DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF WELFARE AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
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CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES COMMITTEE
Chairperson Kimberly Surratt

Public Comment Submitted for Consideration

Subject: Apply a Multiplication Factor for the Additional Cost of Shared Parenting

Please seriously consider applying a multiplication factor to the support calculation for the added costs of child support when there is shared parenting.

There are several reasons to add a multiplication factor. Of course there is the obvious reason pointed out as Recommendation 11 on page 85 of the report titled REVIEW OF THE NEVADA CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES by Jane Venohr, Ph.D. which is part of your reference materials. The cost is higher for shared parenting because many expenses are duplicated in both homes such as, housing, clothing, utilities, among the most obvious. Since the cost for shared parenting is higher overall, the support should also be higher.

Another reason is, without a factor, any parent who would have to pay support and insists on a higher percentage of custody, will be rewarded with significantly lower support payments. Support payers may be inclined to insist on more custody in order to have lower support payments and proceed to neglect the child while in their care. The ugly truth is, it's all about money.

Those who truly desire to spend nearly equal time with their children, should be expected to understand that keeping two homes is more expensive than one. There is presently no consideration of the added expense of shared parenting. Sadly in many cases it is simple dollars and cents that induce a support payer to fight for equal custody. Support payers are too often willing to disregard the inefficiencies of maintaining two homes, the inconvenience to the children of frequently being moved between two homes, the difficulties of consistent parenting coordination, the difficulty of providing care themselves, and other problems, in order to save a buck. While they should not be punished for wanting to be with their children, the true cost should be recognized, and their custody decisions should be based on the expectation of a support calculation reflecting the true cost.

We suggest including some language to phase in a multiplier for shared parenting. The following are some ideas:

1. Phase in a multiplier so there are no steps in the support calculation, resulting in there being no target for high earners to shoot for when seeking custody. Use a multiplier of 3 times the high earners custody percentage (up to 50%). Apply this factor to any custody arrangement which exceeds visitation every other weekend.

2. Dispose of the step function for shared parenting support calculation which currently occurs at above 40% custody.

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Apply a Multiplication Factor for the Additional Cost of Shared Parenting
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