


MINNESOTA FAMILY SUPPORT & RECOVERY COUNCIL

2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE





Child Support Task Force and Community Outreach Update

Jessica Raymond, DHS Child Support Division
Kim Foster, DHS Child Support Division

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Overview




- Introduction to the Minnesota Child Support Task Force
- Summary of the task force's:
 - Purpose and charge
 - Work process
 - Recommendations
- Questions

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Purpose



- Approaches to outreach efforts
 - Legislative mandate
 - Agency initiated efforts



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Intro to the MN Child Support Task Force


- Minnesota Child Support Task Force was created by the legislature in 2016




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MN Child Support Task Force: Purpose

- Purpose is to advise the commissioner of the MN Dept of Human Services on matters relevant to maintaining effective and efficient child support guidelines that will serve MN children and take into account the changing dynamics of families




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MN Child Support Task Force: Membership


15 members including:

- Four parents
- Four legislators
- Representative from MN County Attorneys Association
- Representative from a tribe with a child support program
- Child support magistrate
- Representative from MFRSC
- Attorney representing the MN State Bar Association
- Representative from Legal Aid
- Director of the DHS Child Support Division



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**MN Child Support Task Force:
Priority Issues**




Task force was assigned to address and make recommendations on:

- Self-support reserve for custodial and noncustodial parents
- Simultaneous child support orders
- Obligor subject to child support orders in multiple counties
- Parents with multiple families

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**MN Child Support Task Force:
Priority Issues**




- Non-nuclear families, such as grandparents, relatives, and foster parents who are caretakers of children
- Standards to apply for modifications; and
- Updating Minn. Stat., section 518A.35, subd. 2, the guideline for basic support

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**MN Child Support Task Force:
Meetings**





- Met 29 times since September 2016 to June 2019
- Participated in intensive educational sessions
- Reviewed various guidelines models, economic models and data
- Engaged with multiple economists



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**MN Child Support Task Force:
Dr. Jane Venohr**

- Task force contracted with Dr. Jane Venohr
- Economist with Center for Policy Research
- Assisted more than 25 states with guidelines reviews

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**MN Child Support Task Force:
Meetings**

- Solicited and accepted public comment from hundreds of individuals






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**MN Child Support Task Force:
Public Comment**

5 public comment meetings held in various locations across the state including:

- Minneapolis
- Brainerd
- Mankato
- Coon Rapids
- St. Cloud

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MN Child Support Task Force: Public Comment

- Task force collected 692 written submissions from the public
- 37% were parents ordered to pay support, 63% were parents who had an order to receive support
- Results of the survey were complied, analyzed and shared with the task force
- Included in the 2018 Quadrennial Review

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MN Child Support Task Force: Public Comment

- Many parents expressed confusion about the 2018 change to the parenting expense adjustment
- Task force recommended a change to the statute governing modification in response to public comment
- Legislation was passed to clarify when criteria for modification are met

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Task Force's Recommendations

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES Legislative Report

2019 Minnesota Child Support Task Force

Activities and Recommendations
 Child Support Division
 August 31, 2019

For more information contact:
 Minnesota Department of Human Services
 Child Support Division
 P.O. Box 64846
 St. Paul, MN 55164
 651-430-4000

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Basic Support Guidelines

CURRENTLY

- Minnesota's guideline is codified in statute 518A.35
- Effective in 2007 when Minnesota moved to an Income Shares Model
- Based on sound economic methodology and supports policy goals of the child support program
- Based upon economic data that is over 17 years old

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Basic Support Guidelines

CURRENTLY


- Results in basic support obligations that constitute high percentages of income for low-income obligors
- Results in "Self-Support Reserve Effect" for certain obligors
- Basic support table ends at combined incomes of \$15,000 per month

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Basic Support Guidelines

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS

- Continue using an Income Shares Model
- Continue using USDA's measurements on the cost of raising children in the Midwest, but updated to current price levels




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Basic Support Guidelines

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS

- Extend the basic support table from combined monthly incomes of \$15,000 to \$30,000
- Implement a low-income adjustment within the table for combined monthly incomes of \$6,000 and below



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Self-Support Reserve

CURRENTLY

- State and federal laws create a presumption that a child support order should not exceed a parent's ability to pay
- Ability to pay is calculated by subtracting a monthly amount, called a "self-support reserve", from the gross income of the paying parent

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Self-Support Reserve

CURRENTLY

- Self-support reserve is 120% of the federal poverty guidelines for one person
- In 2019, that amount is \$1,249 per month
- The self-support reserve is only subtracted from the paying parent's income


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Self-Support Reserve




TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS

- Apply the self-support reserve to the income of both parents
- Create a new deviation factor
- Keep self-support reserve at 120% of federal poverty guidelines



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Multiple Families




CURRENTLY

- Minnesota provides two deductions for nonjoint children:
 - Court-ordered support obligations
 - Nonjoint children residing in the home
- Deductions are applied to both parents' incomes
- Deductions do not apply to all legal nonjoint children

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Multiple Families




CURRENTLY

For court-ordered support obligations:

- Actual support amount of the order is used
- There is no cap or limit
- It is subtracted when determining gross income

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Multiple Families




CURRENTLY

For nonjoint children in the home:

- A hypothetical support amount is used
- Capped at two nonjoint children
- It is not deducted when determining gross income
- It is deducted when determining PICS

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Multiple Families: SSR Issue with Similarly Situated Obligors



- Taylor has a gross monthly income of \$1,600
- Taylor has a child from a previous relationship and has a court order to pay \$168
- Cameron has a gross monthly income of \$1,600
- Cameron has a child from a previous relationship in Cameron’s home
- Taylor and Cameron each have a new joint child (with partners who also make \$1,600 per month)

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Multiple Families: SSR Issue

Taylor: Court Ordered Support of \$168


	Parent A Parent B Combined		
	\$1600	\$1600	
Income			
1a. Monthly Income Received	\$0	\$0	---
1b. Children’s Social Security/Retirement Benefits Derived From a Parent’s Eligibility	\$0	\$0	---
1c. Financial Income	\$0	\$0	---
1d. Spousal Maintenance Orders Obligated to be Paid	\$0	\$0	---
1e. Child Support Order(s) Obligated to be Paid for Nonjoint Child(ren)	\$168	\$0	---
1f. Monthly Gross Income (1a+1b+1c-1d-1e)	\$1632	\$1600	---
Adjustments			
2a. Number of Nonjoint Child(ren) in the Home (Maximum number allowed is 2)	0	0	---
2b. Deduction for Nonjoint Child(ren) in the Home	\$0	\$0	---
3. Parental Income for Determining Child Support (PICs)	\$1432	\$1600	\$3032
4. Percentage Share of Combined PICS	47%	53%	---
5. Combined Basic Support Obligation	---	---	\$603
6. Pro-Rata Basic Support Obligation	\$293	\$320	---

Cameron: Nonjoint Child in Home Credit of \$168

	Parent A Parent B Combined		
	\$1600	\$1600	
Income			
1a. Monthly Income Received	\$0	\$0	---
1b. Children’s Social Security/Retirement Benefits Derived From a Parent’s Eligibility	\$0	\$0	---
1c. Financial Income	\$0	\$0	---
1d. Spousal Maintenance Orders Obligated to be Paid	\$0	\$0	---
1e. Child Support Order(s) Obligated to be Paid for Nonjoint Child(ren)	\$0	\$0	---
1f. Monthly Gross Income (1a+1b+1c-1d-1e)	\$1600	\$1600	---
Adjustments			
2a. Number of Nonjoint Child(ren) in the Home (Maximum number allowed is 2)	1	0	---
2b. Deduction for Nonjoint Child(ren) in the Home	\$168	\$0	---
3. Parental Income for Determining Child Support (PICs)	\$1432	\$1600	\$3032
4. Percentage Share of Combined PICS	47%	53%	---
5. Combined Basic Support Obligation	---	---	\$603
6. Pro-Rata Basic Support Obligation	\$293	\$320	---

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Multiple Families: SSR Issue



Taylor: Court Ordered Support of \$168 Cameron: Nonjoint Child in Home Deduction of \$168


Computing a Final Obligation			Computing a Final Obligation		
14. Total Child Support Obligation	\$283	\$0	14. Total Child Support Obligation	\$283	\$0
15a. Monthly Gross Income	\$1432	\$1600	15a. Monthly Gross Income	\$1600	\$1600
Ability to Pay Calculation			Ability to Pay Calculation		
15b. Income Available for Support	\$183	\$351	15b. Income Available for Support	\$351	\$351
16. Monthly Child Support Obligation - No Adjustment Necessary	\$0	\$0	16. Monthly Child Support Obligation - No Adjustment Necessary	\$283	\$0
17. Amount of Reduction	\$100	\$0	17. Amount of Reduction	\$0	\$0

- Obligation reduced to the income available for support
- Self-Support Reserve is subtracted from gross income of \$1432 and the income available for support is \$183
- Taylor's basic support obligation is \$183

- Self Support Reserve is subtracted from the gross income of \$1600 and income available for support is \$351
- Obligation will not be reduced
- Cameron's basic support obligation is \$283


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Multiple Families




TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS

- Expanding the application of the deduction for legal nonjoint children, who are not the subject of court orders, to all legal nonjoint children
- Increasing the cap on nonjoint children from two to six




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Multiple Families



TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS

- Increasing the calculation of the deduction for nonjoint children, who are not the subject of court orders, from 50% to 75%
- Deducting the self-support reserve from PICS rather than gross income



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Non-Nuclear Families

CURRENTLY


- Guidelines do not provide for a specific deviation factor for out-of-home placement cases
- Establishment and collection of child support to reimburse cost of foster care often present barriers to families working toward reunification
- Deviation factors do not clearly state that they can be applied to non-nuclear families

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Non-Nuclear Families

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS

- Creating a deviation factor for out-of-home placement cases where family reunification is the goal
- Clarifying that deviation factors may be applied to cases where the child is residing with a non-parent caretaker



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Future Updates to the Guidelines and Remaining Issues


CURRENTLY

- Task force was not extended by the legislature
- Expired on June 30, 2019
- Mechanism to routinely update guidelines yet to be developed
- Issues remain to be addressed

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Future Updates to the Guidelines and Remaining Issues

- Remaining issues include:
 - Simultaneous child support orders
 - Obligors subject to child support orders in multiple counties
 - Standards to apply for modifications





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Future Updates to the Guidelines and Remaining Issues

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS

- Creation of a permanent advisory body to:
 - Provide a venue for public input
 - Develop process to routinely update guidelines
 - Address remaining priority issues

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What's Next?

- 2019 Minnesota Child Support Task Force Report approved by DHS Commissioner
- Submitted to MN Legislative Reference Library
- Legislative session begins February 2020




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Outreach Recap

- Mandated by statute
- Formal requirement to solicit public input
- Other ways to engage



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Q & A Session

Questions?

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Thank You!

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 651-478-8109

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Outreach = Impact

Kim Foster
Policy Team Lead
Child Support Help Desk
651-431-4600

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Community Outreach...




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Policy Team Lead – Child Support Help Desk + Outreach

- 7 Help Desk Advisors; 3 Team Leads (technical, training & policy) - almost 35,000 contacts last year!
- Outreach Meetings from July, 2018 – August, 2019 = 58+
- Participants impacted by outreach efforts = over 100 families
- Several Community Organizations with a better understanding of what Child Support is and what resources are available to help their participants.
- Trust established within the communities.




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Be Flexible & Creative




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Choosing Organizations.....



Organizations that work with PARENTS!



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Outreach Partners

- Parents in Community Action (PICA) Head Start
- Family Wise
- Father Project



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What is PICA?

PARENTS IN COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.



- Private, Non Profit Agency
- Founded in 1969 by Head Start Parents
- Serves nearly 2,500 children & families
- Offers a variety of programs & Services for children & families in addition to Head Start & Early Head Start
- Funded by Federal, State & County governments as well as private donors & Foundations
- Services are provided at no cost to eligible children six weeks to five year and their families

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- Child Support 101
 - Parents
 - Staff
- Q&A
- Tabling at Annual Family Connection Event

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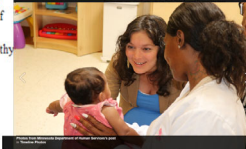
August 27 at 8:22 AM ·

Children and Family Services Assistant Commissioner Nikki Farago and Child Support Director Shanteen Moore recently visited the Parents in Community Action, Inc. (PICA) facility in South Minneapolis to learn about the Head Start and Early Head Start programs it offers to families, and build on an existing partnership between PICA and state child support staff.

For the past year, Kim Foster with the DHS Child Support Division has been visiting PICA to give "Child Support 101" presentations to families and answer their questions. Before a tour of the facility, Farago and Moore talked with PICA leadership about barriers to child support participation, and strategies for providing parents with tools they need to guide children's healthy growth and development. Thanks for hosting us, PICA Head Start!

August is Child Support Awareness Month -

learn more about Minnesota's program in this fact sheet <https://go.usa.gov/vDq6>



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Cheryl Morgan Spencer, PICA's Cross Cultural Community Liaison

"I am responding to four distinct areas that I think are really important to the impact of any outreach effort":

- Cross Cultural Effectiveness
- Knowledge of the Subject Matter
- Authenticity of Connection to Participants
- Overall Usefulness

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Impact of efforts with PICA

- Increased knowledge about MN Child Support overall
- Increased knowledge about the process of securing child support ("Kim successfully de-mystified the process")
- Increased ability to successfully navigate the Child Support system on their own. (MCSO)

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FamilyWise

MAIN OFFICE
3036 University Avenue SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414
P: 612.617.0191 | F: 612.617.0193


FamilyWiseServices.org

Services provided by Family Wise:

- Parenting Education
- Supervised Visitation & Safe Exchanges
- Wraparound Program
- First Step Early Childhood Education
- Bright Beginnings Young Parent Services

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"Lunch & Learn"
Child Support 101




FamilyWise

Overview of:

- Application Process
- Parentage
- Establishment of Support
- Enforcement
- Payment Options
- Resource documents

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FATHER PROJECT
 a program of **GOODWILL·EASTER SEALS®**
 MINNESOTA

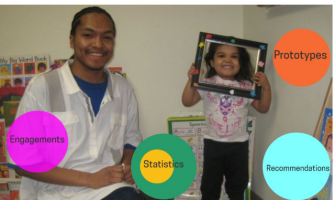


Services offered include:

- Case Management
- Parenting Support
- Child Support Services
- Father & Family Activities
- Employment Services
- GED Tutoring

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m DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES **FATHER PROJECT** **UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**
 a program of **GOODWILL·EASTER SEALS®** **Driven to Discover**

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Prototype Driver's License Suspension Simulation

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Driver's License Innovation Project

FATHER PROJECT
a program of
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MINNESOTA

WRIMMER
PLACE

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Father Project 2700 East Lake Street Minneapolis, MN

FATHER PROJECT
a program of **GOODWILL · EASTER SEALS**
MINNESOTA

- Child Support Overview
- Resource documentation
- 1:1 meetings with Child Support Staff on a weekly basis
- Tabling at Community Events
- Assisting with Father Project Recognition Dinners

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FAQ's



- Driver's License Suspension/Payment Agreements
- Arrears Management (How much do I owe? What can I do about it?)
- Modifications due to Change of Income, Homelessness, Chemical Dependency and/or inpatient treatment, incarceration, and parenting time changes
- "I got this notice, what do I do?"
- I can't remember who my Child Support Worker is, can you provide me with that information?

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Festival for Fathers & Families









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Guy Bowling, Father Project Minneapolis



- What motivated you to accept the invite from DHS child support to partner on outreach and engagement?
- What is your vision for future work with child support?
- In what ways has this partnership served to help fathers and families?
- What are some things that make this partnership sustainable?
- What could we do to improve or strengthen this partnership?



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Child Support Staff Build Relationships,
Engage Communities to Improve Services



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Outreach = Impact



PARTNERSHIP *Alliance*
 Teamwork **Community**
Joint Efforts
 Assistance
 Working Together *Collaboration*
COMMITMENT
 TRUST
Equity **Association**



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Kim Foster

Policy Team Lead
Child Support Help Desk
Minnesota Department of Human Services

651-431-4600

Kim.Foster@state.mn.us



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