



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

DRAFT – SUBJECT TO CHANGE – FOR WORK GROUP REVIEW – DECEMBER 11, 2015

Child Support Work Group Draft Report

Working Draft Report – December 11, 2015

**Prepared by the Child Support Work Group and
Minnesota Department of Human Services
Child Support Division**

For further information, contact:

Jeffrey Jorgenson, Director
Child Support Division
Minnesota Department of Human Services
P.O. Box 64946 St. Paul, MN 55164-0946
651-431-4400



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

January 15, 2016

To: The Honorable Senator Tony Lourey, The Honorable Senator Julie Rosen, The Honorable Senator Ron Latz, The Honorable Senator Warren Limmer, The Honorable Senator Kathy Sheran, The Honorable Senator Michelle Benson, The Honorable Representative Peggy Scott, The Honorable Representative John Lesch, The Honorable Representative Tara Mack, The Honorable Representative Joe Mullery, The Honorable Representative Matt Dean, and The Honorable Representative Tina Liebling

From: Julie Erickson, Child Support Workgroup Chair

RE: Report from Child Support Workgroup on parenting time expense adjustment and composition of permanent child support task force

Dear Legislators,

Enclosed you will find the recommendations of the Child Support Workgroup, authorized and governed by Minnesota Session Laws, Chapter 71, Article I, Section 121.

The group met six times between August and December 2015 to put together the enclosed recommendations. Per the authorizing session law, the workgroup engaged an economist to provide technical assistance on the parenting time expense adjustment. Dr. Jane Venohr from the Center for Policy Research provided research and analysis. Her work is cited throughout the report.

In addition to the recommendations on changing the parenting time expense adjustment and the composition of a permanent child support task force, the report also includes a list of topics the group believed should be addressed by the permanent task force.

The workgroup fulfills their mission, as defined by the legislature in the session law, by submitting this report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the committees with jurisdiction over civil law, judiciary, and health and human services.

Sincerely,

Julie A. Erickson
Child Support Workgroup Chair
CC: Legislative Reference Library

Table of Contents

Heading One	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Heading Two.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Heading Two.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Working Draft Report – December 11, 2015	1
Executive Summary [Renee].....	3
Introduction.....	4
Child Support Work Group	4
Current Minnesota Parenting Time Expense Adjustment Model	6
Overview	6
Child Support Models Reviewed.....	9
Overview	9
Analysis of Models.....	12
Weaknesses and ways to address them	12
Recommendations: Child Support Parent Expense Adjustment and Model.....	13
Model.....	13
Recommendations: Permanent Child Support Task Force.....	15
Composition	15
Function and Scope	15
Additional Notes	16
Legislative Language [May or may not include]	17
Appendices	18
A. Authorizing Legislation	19
A. Laws of Minnesota 2015, chapter 71, section 121 CHILD SUPPORT WORK GROUP.ne.....	19
B. Work Group Members.....	20
C. Work Group Meeting Schedule.....	21
D. Work Group Charter	22
Child Support Work Group.....	22
2015 – 2016	22
Purpose	22
Scope.....	22

Report.....	22
Roles and Responsibilities.....	22
Duration.....	22
E. Acronyms	23
F. Economic Reports	24

Executive Summary [Renee]

[To be drafted after the entire report is completed and all comments received.]

Introduction

Child Support Work Group

Purpose and scope

The 2015 Minnesota Legislature created, under the responsibility of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), the Child Support Work Group (work group). The enacted legislation, ([Laws of Minnesota 2015, chapter 71, section 121](#)) states that the work group was established to “review the parenting expense adjustment in [Minnesota Statutes, section 518A.36](#), and to identify and recommend changes to the parenting expense adjustment and...include recommendations on the composition of a permanent child support task force.” (See Appendix A.)

The work group used the guiding legislation as the scope for their work. However, they expanded beyond the legislative charge and made additional recommendations on a few longstanding issues that were so closely linked to the parent expense formula that members decided to discuss the issues and include recommendations in this report. (See Appendix B for the work group charter.)

Members and process

The legislation creating the work group also identified its membership:

- Two members of the House of Representatives
- Two members of the Senate
- DHS Commissioner (or a designee)
- Staff member of the Child Support Division of DHS
- Representative of the Minnesota State Bar Association, Family Law section
- Representative of the Minnesota County Attorney’s Association
- Representative of the Minnesota Legal Services Coalition
- Representative of the Minnesota Family Support and Recovery Council
- Two representatives from parent advocacy groups (one representing custodial parents and one representing noncustodial parents)

See Appendix C for a list of the work group members.

The DHS Commissioner designee, Julie Erickson, DHS Child Support Division supervisor, served as the work group chair. Neutral third-party consultants from Minnesota Management & Budget’s Management Analysis & Development division (MAD), facilitated the work group meetings and documented the notes. The legislation authorized DHS to contract with an economist to develop the parent expense adjustment. DHS contracted with Jane Venohr, Ph.D., from the Center for Policy Research in Denver, Colorado. Six work group meetings were held between August 31, 2015 and December 1, 2015 (See Appendix D for meeting schedule). The work group members approved the proposed work group charter and created ground rules to follow as a newly formed group. Members agreed they would use a consensus decision-making process and a super-majority vote would only be used if consensus was not feasible.

Context and history¹

Minnesota’s child support laws and guidelines have evolved and changed over time in an effort to create an equitable and fair system that best meets the needs of the child. In 2005, the Minnesota Legislature passed a bill that made significant changes to the child support guidelines. Notably, this legislation changed the way child support payments were calculated by including the gross income of both parents and the parenting time of each (“income shares” approach), rather than assigning the payment to the parent who was not awarded primary custody. Another key component of the 2005 law was that it allowed a percentage reduction in the child support payment based on the amount of time the parent (without custody of the child) spent with the child in a month. This is called the “parenting expense adjustment.” This allowed the child support payment to be reduced by 12 percent if the parent spent 10 to 45 percent of the “parenting time” with the child. Other changes were made in 2005 including: modifying divorce filing fees, allowing deductions to gross income for non-joint children in the household, and requiring DHS to develop a web-based child-support calculator – among others.

Jump ahead to 2012: Governor Mark Dayton pocket vetoed [HF322](#) and called stakeholders to convene to agree on legislation to address parenting time. In response, the Minnesota Custody Dialogue Group was created. This group drafted legislation and it was introduced as several separate bills that passed as a family law package in [2015 Minnesota Session Law, Chapter 30](#). This law revised the “best interests of the child” standards and made various changes to child support statutes related to types of income used to make child support determinations and clarifying the income tax dependency exemptions each parent can take, among others.

The Minnesota Custody Dialogue Group also introduced legislation in 2015 that aimed to revise the parenting expense adjustment in statute. The “cliff” (which is described in more detail on p. ____) results when payments (for the parent with less parenting time) increase substantially if the parenting time they spend with their child dips below 45 percent. Consequently, this legislation did not pass, and the 2015 Legislature created this Child Support Work Group to review, identify and recommend changes to the parenting expense adjustment to eliminate this “cliff” that takes place.

In the next section of this report, an overview of Minnesota’s current child support model is provided with a more detailed description of the “cliff” issue that this work group was established to review and recommend changes for improvements.

¹ Minnesota Legislative Reference Library, <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/issues/issues?issue=childsupport>, accessed on December 10, 2015.

Current Minnesota Parenting Time Expense Adjustment Model

Overview

Minnesota’s current child support guidelines provides for an adjustment in the basic support portion of a child support order in Minnesota Statutes 518A.36. The law provide for a flat parenting time expense adjustment of 12% of the basic support order when a parent has 10% to 45% parenting time. If a parent has less than 10% of parenting time, no adjustment is given. If a parent has 45.1% or more parenting time, a different formula is used that assumes the parents have equal parenting time.

In cases where the parent has less than 10% parenting time, the basic obligation is calculated according to Minn. Stat. 518A.34. No adjustment is given, so the basic support amount stays the same.

When a parent has 10% to 45% parenting time, the basic obligation is calculated. Then the basic obligation amount is multiplied by .12 and subtracted from the basic support obligation. The resulting number is the new basic support amount.

When the parenting time is equal, the combined basic support amount from the guidelines grid in Minn. Stat. 518A.35 is first multiplied by .75. Next, the new combined basic support is prorated based on each parent’s share of the combined income. Finally, the lower amount is subtracted from the higher amount to reach the new basic support amount for the parent who has a higher income.

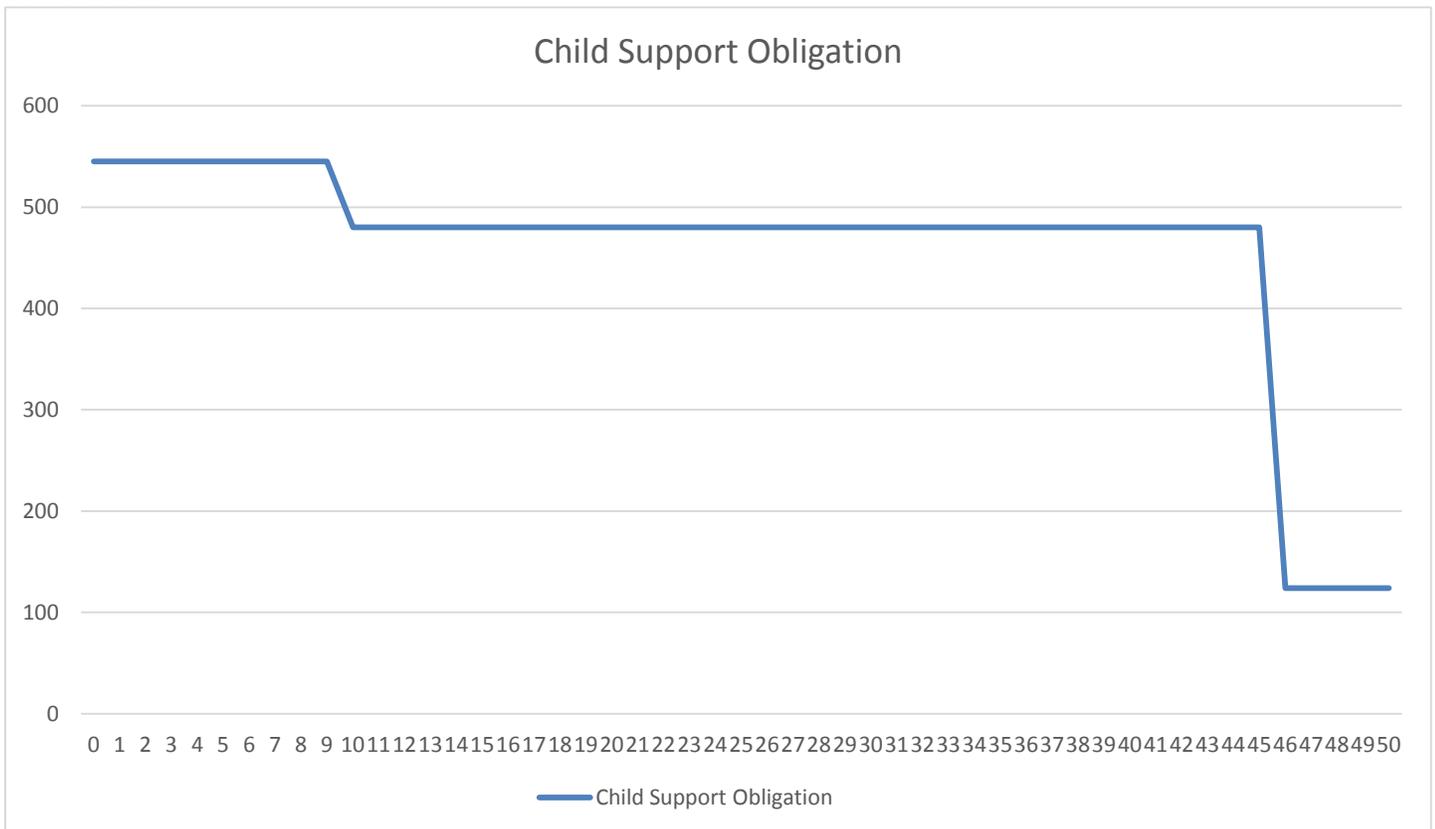
Parenting Time	Deduction	Basic support under 518A.34 (Parent A: \$3281/mo and Parent B: \$2669/mo)	Adjustment	New basic support order
Less than 10%	Nothing	\$545	None	\$545
10% to 45%	12%	\$545	$545 \times .12 = 65$ $545 - 65 = 480$	\$480
45.1% or more	Use alternative formula	(Combined \$923; Parent A is 59% and Parent B is 41%)	$923 \times .75 = 692$ $692 \times .59 = 408$ $692 \times .41 = 284$ $408 - 284 = 124$	\$124

Definition of problem: parenting time adjustment cliff

The major problem with the current model stems from establishing only three categories: no adjustment, 12% adjustment and the alternative formula. The change between the three sections is as little as one overnight—meaning a child support obligation could change hundreds of dollars based on the difference of one overnight over an entire year. Graphically (see diagram), the three-tiered adjustment creates two large “cliffs” where the change in obligation hinges on one night.

The cliffs become points of high conflict. Parents and practitioners testified that conflict occurs during custody hearings over one or two overnights a year that would push the obligation over the cliffs. Parental conflict over child support amounts tied to these cliffs removes the best interest of the child from the center of custody discussions, and shifts it to a conflict over dollars. While there is statutory guidance that the best interest of the child(ren) should dictate the custody arrangements, there is also a preference for agreements between the parents. The high conflict areas around the cliffs undermines both the best interest standard and the push for agreement between the parents.

In addition to the conflicts, the current formula treats all parents between 10% and 45% the same. The parenting time expense adjustment, according to statute, is supposed to recognize the presumption that “while exercising parenting time, a parent is responsible for and incurs costs of caring for the child...” The current formula, however, does not accurately represent the additional costs incurred with additional parenting time. A parent with a child 45% of the time logically spends more on the child than a parent with a child only 10% of the time, but both are given the same deduction under the current law.



Desired future child support model

The workgroup developed a list of things that should be true of a future model. The first requirement was the elimination of the cliff effect by creating a model with more than three tiers. The other desired outcomes identified by the workgroup were:

- A schedule that allows/maintains the economic dignity of people who are living at the poverty level and below.
- A level of support that allows both parents to have resources to parent their children.
- Passing a law that changes the guidelines.
- Ensures best outcomes for the children. Financially, over time, long-term, so children grow up and become good members of society.
- A solution that will help minimize conflict for families in midst of divorce.
- Works for unmarried parents and parents who have never cohabitated.
- A solution that doesn't push parents more into poverty; breaks cycles of generational poverty.

Child Support Models Reviewed

Overview

Dr. Venohr, an economist with vast experience and knowledge about child support systems across the country, was contracted by DHS to create an alternative parenting-time expense adjustment formula that would address the “cliff” issue described earlier in the report. Dr. Venohr attended three work group meetings, at which she presented five different child support parenting-time expense adjustment models for the work group to review and discuss. In preparation for the work group discussions, Dr. Venohr prepared three briefing papers that included background information, research and comparisons of the states’ child support formulas to demonstrate the monthly child support payment amount that results at the different levels of parenting time. (See Appendix F for reports.) The goal of the new parenting-time expense adjustment is to eliminate the “cliff” that occurs at 45.1 percent parenting time.

A brief summary description of the five child support parenting expense adjustment formulas are listed below. The descriptions are based on information in the attached reports written by Dr. Venohr².

- Cross-credit
- Oregon (applied to current MN guidelines)
- Oregon alternative “A”
- Michigan
- Michigan alternative “A”

Cross-credit

Description: The cross-credit is the most commonly used adjustment among states. Minnesota’s current model uses a cross-credit formula for situations in which the child’s time with each parent exceeds 45 percent. (Note: Minnesota uses two different formulas when applying adjustments - depending on the amount of timesharing. A *simple percentage adjustment* is used when the flat 12 percent adjustment is applied at the threshold of 10 percent parenting time. However, the *cross-credit formula* is applied at the threshold of 45 percent parenting time.) Typically, cross-credit formulas weigh the parent’s payment orders by each parent’s timeshare, but the Minnesota adjustment uses 50 percent for all timesharing arrangements exceeding 45 percent. Basic obligation is multiplied by 150 percent to account for approximately 50 percent of all child-rearing expenditures that are being duplicated by parents when the child lives in two households (i.e., the child’s housing and transportation costs are duplicated).

Strengths: Formula is intuitive and generally makes mathematical sense to guidelines users; long history of successful use in several states.

² Venohr, Jane, Ph.D., Economic Basis of Minnesota Basic Schedule and Parenting-Time Expense Adjustment, September 16, 2015; Alternative Adjustments for Parenting Expenses, October 2, 2015; Alternative Adjustments for Parenting-Time Expenses and Low-Income Adjustments, November 10, 2015.

Weaknesses: Requires the use of a timesharing threshold, which can create some undesired outcomes (the higher the threshold is set, the more likely it will produce a cliff effect; if it set too low, the formula may not work for certain income situations); it can create a “flip” – meaning that the formula can result in the parent with more of the child’s time obligated to pay if that parent makes substantially more income than the other parent; adjustment cannot be expressed in a table form (like Oregon’s).

Which states use this adjustment formula? Twenty-one states: AK, CO, DC, FL, ID, KS, LA, ME, MD, MN*, NE, NC, NM, OK, SC, SD, VT, VA, WV, WY, WI). Wyoming uses a cross-credit formula with no multiplier, while all other states use a 1.5 multiplier.

Oregon (applied to current MN guidelines)

Description: Oregon’s adjustment is an advanced math formula that uses exponential powers (squaring or cubing a value) in the formula to allow for a gradual adjustment (parenting time credit) for each additional day that is added to the parenting time. The intent of this type of gradual change is to reduce parental conflicts about the timesharing arrangements and “cliff” effects. The Oregon parenting-expense adjustment does not factor in the parent’s prorated share of the basic obligation into the calculation, whereas the current Minnesota adjustment, the cross-credit and Michigan do.

Strengths: Reflects both parents’ expenses fairly; produces gradual changes to the order amount as time with the child increases; reduces conflict over parent time; adjustment amount is transparent to user; lookup table of percentage adjustments can be used.

Weaknesses: Formula is complicated and not intuitive; it can create a “flip” – meaning that the formula can result in the parent with more of the child’s time obligated to pay if that parent makes substantially more income than the other parent (but this would only happen with great income disparity).

Which states use this adjustment formula? Three states use an advanced math formula: Indiana, Michigan and Oregon.

Oregon alternative “A”

Description: This adjustment works exactly like Oregon’s adjustment above, but uses different percentage adjustments. This adjustment model generally produces lower payment amounts than both Michigan formulas and the current Minnesota model. (The Oregon-A payment amounts are lower than Minnesota’s current model starting at 20 percent parenting time and higher.)

Strengths: Alleviates cliff effects; reflects both parents’ expenses fairly; produces gradual changes to the order amount as time with the child increases; reduces conflict over parent time; adjustment amount is transparent to user; lookup table of percentage adjustments can be used. Note: this formula has been used for two years in Oregon and anecdotal evidence suggests that it reduces parental conflict over the number of overnights because the adjustment is very gradual.

Weaknesses: Formula is complicated, not intuitive, and is difficult to explain; it can create a “flip” – meaning that the formula can result in the parent with more of the child’s time obligated to pay if that parent makes substantially more income than the other parent. (This would only happen with great

income disparity. A rule or deviation factor can be applied to address flipping at low levels of timesharing and minimum order anomaly.)

Which states use this adjustment formula? Oregon

Michigan

Description: The Michigan adjustment is an advanced math formula that uses exponential powers (squaring or cubing a value) in the formula to allow for a gradual adjustment (parenting time credit) for each additional day that is added to the parenting time. The intent of this type of gradual change is to reduce parental conflicts about the timesharing arrangements and “cliff” effects. Michigan’s formula is similar to the cross-credit, but it takes the function to the third power (cubed) to make the adjustment gradual. This formula more closely tracks with Minnesota’s existing adjustment. This adjustment model generally produces higher payment amounts than the Michigan-A and Oregon-A formulas and higher payments than Minnesota’s current adjustment model up to 30 percent parenting time, then the payments drop lower than the current adjustment.

Strengths: Alleviates cliff effects; reflects both parents’ expenses fairly; produces gradual changes to the order amount as time with the child increases; reduces conflict over parent time.

Weaknesses: Formula is complicated and not intuitive, it can create a “flip” – meaning that the formula can result in the parent with more of the child’s time obligated to pay if that parent makes substantially more income than the other parent. (This would only happen with great income disparity. A rule or deviation factor can be applied to address flipping at low levels of timesharing and minimum order anomaly.) Adjustment amount less transparent to user because formula is difficult; adjustment cannot be expressed in a table form (like Oregon and Oregon-A); requires a calculator.

Which states use this adjustment formula? Three states use an advanced math formula: Indiana, Michigan and Oregon.

Michigan alternative “A”

Description: This adjustment works exactly like Michigan’s adjustment above, but instead of cubing the formula, it takes it to the 2.54th power.

Strengths: No cliff effects; reflects both parents’ expenses fairly; produces gradual changes to the order amount as time with the child increases; reduces conflict over parent time.

Weaknesses: Formula is complicated and not intuitive, it can create a “flip” – meaning that the formula can result in the parent with more of the child’s time obligated to pay if that parent makes substantially more income than the other parent. (This would only happen with great income disparity. A rule or deviation factor can be applied to address flipping at low levels of timesharing and minimum order anomaly.) Adjustment amount less transparent to user because formula is difficult; adjustment cannot be expressed in a table form (like Oregon and Oregon-A); requires a calculator.

Which states use this? Michigan is reviewing its guidelines this year and may revise the formula by taking it to the 2.54th power to allow for a daily food budget. (Michigan currently cubes the formula.)

Analysis of Models

The group started with more support for the Oregon-Alternative model. But as the group continued to learn about the math underlying the formula and compared outcomes after applying various scenarios, support for the Michigan model grew.

The Michigan formula offers a theoretical framework that accounts for parenting expenses in two ways—the daily costs of raising a child that increase day by day and the duplicated costs of raising a child in two households when a child is no longer a visitor in the second parent’s home. The first type of cost includes, for example, food and transportation costs. These costs are represented in the model by the gradual increase at the beginning of the adjustment. The second type of costs are incurred only after a child is in the second household enough to require duplication of household living essentials, like a second bedroom in an apartment, furniture, sheets, etc., These costs do not occur at first, but add up quickly once the child is in the household more than 20%-30% of the time. The Michigan model accounts for both types of costs.

Another benefit to the Michigan formula is the recognition that a flat percentage will affect those with lower incomes more than those with higher incomes. The Michigan formula takes this into account and changes the percentage of the parenting time expense adjustment not only on the time spent with the parent but also on the combined incomes of the parents.

Weaknesses and ways to address them

The largest weakness in the Michigan model is the “flipping” — when the parent who has more parenting time is obligated to pay the parent with less parenting time. Currently, Minnesota law only allows this to happen when the parents use the equal parenting time formula (the parent with less parenting time must have at least 45.1%).

The workgroup decided that in most situations the flip should only be allowed at the same level. However, group also believed that in cases where there is a significant income disparity between the parents that a flip at a lower level of parenting time should be allowed in order to increase the likelihood of the child actually spending time with the second parent. The group believed that setting up a rebuttable presumption that a parent with more than 55% parenting time would not have an obligation with a list of factors to consider in order to overcome the presumption would address this weakness.

Another weakness of the Michigan model is that the model is based on an advanced math formula that is not able to be translated into a look up table because it is based on more than one variable. Since it accounts for both the time spent with the parent and the income of the parents in determining the percentage adjustment, a calculator is necessary to determine adjustment.

While some of the other models—Oregon and Oregon A—can be reduced to a look up table, in reality, Oregon (and Minnesota) already rely on calculators to determine the adjustment and final obligation.

While the look up tables might offer a flat percentage, the entire process of determining a final obligation already has many steps involved. Given the reality that most people rely on a calculator even if there is a look up table, the group believed that the more realistic outcomes were worth the continued reliance on a calculator.

Recommendations: Child Support Parent Expense Adjustment and Model

Model

The group recommends the Michigan model:

$$\frac{(A_0)^3(B_s)^3 - (B_0)^3(A_s)^3}{(A_0)^3 + (B_0)^3}$$

Where

A₀ – Approximate annual number of overnights the children will spend with parent A

B₀ – Approximate annual number of overnights the children will spend with parent B

A_s –Parent A’s base support obligation

B_s –Parent B’s base support obligation

In addition, the group recommends the following to limit the amount of “flipping” that occurs in low parenting time situations:

If a parent has more than 55 percent parenting time, there is a rebuttal presumption that the parent shall have a zero dollar basic child support obligation. The court must consider the following to rebut the presumption: (1) Significant income disparity, (2) After considering the benefit and detriment to the child and the ability of each parent to meet the needs of the child, (3) Voluntary under-employment or unemployment (look to existing statute 518A.32), (4) When parent with more than 55% parenting time owes significant arrears to the other parent, and (5) When it would be unjust or inappropriate to follow the presumption.

If the presumption is rebutted, the presumed basic support would revert back to the results of the guidelines and calculator. Deviations would still be acceptable at this point.

Implementation considerations

The group also made a series of recommendations, some legislative and some for department and county policy, to ease implementation and clarify how to handle certain types of existing orders.

Modifications

If provisions of modification statute are met, existing orders may be modified when the new formula is effective. (No change needed)

Split-custody cases

Use H.F. 512 bill language on determining basic support for split custody cases (cases where multiple children have different parenting time arrangements in the same order). Add language that states this is for purposes of calculating **basic support** only. (Legislative change)

New parenting time order modification standard

Amend 518.175 to include a new parenting time order modification standard, “If a parenting plan or an order granting parenting time cannot be used to determine percentages of parenting time for each parent, the court shall modify the parenting plan or order granting parenting time so that the percentages of parenting time for each parent can be determined.” (Legislative change)

No parenting time order, new order

If no parenting order containing specific percentage of time or ability to determine percentages of time, the parenting time expense adjustment shall not be awarded. (Policy change)

Existing order—existing PEA, but no parenting time order

If a current child order contains a parenting time expense adjustment or uses the equal parenting time calculation found at 518A.36, subd 2 or 3 but does not have a corresponding parenting time order, there is a rebuttal presumption that the existing adjustment or calculation shall continue after modification, if the modification is not based on a change in parenting time. (Legislative change)

Existing order—“Reasonable and liberal” parenting time order w/o existing credit

If a parenting time order does not allow for the ability to determine percentages of parenting time for each parent, it is grounds for modification of the parenting time order under the new parenting time order modification standard. (Policy change)

Recommendations: Permanent Child Support Task Force

Composition

The work group recommends that the permanent Child Support Task Force be composed of the following membership:

- Current Child Support Work Group members (12 members listed in Appendix B);
- Two additional parents (one representing custodial parents; one representing noncustodial parents);
- Court administrator (in an advisory capacity);
- Tribal representative who is running IV-D program;
- Child advocate (representing the economic security of children); and
- Office of Ombudsperson for Families.

The Task Force should have no more than 18 members.

Function and Scope

The work group described the recommended role of the permanent Child Support Task Force and identified activities they considered within scope.

The Task Force should:

- Serve in an advisory role to the Department of Human Services.
- Involve ad-hoc members with specific content expertise – as needed – to serve on sub-committees to address topics and issues and make recommendations to the Task Force.
- Meet as a group a minimum of three times per year and hold at least one of the three meetings for the sole purpose of collecting public input.
- At least every four years, advise DHS on the development of the quadrennial review report.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of child support guidelines, economic conditions, and all matters relevant to maintaining effective and efficient child support guidelines.
- Prioritize and address the identified parking lot issues the current work group identified but did not discuss and make recommendations for this report (e.g., updating poverty index, applying self-support reserve [SSR] to both parents). This could be Phase I activities, and Phase II could involve preparing for the quadrennial report (e.g., creating timeline, setting agenda items).

Additional Notes

- The work group recommends that a fiscal note be prepared and attached to the proposed legislation to itemize the required resources necessary to support the permanent Child Support Task Force. For example, conducting research, collecting data, contracting with an economist, and potentially adding an FTE at DHS for overseeing the Task Force and creating the quadrennial review report.
- The permanent Task Force should not be considered a clearinghouse for all issues related to child support; this would create unnecessary barriers for good work being conducted by external advocacy and policy organizations.

Legislative Language [**May or may not include**]

Appendices

A. Authorizing Legislation

- A. **Laws of Minnesota 2015, chapter 71, section 121 CHILD SUPPORT WORK GROUP.**
- B. – (a) A child support work group is established to review the parenting expense adjustment in Minnesota Statutes, section 518A.36, and to identify and recommend changes to the parenting expense adjustment.
- C. – (b) Members of the work group shall include:
- D. – (1) two members of the house of representatives, one appointed by the speaker of the house and one appointed by the minority leader;
- E. – (2) two members of the senate, one appointed by the majority leader and one appointed by the minority leader;
- F. – (3) the commissioner of human services or a designee;
- G. – (4) one staff member from the Child Support Division of the Department of Human Services, appointed by the commissioner;
- H. – (5) one representative of the Minnesota State Bar Association, Family Law section, appointed by the section;
- I. – (6) one representative of the Minnesota County Attorneys Association, appointed by the association;
- J. – (7) one representative of the Minnesota Legal Services Coalition, appointed by the coalition;
- K. – (8) one representative of the Minnesota Family Support and Recovery Council, appointed by the council; and
- L. – (9) two representatives from parent advocacy groups, one representing custodial parents and one representing noncustodial parents, appointed by the commissioner of human services.
- M. – The commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, shall appoint the work group chair.
- N. – (c) The work group shall be authorized to retain the services of an economist to help create an equitable parenting expense adjustment formula. The work group may hire an economist by use of a sole-source contract.
- O. – (d) The work group shall issue a report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over civil law, judiciary, and health and human services by January 15, 2016. The report must include recommendations for changes to the computation of child support and recommendations on the composition of a permanent child support task force.
- P. – (e) Terms, compensation, and removal of members and the filling of vacancies are governed by Minnesota Statutes, section 15.059.
- Q. – (f) The work group expires January 16, 2016.

B. Work Group Members

C. Required Membership	Work Group Member
Member of the House of Representatives	Kim Norton
Member of the House of Representatives	Peggy Scott
Member of the Senate	Chris Eaton
Member of the Senate	Scott Newman
DHS Commissioner (or designee)	Julie Erickson
DHS Child Support Division staff member	Alissa Harrington
MN State Bar Association, Family Law section	Pamela Waggoner
MN County Attorney’s Association	Kathleen Heany Melissa Rossow (alternative)
MN Legal Services Association	Melinda Hugdahl
MN Family Support and Recovery Council	Lisa Kontz
Parent advocacy organization – noncustodial parent	Brian Ulrich
Parent advocacy organization – custodial parent	Marie Garza
Economist, Center for Policy Research	Jane Venohr, Ph.D.

C. Work Group Meeting Schedule

Meeting	Date/Time	Location
#1	August 31, 2015 9:00 – 11:30 am	Department of Human Services, St. Paul
#2	September 12, 2015 8:30 – 11:30 am	Department of Administration, St. Paul
#3	October 13, 2015 8:30 am – 12:30 pm	Department of Human Services, St. Paul
#4	October 28, 2015 9:00 am – 4:30 pm	Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust Building, St. Paul
#5	November 13, 2015 8:00 am – 12:00 pm	Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust Building, St. Paul
#6	December 1, 2015 8:30 am – 4:30 pm	Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust Building, St. Paul

D. Work Group Charter

Child Support Work Group

2015 – 2016

Purpose

The 2015 Minnesota Legislature established, under the responsibility of the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Child Support Work Group. The Work Group is charged with reviewing and recommending changes to the parenting expense adjustment in Minnesota Statutes (M.S. 518A.36).

Scope

The scope of the workgroup is described in the legislation establishing the work group:

(d) The work group shall issue a report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over civil law, judiciary, and health and human services by January 15, 2016. The report must include recommendations for changes to the computation of child support and recommendations on the composition of a permanent child support task force.

Report

The work group's report is due to the Legislature on January 15, 2016.

Roles and Responsibilities

DHS: Convene work group; coordinate meetings; chair the work group; provide technical assistance; compile research; deliver the report to the Legislature on behalf of the work group

Other work group members: Provide expertise, opinions, and feedback to the work group.

Management Analysis & Development (MAD): Facilitate meetings; assist in developing meeting process and agendas; document meetings; provide research support; write report.

Duration

August 2015 – January 2016, approximately five work group meetings.

E. Acronyms

Need to compile all acronyms used as final step.

F. Economic Reports

List reports here – with note about accessibility - attach PDFs after report compiled into PDF.