program has rulemaking authority to change whether enforcement of medical support against the receiving parent by NMSN is done. The workgroup decided to recommend no longer automatically issuing NMSNs to the employer of the parent receiving support.

The group also discussed the child care cost topic at their latest meeting. The economic study did not provide a lot of data on child care costs or recommendations on the issue. The group acknowledged the high costs of child care but also the fact that these costs cannot be further addressed by the child support guidelines. They agreed to recommend to the larger advisory committee to add a provision in rule that will allow parents to stipulate to paying more than the cap allows and to update commentary to advise that rebuttals can also be used to account for child care costs that exceed the caps.

Alex noted that she had previously hoped to have rule language ready to circulate for this meeting, but they are still working on some of the verbiage. Once a more finished draft is ready, she will circulate it with the workgroup before bringing it to the larger committee meeting.

**Income:**

Lucci noted that the workgroup just met on Monday, so the minutes were not ready to share with this group. She reminded the group that the recommendation was to lower the minimum order to \$50. The workgroup discussed the exception to the minimum order when a paying parent has “disability benefits as a sole source of income” [(2)(d)(A) in the Minimum Order rule]. The group discussed how restrictive this should be and if it applies to certain types of disability benefits and not others. This came about from questions received by the Policy Team, as well as observations that Donna has noted where the exception has been applied inconsistently. The workgroup had a thoughtful discussion and decided to not make any changes to this part of the rule yet. There is also a similar provision in the Income rule that says potential income may not be imputed to a parent unable to work full-time due to a verified disability. They are talking about different things and applying different standards, but the groups wants to have further discussion about it while reviewing the Income rule before making any changes to the provision in the Minimum Order rule.

Mike noted that the group struggled with what to do about veterans who have a VA disability rating that entitles them to significant amounts of money each month but still retain the ability to work. Jeremy noted that he thinks that particular issue is best addressed as potential income and prefers to keep the minimum order issue very broad so that you are not subject to the minimum order if all the money you make is based on your disability (for any reason). Trena commented in the chat that disabled veterans who can still work won't be depending exclusively on their disability benefits and asked if this is really an issue. Mike responded that there could be situations in which someone's collecting a significant amount of VA benefits and has the ability to work but chooses not to because they are comfortable with the amount that they receive from the VA. Those individuals probably receive too much money to be impacted by the minimum order.

The workgroup also discussed the Self-Support Reserve (SSR) rule and talked through information from our case data report. The SSR is currently set at 116% of the federal poverty guidelines, and there was consensus out of surveys conducted prior to convening the Guidelines Advisory Committee that the SSR was too low. During the group's discussions,

they figured out that the SSR is not impacting many calculations currently, likely because the program tends to allege higher income than what people are actually earning. The group agreed to put forward the recommendation from the Center for Policy Research, which is to raise the SSR to be consistent with the federal SNAP qualification limits. Today, the SSR is \$1,522 per month, and raising it to match SNAP would put it at \$1,695. If we continue to improve how we allege income and push for using actual income when available, we will have a better picture of whether the SSR and the minimum order are doing what they are meant to do.

At the next meeting, the workgroup intends to discuss the Income rule and continue the conversation about how we allege income for parents when we do not have sufficient information on their income histories.

**Parenting Time Credit:**

Lori noted there are no other updates from this work group.

**Identify Topics for August Meeting**

**Dawn Marquardt**

Dawn noted that the next meeting is scheduled for August 20. She will be at a conference but will plan on attending the meeting.

Lucci noted that she will be able to report back on what was discussed at the next Income Workgroup meeting but is not sure she will have rule language ready for this group to review by the next larger advisory committee meeting.

Alex advised that her goal is to have language for both the Medical Support and Child Care Costs rules ready by the next meeting. The workgroup agreed to proceed via email and only meet as needed, which should move the process along faster.

Dawn added that the group can discuss the design workgroup in more detail at the next meeting and look at the membership of that group to decide if any additional representatives may be needed.

**Round Table**

**All**

There was no further discussion for round table.