

Department of Finance and Administration

Legislative Impact Statement

Bill: HB1802

Bill Subtitle: TO REVISE THE FAMILY SUPPORT CHART TO REFLECT PAYOR AND RECIPIENT INCOME.

Basic Change:

Sponsor: Rep. Lowery

HB1802 would require a committee of the Arkansas Supreme Court to revise the methodology underlying the family support chart to reflect both custodial and non-custodial parent income when establishing or modifying a child support obligation. The current chart is based on a percentage of obligor income and does not directly take into account the custodial parent's income.

Revenue Impact:

None.

Taxpayer Impact:

While there is no taxpayer impact as such, citizens for whom child support is an issue may be affected if there is large difference in the child support obligation under the new methodology.

Resources Required:

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) data system changes required to support a change in the method of calculating child support obligation in OCSE cases will cost approximately \$150,000. Two-thirds of the cost would be paid from federal funds.

Time Required:

After guidelines have been developed and published by the Court, OCSE estimates data system development time of approximately five months. Additional staff training will be required after programming changes are completed.

Procedural Changes:

None.

Other Comments:

This change in the methodology is a significant change in Arkansas family law and will impact the bench, bar, and families around the state. The January 1, 2020 deadline for revision of the family support chart provides little time for development, implementation, and education of the bench and bar.

Legal Analysis:

HB1802 amends current law to specify the method by which the family support chart used in divorce, support and paternity actions derives child support obligations. The family support chart is established by Supreme Court rule.