



Ohio Child Support Guidelines Advisory Council

Sunset Review Committee

June 11th, 2024

Chairman Wilkin, Members of the Sunset Review Committee, my name is Ethan Wittkorn, and I am a Legislative Liaison at the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Thank you for allowing me to speak today in support of the continuation of the Child Support Guidelines Advisory Council.

Federal regulation requires ODJFS to establish a single set of guidelines to be used in the establishment of child support orders. These guidelines are designed to be used across the state by courts and child support enforcement agencies as a standardized resource. As such, every four years ODJFS must review this set of guidelines to ensure that they best meet the needs of Ohio children. Additional federal requirements specify that the review must include a consideration of economic data on the cost of raising a child, an analysis of case data of child support orders, and a meaningful opportunity for public input.

To assist in this review, H.B. 591 of the 118th General Assembly established the Child Support Guidelines Advisory Council in 1990. The Council is composed of child support obligors and obligees, judges, attorneys, child support enforcement agency representatives, members of the General Assembly, and stakeholders with an interest in the welfare of children. The Council serves to help ODJFS child support staff review the guidelines by providing a wide range of perspectives from professionals working in the child support field, as well as individuals who are personally impacted by Ohio's child support system.

The Council does not have any full-time staff, but ODJFS child support staff organizes the meetings and provides administrative assistance. Including the time it takes to recruit members, through the final approval of the guidelines, each iteration of the Council is typically active for one to two years. Expenses of the Council are limited to travel expenses of invited members and costs associated with the federally required economic study.

The most recent Council, having met from February 28, 2022, to December 8, 2022, saw input from over 40 child support professionals and members of the public with presentations on real world applications of the guidelines being made by public members.

ODJFS believes that the Child Support Guidelines Advisory Council provides valuable input and assistance in updating the guidelines every four years.

Once again, thank you for allowing me to speak on the Child Support Guidelines Advisory Council. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.