

Child Support Advisory Committee Meeting

April 13, 2021 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Healthcare and Family Services (HFS)

WebEx Meeting

Committee Members Present via WebEx/phone:

Darryl Apperton, Maggie Bennett, Trent Cameron, Howard Feldman, Dr. Kirk Harris, Juanita Sanders (for Secretary Grace Hou), Elizabeth Lingle, Honorable Judge Pamela Loza, Christina Mahoney, Turyia Clay (for The Honorable Iris Y. Martinez), The Honorable Sidney Mathias, The Honorable Alana I. Mejias, Jessica Patchik, Christine Raffaele, Vickie Smith, Richard Zuckerman

Committee Members Absent:

Maria Barlow, The Honorable La Shawn Ford, Geraldine Franco, Nicole McKinnon, Phillip Mohr, Derrick White

HFS Staff Present via phone:

Bryan Tribble, Gina Hemphill, Ralph Abt, Daun Perino, Irene Curran, Hilary Felton, Sharon Shapiro, and Kim Rossini

Public Guests: Farren Counterman and Mick Gerhardt

- **Welcome to CSAC members – Richard Zuckerman**
 - Roll call of committee members
 - Introduction of state employees and members of the public
 - All committee members, attendees and members of the public were asked to announce their name before speaking and to mute their phone if they are not speaking.
 - Approval of February 16, 2021 meeting notes
Motion made to approve. Motion was seconded, Notes were passed.

- **Legislative Updates – Richard Zuckerman**

There are five bills related to child support:

 1. HB48 - Consumer Debt - CS - 2nd Reading in House – still moving
 2. HB681 - Consumer Debt - CS - Rule 19 in House – Bryan Tribble stated that Child Support Services has been discussing this with Rep. Mayfield. There are problematic aspects on our side. It would put Child Support Services out of compliance. We are not in a position at this time to discuss our position on this. Richard Zuckerman asked if it was appropriate for committee members to discuss it with Bryan. Bryan responded yes that we would include our legislative affairs office. Richard offered his assistance.

3. HB3876 - CS Arrears - Interest - Rule 19 in House – still moving
4. SB258 - IMDMA - Health Ins.- Senate Judiciary (ISBA bill) – up today
5. SB2110 - CS - Actions-Remedies - Senate Judiciary (HFS bill)- up today

- **Quadrennial Review Discussion – Bryan Tribble**

Bryan thanked the members of the Public Input Subcommittee. The group has done a great deal of good work. They have three surveys that they will be sharing once they have reached the final draft. This group meets most Fridays. They came up with three drafts that they are ready to share with the committee.

Demographic Info – Irene Curran & Daun Perino

1. What is your age? (choices given)
2. What is your gender? (choices given)
3. What is your race/ethnicity? (choices given)
4. What is the highest level of school you have completed? (choices given)
5. What is your current employment status? (choices given)
6. Location – provide zip code where you reside
7. Household income – (choices/ranges given)

Kirk Harris stated that this demographic information gives us insight to who is being served. These features will allow us to see the quantitative and qualitative info. This is a better snapshot of the system.

Irene Curran stated that they did not want too much because they don't want people to lose interest.

Vickie Smith stated that when you gather info and ask for zip code some cases could be identifiable. Daun Perino responded that they would not be identifiable. Vicky asked how the data will be used (public or just by department). Bryan responded that it was not yet decided but could be public. Vicky asked why the group didn't use race/ethnicity because they are not the same thing? Bryan asked, in light of the location question, do we really need this info? Richard Zuckerman stated that he thinks we need it. Kirk Harris stated that we could withhold any private info, but the zip code is very important. We have a general idea, but this would confirm the info.

Qualitative Questions – Post Court Survey

Kirk Harris stated that the point of this piece is to get the temp of those going through the system. This will address how comfortable they feel and if the system tries to give a level of comfort.

1. Was your appearance done in person or virtually? (choices given)
2. Upon arrival in the court room, how was as your interaction with courtroom personnel? (choices given)
3. Throughout your court appearance, do you feel you were treated respectfully by courtroom personnel? (choices given and space to explain)
4. Do you think you were listened to throughout the proceedings? (choices given and space to explain)

5. What did you most like about your courtroom experience today? (space to explain)
6. What did you least like about your courtroom experience today? (space to explain)
7. Could anything have been done to improve your experience? (choices given and space to explain)
8. If you provided financial documentation or the financial affidavit to the court, do you believe that documentation was utilized in determining the amount of your child support order? (choices given)
9. Are you aware of any barriers to your payment of child support? (choices given and space to explain)
10. How did you feel you were treated during your court proceeding today? (choices given)
11. Given your experience in the courtroom today, how willing are you to access the judicial process to address future child support issues? (choices given)
12. Was your appearance done in person or virtually? (choices given)

In context of open-ended questions this allows us to get a true appreciation of the institutional changes with the population.

Judge Loza commented on the post pandemic subcommittee. Some cases go out and some show up in court. Most people prefer Zoom. She is interested to see what all of this will show. Technology is still an issue. She is glad that this is being done.

Maggie Bennett stated that there may be a problem with questions asking about default. She suggested that we use a different word than default. Kirk Harris responded that they are not there yet.

Trent Cameron commented on financial doc #8. He stated that they may want to break it out even more. Some judges require info be filed. If not filed, they can't be used. Suggested that this may need to be flushed out a bit more. They bring docs in but don't get them filed. Then they are not allowed to use them. They feel like it isn't fair. Daun Perino stated that some allow them to use them to set something temporary. She also said that they had not considered this. Trent said that at times they are allowed to use the info that is brought in, but some attorneys object. When both parties are pro se this is not an issue. Daun stated that the reason behind this question, docs asked to provide may not be used to set order or calculate. They want the perspective from the parties. Trent stated that they get a lot of people that are upset because they file financial affidavits with HFS then have to do it again with the courts. They don't understand this. We are looking for paystubs and W2's.

Quantitative Questions – Post Court Appearance Survey

Public Input

1. Did your court appearance concern child support? (choices given)
2. Are you currently ordered to pay child support? (choices given)

3. If yes, when was your child support order entered? If you are unsure, an approximate date is fine. (choices given)
4. When the amount of child support was set
5. Was the number of overnights visits you have with your child taken into consideration when your child support order was set? (choices given)
6. Did you provide documents to the Court when the child support order was set? (choices given)
7. Did you provide a financial affidavit to the Court when the child support order was set? (choices given)
8. Do you provide support in your household for children other than those on this current child support order? (choices given)
9. Do you provide support for children not in your household other than those on this current child support order? (choices given)
10. Do you receive support for children in your household other than those on this current child support order? (choices given)
11. Was health insurance addressed as part of today's support order? (choices given)
12. Did someone explain how your child support was calculated? (choices given)
13. Do you understand how your child support was calculated? (choices given)

Daun Perino suggested that #8 may be misunderstood. She said that we need to know the relationship.

Maggie Bennett suggested that in multi-family adjustments if someone responds yes, you may want to add a question to see if they are biological or non-biological kids.

Trent Cameron suggested that we not use the word bio. There are adopted children as well. He thought that we should use "legally obligated to support". Maggie stated that 505 has it worded in statute. Richard Zuckerman asked what we are specifically looking for. Daun stated that we just want to know if it was addressed by the courts. Richard then asked if it would be better to ask if they were ordered to pay anything. It isn't worded to get the specific issue/info. We are just trying to see if the issue was addressed. We may need to be more specific. It should say "for the children". It may be different for each person. Anything that could impact the child support amount.

Vickie Smith asked what the committee thinks about #12 & #13. She asked what we are getting at. Someone responded that we are asking if they know how their order was decided upon and do they fully understand how their support was calculated. Kirk Harris stated that there may be more tools to explain this. Maggie has had people tell her that they go to the web site and have done online calcs. It is a wonderful tool. Many use technology well and do their own online calc. Trent had suggestions the wording be changed. Simply ask if someone explained things and if so, do they understand. Sid Mathias asked that we be careful with #13. He wants to be sure that we do not

make anyone feel stupid. Jessica Patchik stated that you literally have to break it down for them. It is very complicated for some. Darrell Apperton stated that we are going to put demographic info on top and possibly limit some questions. It can be very long. Richard Zuckerman asked Bryan Tribble what the next step is. Bryan responded that he would like to get the committee to give guidance so that we can start the online survey. This is a way that we can tabulate info. We are looking for the vote so that we can take it to the next step and move forward. Richard asked if it would be pretested before release. Bryan said that it absolutely would be. Kirk Harris asked if that is something that he wanted to do today. Bryan responded yes. Kirk put forward a motion to put this forward with recommended changes. Not all committee members were in favor. Richard stated that the committee can move forward in focusing on surveys and methodology.

Procurement Update – Daun Perino

Daun stated that moving forward with procurement, we get moved in different directions. We are looking at the last cost for procurement process. We are gathering more info in order to move forward. Once approved we can get quotes.

Kirk Harris asked about outreach and what is being captured under procurement. Daun explained that we do not have a current contract. Kirk stated that it is a mistake to peruse and not resource and maximize. He feels that it needs to be the most comprehensive quadrennial review possible. We had earlier conversations about outreach. It seems like it is the time for outreach. Bryan suggested that we need to see if there is any room for what is being proposed. Kirk stated that he didn't know that this wouldn't move forward. Richard Zuckerman stated that we are progressing toward having larger groups. Daun stated that Procurement wouldn't really be doing this. They get quotes. It will define what this is. The soon as discussion can be had the better. This process can take several months. Kirk is looking forward to being a part of this. No additional question on this subject at this time.

- **Old/New Business**

- **Old Business:**

- Kirk Harris mentioned a meeting with HFS and DHS. There was a meeting regarding bringing together families on TANF with DHS and Child Support. They discussed their roll of outreach for question review. The idea of using the Quadrennial Review as a project to include people. There is another meeting in a few days. They will be looking at other strategies for outreach. We need to make connections between HFS and DHS. There is something to be said for communicating between agencies.

- **New Business:**

- No new business

- **Public Comments:**

- Mitch Gerhardt state that he appreciates all that the committee is doing. He thanked the committee for their involvement and input.

Richard Zuckerman stated that the next scheduled committee meeting is on July 13th. It may be necessary to have a meeting prior to that. If there is an extra meeting scheduled everyone will be informed.

- **Meeting Adjourned**

Motion made to adjourn; motion approved by voice vote.