

Domestic Relations Committee
Judicial Conference of Indiana

Minutes
January 19, 2024, via Teams

The Domestic Relations Committee met on Friday, January 19, 2024, from 10:00 AM through 1:00 PM, via Teams.

1. Members Present: Thomas P. Hallett, Chair, Beth A. Webber, Jennifer K. Kinsley, Ashley N. Hand, Lisa A. Berdine, Mark A. Hardwick, Susan E. Boatright, A. Patricia Osan, Andrew R. Bloch
2. Staff present: Joseph Fischer, Indiana Office of Court Service and Jill Russell, Trial Court Technology provided staff assistance. Leslie Dunn of IOCS attended to give a presentation.
3. Guests Present: Dr. David Betson, economic advisor, Angelica Carter and Trevor Hale, Child Support Bureau, and David Morris, IPAC also attended the committee meeting.
4. Minutes Approved: The October 20, 2023, minutes of the committee were approved
5. Guardian ad Litem Guidelines
 - Leslie Dunn Updated Committee on GAL Guidelines Process
 - IOCS to email final draft to committee for review. Chair and Jeff Bercovitz will determine collecting votes of approval prior to Leslie's presentation to the Board.
6. Approve reports for Child Support Guidelines; post on Internet
 - The Committee reviewed the following documents: WSS Table, Labor Market Study, and Case File Review
 - Committee made minor edits and clarifying alterations. No substantive changes.
 - Committee votes and approves the documents for posting.
7. Plans for future Child Support Guidelines review
 - Committee discussed changes for future guideline reviews and case file studies.
 - More clear definition of deviation; Fewer months of analysis as thirty was not necessary; More cases and ideally more worksheets; Shrink the window to a year rather than 3 years; Remove: RS, Guardianships, and Adoption
 - Committee agrees to have a survey, timeframe, and general outlined plan by January of 2025.
8. Child Support Calculator updates Jill Russell updated the committee on updating the calculator with demonstrations. Ongoing issues to be mailed to Jeff, Chair Hallett, and Joseph Fischer.

9. Ideas for future projects: Committee heard from members, IPAC, and Child Support Bureau about additional projects to consider for future meetings.
10. Recent legislation: Committee discussed limited impactful legislation being considered by the Indiana Legislature.
11. Next Meeting: Committee notes next meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2024, at 10:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Fischer, Staff Attorney
Children and Family Division, IOCS

Domestic Relations Committee
Judicial Conference of Indiana

Minutes
March 15, 2024, via Teams

The Domestic Relations Committee met on Friday, March 15, 2024, from 10:00 AM through 1:00 PM, via Teams.

1. Members Present: Lisa A. Berdine, Andrew R. Bloch, Susan E. Boatright, Alicia A. Gooden, Ashley N. Hand, Jennifer K. Kinsley, Ashley N. Hand, Leslie C. Shivley, Beth A. Webber, William L. Wilson, and Thomas P. Hallett, Chair
2. Staff present: Jeffrey Bercovitz and Joseph Fischer, Indiana Office of Court Services and Jill Russell, Trial Court Technology provided staff assistance.
3. Minutes Approved: The January 19, 2023 committee minutes were approved.
4. Child Support Guideline Schedule: Staff reported a scrivener's error in the Schedules for Weekly Support Payments. It will be corrected soon.
5. Future Child Support Guidelines Review: Members of the committee discussed steps for the next child support guidelines review, including:
 - Have the case file review done soon so the results could be ready when the next review begins
 - Hire a fresh set of eyes for the consultant as soon as possible
 - Get randomly selected child support amounts as soon as possible to begin the case file review. Increase the number of case files selected to about 1200.
 - Rethink the use of controlled expenses in collaborative or shared parenting cases
 - More commentary on self-employment cases
 - More language on alternative income cases, e.g. crypto currency, gig economy, driving uber, etc...
6. Child Support Calculator updates. Jill Russell gave an update on minor changes to the child support calculator since January in the areas of the number of fields for children on the worksheet, retrieval of prior calculations, and printing of the child support obligation worksheet. Committee members agreed by consensus to see what is happening in their courts with the use of worksheets based on the prior child support guidelines.
7. Electronic Parenting Time Calendar. Jill Russell displayed a test version of the electronic parenting time calendar and reported it could now calculate beginning when the child was five (5) months of age. She reported the underlying code is

“rickety” and a grant and/or additional monies are needed for rebuilding. Committee members agreed additional monies should be sought.

8. Other.

- a. Mag. Wilson reported his court was losing attorney Guardian ad Litem (GAL) and wondered if other committee members had similar issues. Committee members discussed: loss of guardian ad litem due to retirements, payment issues and burnout. They discussed solutions including use of focused assessments to narrow and focus GAL appointments, use of strict timelines, addressing fee payments at the first hearing, and scheduling status hearings every 30 days.
- b. Mag. Berdine reported the Indiana Legal Help website was updating their forms including removal of the 6% rule and other issues. She wanted to know if committee believed it would be helpful to have a space on the child support worksheets for deviations. Members of the committee agreed by consensus there should be space for litigants to note reasons for child support deviations from the guideline amount in forms for dissolutions and paternity cases.

9. Next Meeting: Committee members agree to meet again on Friday, May 17 via Teams at 10:00 a.m. and additional meeting dates.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Bercovitz, Director
Juvenile and Family Law

Domestic Relations Committee
Judicial Conference of Indiana

Minutes
May 14, 2024, via Teams

The Domestic Relations Committee convened via Teams, on Friday, May 14, 2024, from 10:00 AM through 1:00 PM.

1. **Members Present:** Judicial Officers Thomas Hallett, Chair, Beth Webber, Ashley Hand, Lisa Berdine, Mark Hardwick, Susan Boatright, A. Patricia Osan, Andrew R. Bloch, William Wilson, and Alicia Gooden
2. **Staff present:** Joseph Fischer, Indiana Office of Court Service served as staff attorney. Christa Coffey and Matthew Brothers, Trial Court Technology provided tech updates.
3. **Approval of May Committee Minutes:** The May 14, 2024, minutes of the committee were approved unanimously. Moved by Magistrate Boatright and Seconded by Judge Hand.
4. **Planning for next Guideline Review:** Loose timeline of events mapped out for 2028 child support review. CSR to be done prior to revision work. Staff created a timeline of proposed events.
5. **IPAC Recommendations:** Domestic Relations Committee reviewed the full list of recommendations created by IPAC. These serve as a list of items that IPAC would like to see addressed in the next child support revision. The committee assigned each topic a priority level if the item was deemed appropriate for consideration. This work product will be stored in the 2028 revision folder.
6. **Ongoing Updates:** Joseph Fischer provided two brief updates to the committee.
 - The previously discussed update to the child support guideline tables has been approved. The 4-5,000 range for 2+ children now better reflects the intent of the committee and do not risk an unjust result.
 - Brief update on the progress of the GAL guidelines. OJA anticipates these being put into practice in January of 2025.
7. **Tech Updates:** Christa Coffey & Matthew Brothers provide brief update on CS Calculator & Parenting Time Calendar. The final portion of the

calendar is nearing completion. Possibly one more meeting for questions before it is rolled out.

8. **Virtual Meeting Update:** The Domestic Relations Meetings will return to in person at some point in the future. However, as the committee is in between projects for the time being meetings will be held virtually.
9. **Next Meeting:** Committee notes next meeting is scheduled for July 19, 2024, at 10:00 AM. Virtual Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Fischer, Staff Attorney
Children and Family Division, IOCS

Domestic Relations Committee
Judicial Conference of Indiana

Minutes
July 19, 2024, via Teams

The Domestic Relations Committee convened via Teams, on Friday, July 19, 2024, from 10:00 AM through 1:00 PM.

1. **Members Present:** Judicial Officers Thomas Hallett, Chair, Andrew R. Bloch, Susan Boatright, Brent Ecenbarger, Alicia Gooden, Ashley Hand, Jennifer Kinsley, Ana Patricia Osan, Luke Rudisill, and Beth Webber.
2. **Staff present:** Joseph Fischer and Kelly Elliott with Indiana Office of Court Service served as staff attorneys. Janelle O'Malley and Jill Russell with the Indiana Office of Court Technology provided tech updates.
3. **Approval of May Committee Minutes:** The May 14, 2024, minutes of the committee were approved unanimously. Moved by Judge Hand and Seconded by Magistrate Boatright.
4. **Tech Updates:** Janelle O'Malley and Jill Russell provide brief updates on the Financial Declaration form and Parenting Time Calendar. Janelle O'Malley provided a demonstration of the Financial Declaration form to the committee. It is anticipated that the Financial Declaration form will be accessible to the public soon. Jill Russell reviewed questions with the committee regarding the Parenting Time Calendar for children under the age of three (3).
5. **Ongoing Updates:** Joseph Fischer provided two brief updates to the committee.
 - Brief update on the progress of the GAL guidelines, including the process for applications, registry, training, and complaints.
 - Discussed retaining services of Jane Venohr in 2025 to serve as a child support consultant.
6. **Legislation:** Committee briefly discussed anticipated legislation and the desire to maintain this topic on the agenda for the next meeting.
7. **Non-attorney mediator:** Joseph Fischer provided the committee a brief overview of the issues surrounding non-attorney mediators.

8. **2025 Meetings:** Committee discussed setting meetings in 2025 for the third Friday of each month.
9. **Next Meeting:** Committee notes next meeting is scheduled for August 26, 2024, at 10:00 AM. Virtual Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Fischer, J.D.
Children and Family Division, IOCS

Kelly Elliot, J.D.
Legal Support and Statistics Division, IOCS

Domestic Relations Committee
Judicial Conference of Indiana

Minutes
October 18, 2024, via Teams

The Domestic Relations Committee convened via Teams, on Friday, October 18, 2024, from 10:00 AM through 1:00 PM.

1. **Members Present:** Judicial Officers Thomas Hallett, Chair, Andrew R. Bloch, Susan Boatright, Alicia Gooden, Ashley Hand, Jennifer Kinsley, Ana Patricia Osan, Leslie Shively, Luke Rudisill, Beth Webber, and William Wilson.
2. **Staff present:** Joseph Fischer and Kelly Elliott with Indiana Office of Court Service served as staff attorneys. Jill Russell with the Indiana Office of Court Technology provided tech updates.
3. **Approval of May Committee Minutes:** The July 19, 2024, minutes of the committee were approved unanimously. Moved by Mag. Wilson and Seconded by Judge Hand.
4. **Child Support Calculator Changes:** Jill Russell provided an overview of updates made to the child support calculator. Jill explained that the calculator was generating an incorrect obligation support amount if a user did not select a parent as being responsible for controlled expenses when parents shared an equal number of overnights (i.e., parents intend to share controlled expenses). The updated calculator now requires the user to select one of the parents to be responsible for controlled expenses before a child support worksheet can be generated. The calculator also provides guidance to the user on how to calculate a child support obligation amount if both parents are to share controlled expenses. The Committee approved the changes unanimously.
5. **Update on GAL Guidelines:** Joseph Fischer provided a brief update on the GAL guidelines. The Indiana Supreme Court approved the GAL guidelines on October 17, 2024, and they will go into effect on January 1, 2025. Joseph and Judge Gooden answered questions from committee members related to the GAL guidelines.
6. **Legislation:** The Committee briefly discussed a draft of proposed legislation and the desire to maintain this topic on the agenda for the next meeting.

7. **FAFSA Changes and Student Aid Index:** Judge Hallett informed the committee that for purposes of calculating post-secondary child support, FAFSA will no longer provide an “expected family contribution,” but instead provide a student aid index. Joseph Fischer provided the committee with an article outlining these changes.
8. **Child Support Guidelines:** Joseph and Kelly discussed a question received from a judicial officer regarding the child support guidelines and Social Security disability derivative benefits.
9. **Child Support Guideline Revision:** Judge Hallett explained that contact will be made with Dr. Jane Venhor to determine if she can serve as the committee’s consultant for the next child support guideline revision, which is set for 2028.
10. **Upcoming Meetings:** The Committee decided to cancel the meetings set for November 15 and December 20, 2024. The Committee set dates for meetings in 2025 for the third Friday of each month.
11. **Next Meeting:** The Committee will meet next on January 17, 2025, at 10:00 A.M. Virtual Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Fischer, Staff Attorney
Children and Family Division, IOCS

Kelly Elliot, Staff Attorney
Legal Support and Statistics Division, IOCS