



Winning Strategies: Fatherhood, The Courts & Custody, Incorporated
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501 C 3 Agency advocating, educating & empowering fathers for custody.

March 11, 2021

Mr. Luke Clippinger, Chair
c/o The Maryland Judiciary Committee
Room 101
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Issue: Child Support Guidelines – House Bill 1339

Dear Mr. Clippinger:

We are a 501 C 3 non-profit organization in Baltimore City. Winning Strategies: Fatherhood, The Courts & Custody, Incorporated assists fathers with advocacy, education, enlightenment about Joint/Shared Custody and visitation rights of their child/children, as well as the child support that is associated with joint custody. The *Winning Strategies* program advocates, educates & empowers fathers on how to obtain his legal rights at the pro se level. Therefore, the Child Support Guidelines – House Bill 1339 is important to the fathers we serve.

We have questions surrounding the upcoming meeting on House Bill 1339. We searched for the aforementioned Chapter of acts of the Maryland General Assembly 2020 but was not successful in locating it on the General Assembly website.

Nevertheless, Winning Strategies and fathers we serve would like to know more about the proposed House Bill that was brought to the Judiciary Committee by request of the Department of Human Service. Mr. Clippinger and the Judiciary Committee and Department of Human Services there are 3 questions that we have about HB 1339:

1. Will the child support administration wait until the final Order has been set by a Judge or Magistrate because we help fathers who state that after a court proceeding, he is almost forced to sign a child support document. Why would he have to sign a document for child support because after any initial court appearance everyone has 30 days to file an appeal?
2. If he has 30 days to file an appeal, he could research family laws that could be beneficial to him that he did not know about prior to a proposed Order for child support, if that is not mentioned in the current operating procedures has that wording been added to the proposed HB 1339?
3. What about vacating child support due to the pandemic of COVID-19 and the after-effects of COVID-19 with the loss of employment or reduction in employment, this was not due to poor work performance that the father/obligor lost his job, it was due to a public health crisis?

Lastly, we are concerned about the mental health of fathers as they try to navigate the various systems to do their part in aiding their children however fairness should be given to the fathers so the fathers can plan for a better future to care for their children.

Sincerely,

The Winning Strategies Team

Cc: File
Department of Human Services