

# Minutes

## Child Support Schedule Workgroup

### Subcommittee: Self-Support Reserve and Adding Worksheet Deductions

Thursday, May 11, 2023 3:15 pm – 4:20 pm

Teams Webinar | [Miro Board](#)

## Attendance

### Members Appearing:

Amy Roark	Joy Moore	Kaha Arte
Raymond Allen	Terry Price	<i>Facilitator: Rachelle Jennings</i>
		<i>Notetaker: Lucas Camacho</i>

Public Attendees: None

## Agenda Details

1. Welcome
2. Ice Breaker
3. Focus Area 1: SSR Calculation
  - a. Status of Research of Cost to Support a Single Person Household (Ray & Amy)
    - i. Ray briefly researched this topic with Terry. They discussed creating a two-tier system that would create a different SSR calculation for people in the 6 most populated counties in WA.
      1. The 6 most populous counties are King, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston, Clark, and Spokane.
      2. People in these counties would be placed in a separate tier that would raise their SSR to 150% of the federal poverty guidelines due to the higher costs of living in those regions.
      3. Smaller counties like Grant are less expensive, so we could keep such counties' SSR calculations at the current 125% threshold.
      4. What happens if NCP moves from a county in one tier to a county in another?
    - ii. Amy's research found that the cost to rent a single person household in WA is approximately \$1200 for someone renting a single-person apartment/studio. The cost of food has risen sharply over the past few years. Her numbers are specific to Clark County and address:
      1. Housing
      2. Transportation
        - a. Insurance
        - b. Public Transport
      3. Food
      4. Health Insurance
    - iii. Kaha linked [Out of Reach: | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](#)
      1. This site shows that the fair market price to rent a 1 bedroom apartment in WA is \$1350/mo.
    - iv. Kaha – [The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Washington State 2020](#)
      1. Page 7 of this PDF shows the significant differences in costs between counties.

- a. For example, the self-sufficiency standard for one adult is approximately \$40000/yr in King County, \$30000 in Clark County, and \$20000 in Spokane County.
    - 2. This study's data is from 2020, so some costs have likely been subject to inflation since then.
  - v. **Question:** Is DCS able to sort data by NCP location?
    - 1. **Answer:** We might be able to pull this. Analyzing orders by county might work.
    - 2. [Child Support Program SFY 2022 - ESA Briefing Book](#)
      - a. This document shows how many clients DCS has in each county.
  - vi. Can we leave this at the agency's discretion? Would legislators approve that?
  - vii. The group decided to table this topic for now in order to dedicate time to the other agenda items.
- b. Status of Research as to why Arizona chose 80% threshold (Joy)
  - i. Joy provided two links:
    - 1. [Final Report and Recommendations - Committee for an Interim Review of the Child Support Guidelines - December 2017](#)
    - 2. [How Do Child Support Order Amounts Affect Payments and Compliance?](#)
    - 3. Per her findings, it appears AZ chose their 80% threshold based on a CA study that found that orders that charged more than 20% of an individual's income led to lower compliance rates.
    - 4. **Question:** Do we have data regarding the relationship between NCP income level vs compliance? Is there a threshold after which we see payments decline?
      - a. **Answer:** Rachelle will ask Thomas from BICS (Behavioral Intervention for Child Support Services Demonstration Program) if such data exists before the next subcommittee meeting.
- c. Discussion
  - i. Amy provided the following link: [Judicial Council of California - Review of the Statewide Uniform Child Support Guideline 2021](#)
    - 1. This report discusses California's provisions for low income adjustments and analyzes other states' models and alternatives.

#### 4. Focus Area 2: Worksheet Deductions

- a. Review [Draft Language for Paid Family Leave RCW Change](#) (Joy)
  - i. Edits RCW 26.19.071 (5)(i) to account for state insurance premiums for FMLA actually paid and specifies that items deducted from gross income under that subsection shall not be a reason to deviate from the standard calculation.
  - ii. As it stands, there is no specific percentage of income that this addition affects.
    - 1. Per Brady, 0.8% of each employee's gross wages are deducted, up to the 2023 Social Security cap of \$160,200.
    - 2. **Q:** If it's less than 1%, is it worth including?
      - a. **A:** The group sees no harm in including this provision.
  - iii. **Q:** What's the status of our discussion regarding deducting maintenance?
    - 1. **A:** Ian is still working on getting data to measure the potential impact.
  - iv. The group agreed to bring this recommendation to the larger workgroup.
- b. Review Draft Language for Revision to RCW 26.09.325 (Ray & Brady)
  - i. Brady is still working on drafting these changes.
    - 1. So far, it is similar to our existing abatement policy that affects incarcerated NCPs.
  - ii. Ray provided [a Study](#) that he's using to help guide the language.

- iii. The group agreed to bring this recommendation to the larger workgroup
- iv. **Question:** To clarify, this proposal would only apply to court-ordered treatment?
  - 1. **Answer:** Yes.

## 5. Educational Expenses

- a. Summary
  - i. The Basic Support Obligation does not currently include mandatory educational expenses, such as tuition, books, payments, activity costs such as sports, uniforms, band, yearbooks, etc.
  - ii. Proposed adding language that allows for these to be added as line items on the worksheets, essentially expanding line 11 regarding education expenses
  - iii. Should “required electronics” (tablets, laptops, chargers, etc.) be included as well?
  - iv. Brady will think of how to word this to so that SEOs can complete the worksheets
- b. Further Discussion Sought
  - i. Do we want to move forward with this?
    - 1. The group agrees to move forward with this as well.

## 6. Decisions, Tasks, and Next Steps

- a. Homework
  - i. Rachelle will contact Thomas from BICS to try and obtain info on the relationship between NCP income level and order compliance.
  - ii. Brady and Ray will continue working on drafting language for RCW 26.09.325.
  - iii. Brady will think of how to word the educational expenses proposal to allow SEOs to complete the worksheets.
- b. Next Meeting
  - i. The subcommittee will convene during the workgroup meeting on **Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup>**.