

CHAPTER 518

MARRIAGE DISSOLUTION

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518.091 SUMMONS; TEMPORARY RESTRAINING PROVISIONS.

- (a) Every summons must include the notice in this paragraph.

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY RESTRAINING PROVISIONS

UNDER MINNESOTA LAW, SERVICE OF THIS SUMMONS MAKES THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS APPLY TO BOTH PARTIES TO THIS ACTION, UNLESS THEY ARE MODIFIED BY THE COURT OR THE PROCEEDING IS DISMISSED:

(1) NEITHER PARTY MAY DISPOSE OF ANY ASSETS EXCEPT (i) FOR THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE OR FOR THE NECESSARY GENERATION OF INCOME OR PRESERVATION OF ASSETS, (ii) BY AN AGREEMENT IN WRITING, OR (iii) FOR RETAINING COUNSEL TO CARRY ON OR TO CONTEST THIS PROCEEDING;

(2) NEITHER PARTY MAY HARASS THE OTHER PARTY; AND

(3) ALL CURRENTLY AVAILABLE INSURANCE COVERAGE MUST BE MAINTAINED AND CONTINUED WITHOUT CHANGE IN COVERAGE OR BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION.

IF YOU VIOLATE ANY OF THESE PROVISIONS, YOU WILL BE SUBJECT TO SANCTIONS BY THE COURT.

(b) Upon service of the summons, the restraining provisions contained in the notice apply by operation of law upon both parties until modified by further order of the court or dismissal of the proceeding, unless more than one year has passed since the last document was filed with the court.

History: 1991 c 271 s 1

518.10 REQUISITES OF PETITION.

The petition for dissolution of marriage or legal separation shall state and allege:

(a) The name and address of the petitioner and any prior or other name used by the petitioner;

(b) The name and, if known, the address of the respondent and any prior or other name used by the respondent and known to the petitioner;

(c) The place and date of the marriage of the parties;

(d) In the case of a petition for dissolution, that either the petitioner or the respondent or both:

(1) Has resided in this state for not less than 180 days immediately preceding the commencement of the proceeding, or

(2) Has been a member of the armed services and has been stationed in this state for not less than 180 days immediately preceding the commencement of the proceeding, or

(3) Has been a domiciliary of this state for not less than 180 days immediately preceding the commencement of the proceeding;

(e) The name at the time of the petition and any prior or other name, age and date of birth of each living minor or dependent child of the parties born before the marriage or born or adopted during the marriage and a reference to, and the expected date of birth of, a child of the parties conceived during the marriage but not born;

(f) Whether or not a separate proceeding for dissolution, legal separation, or custody is pending in a court in this state or elsewhere;

(g) In the case of a petition for dissolution, that there has been an irretrievable breakdown of the marriage relationship;

(h) In the case of a petition for legal separation, that there is a need for a decree of legal separation; and

(i) Any temporary or permanent maintenance, child support, child custody, disposition of property, attorneys' fees, costs and disbursements applied for without setting forth the amounts.

The petition shall be verified by the petitioner or petitioners, and its allegations established by competent evidence.

History: 1991 c 161 s 2

518.13 FAILURE TO ANSWER; FINDINGS; HEARING.

[For text of subs 1 to 4, see M.S.1990]

Subd. 5. Approval without hearing. Proposed findings of fact, conclusions of law, order for judgment, and judgment and decree must be submitted to the court for approval and filing without a final hearing in the following situations:

(1) if there are no minor children of the marriage, and (i) the parties have entered into a written stipulation, or (ii) the respondent has not appeared after service duly made and proved by affidavit and at least 20 days have elapsed since the time for answering under section 518.12 expired; or

(2) if there are minor children of the marriage, the parties have signed and acknowledged a stipulation, and all parties are represented by counsel.

Notwithstanding clause (1) or (2), the court shall schedule the matter for hearing in any case where the proposed judgment and decree does not appear to be in the best interests of the minor children or is contrary to the interests of justice.

History: 1991 c 271 s 2

518.148 CERTIFICATION OF DISSOLUTION.

Subdivision 1. Certificate of dissolution. An attorney or pro se party may prepare and submit to the court a separate certificate of dissolution to be attached to the judgment and decree at the time of granting the dissolution of marriage. Upon approval by the court and filing of the certificate of dissolution with the court administrator, the court administrator shall provide to any party upon request certified copies of the certificate of dissolution.

Subd. 2. Required information. The certificate shall include the following information:

(1) the full caption and file number of the case and the title "Certificate of Dissolution";

(2) the names and any prior or other names of the parties to the dissolution;

(3) the names of any living minor or dependent children as identified in the judgment and decree;

(4) that the marriage of the parties is dissolved; and

(5) the date of the judgment and decree.

Subd. 3. Certification. The certificate of dissolution shall be conclusive evidence of the facts recited in the certificate.

History: 1991 c 161 s 3

518.167 INVESTIGATIONS AND REPORTS.

[For text of subs 1 to 4, see M.S.1990]

Subd. 5. Costs. The court shall order all or part of the cost of the investigation and report to be paid by either or both parties, based on their ability to pay. Any part of the cost that the court finds the parties are incapable of paying must be borne by the county welfare agency or department of court services that performs the investigation. The court may not order costs under this subdivision to be paid by a party receiving public assistance or legal assistance from a qualified legal services program or by a party whose annual income falls below the poverty line under United States Code, title 42, section 9902(2).

History: 1991 c 271 s 3

518.17 CUSTODY AND SUPPORT OF CHILDREN ON JUDGMENT.

[For text of subs 1 and 1a, see M.S.1990]

Subd. 2. Factors when joint custody is sought. In addition to the factors listed in subdivision 1, where either joint legal or joint physical custody is contemplated or sought, the court shall consider the following relevant factors:

- (a) The ability of parents to cooperate in the rearing of their children;
- (b) Methods for resolving disputes regarding any major decision concerning the life of the child, and the parents' willingness to use those methods;
- (c) Whether it would be detrimental to the child if one parent were to have sole authority over the child's upbringing; and
- (d) Whether domestic abuse, as defined in section 518B.01, has occurred between the parents.

The court shall use a rebuttable presumption that upon request of either or both parties, joint legal custody is in the best interests of the child. However, the court shall use a rebuttable presumption that joint legal or physical custody is not in the best interests of the child if domestic abuse, as defined in section 518B.01, has occurred between the parents.

If the court awards joint legal or physical custody over the objection of a party, the court shall make detailed findings on each of the factors in this subdivision and explain how the factors led to its determination that joint custody would be in the best interests of the child.

[For text of subs 3 and 6, see M.S.1990]

History: 1991 c 271 s 4

518.18 MODIFICATION OF ORDER.

(a) Unless agreed to in writing by the parties, no motion to modify a custody order may be made earlier than one year after the date of the entry of a decree of dissolution or legal separation containing a provision dealing with custody, except in accordance with paragraph (c).

(b) If a motion for modification has been heard, whether or not it was granted, unless agreed to in writing by the parties no subsequent motion may be filed within two years after disposition of the prior motion on its merits, except in accordance with paragraph (c).

(c) The time limitations prescribed in paragraphs (a) and (b) shall not prohibit a motion to modify a custody order if the court finds that there is persistent and willful denial or interference with visitation, or has reason to believe that the child's present environment may endanger the child's physical or emotional health or impair the child's emotional development.

(d) If the court has jurisdiction to determine child custody matters, the court shall

not modify a prior custody order unless it finds, upon the basis of facts that have arisen since the prior order or that were unknown to the court at the time of the prior order, that a change has occurred in the circumstances of the child or the parties and that the modification is necessary to serve the best interests of the child. In applying these standards the court shall retain the custody arrangement established by the prior order unless:

- (i) both parties agree to the modification;
- (ii) the child has been integrated into the family of the petitioner with the consent of the other party; or
- (iii) the child's present environment endangers the child's physical or emotional health or impairs the child's emotional development and the harm likely to be caused by a change of environment is outweighed by the advantage of a change to the child.

In addition, a court may modify a custody order under section 631.52.

(e) In deciding whether to modify a prior joint custody order, the court shall apply the standards set forth in paragraph (d) unless: (1) the parties agree in writing to the application of a different standard, or (2) the party seeking the modification is asking the court for permission to move the residence of the child to another state.

History: 1991 c 266 s 1

518.195 PILOT PROJECT.

Subdivision 1. Criteria. In the counties selected under subdivision 4, a couple desirous of dissolving their marriage may use the streamlined procedure in this section if:

- (1) no living minor children have been born to or adopted by the parties before or during the marriage, unless someone other than the husband has been adjudicated the father;
- (2) the wife is not pregnant;
- (3) they have been married fewer than five years as of the date they file their joint declaration;
- (4) neither party owns any real estate;
- (5) there are no unpaid debts in excess of \$5,000 incurred by either or both of the parties during the marriage, excluding encumbrances on automobiles;
- (6) the total fair market value of the marital assets does not exceed \$25,000, including net equity on automobiles;
- (7) neither party has nonmarital assets in excess of \$25,000; and
- (8) neither party has been a victim of domestic abuse by the other.

Subd. 2. Procedure. A couple qualifying under all of the criteria in subdivision 1, may obtain a judgment and decree by:

- (1) filing a sworn joint declaration, on which both of their signatures must be notarized, containing or appending the following information:
 - (i) the demographic data required in section 518.10;
 - (ii) verifying the qualifications set forth in subdivision 1;
 - (iii) listing each party's nonmarital property;
 - (iv) setting forth how the marital assets and debts will be apportioned;
 - (v) verifying both parties' income and preserving their rights to spousal maintenance; and
 - (vi) certifying that there has been no domestic abuse of one party by the other; and
- (2) viewing any introductory and summary process educational videotapes, if then available from the court, and certifying that they watched any such tapes within the 30 days preceding the filing of the joint declaration.

The district court administrator shall enter a decree of dissolution 30 days after the filing of the joint declaration if the parties meet the statutory qualifications and have complied with the procedural requirements of this subdivision.

Subd. 3. Forms. The state court administrator shall develop simplified forms and instructions for the summary process within 120 days of July 1, 1991. District court administrators shall make the forms for the summary process available upon request and shall accept joint declarations for filing 180 days after July 1, 1991.

Subd. 4. Pilot program. The state court administrator shall designate no more than five counties in at least three different judicial districts as pilot jurisdictions for testing the streamlined process. District court administrators shall make the forms for the summary process available upon request to appropriate residents of the pilot jurisdictions.

History: 1991 c 271 s 5

518.551 MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT PAYMENTS.

[For text of subd 1, see M.S.1990]

Subd. 5. Notice to public authority; guidelines. (a) The petitioner shall notify the public authority of all proceedings for dissolution, legal separation, determination of parentage or for the custody of a child, if either party is receiving aid to families with dependent children or applies for it subsequent to the commencement of the proceeding. After receipt of the notice, the court shall set child support as provided in this subdivision. The court may order either or both parents owing a duty of support to a child of the marriage to pay an amount reasonable or necessary for the child's support, without regard to marital misconduct. The court shall approve a child support stipulation of the parties if each party is represented by independent counsel, unless the stipulation does not meet the conditions of paragraph (h). In other cases the court shall determine and order child support in a specific dollar amount in accordance with the guidelines and the other factors set forth in paragraph (b) and any departure therefrom. The court may also order the obligor to pay child support in the form of a percentage share of the obligor's net bonuses, commissions, or other forms of compensation, in addition to, or if the obligor receives no base pay, in lieu of, an order for a specific dollar amount.

The court shall derive a specific dollar amount by multiplying the obligor's net income by the percentage indicated by the following guidelines:

Net Income Per Month of Obligor	Number of Children						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 or more
\$ 400 and Below	Order based on the ability of the obligor to provide support at these income levels, or at higher levels, if the obligor has the earning ability.						
\$ 401 - 500	14%	17%	20%	22%	24%	26%	28%
\$ 501 - 550	15%	18%	21%	24%	26%	28%	30%
\$ 551 - 600	16%	19%	22%	25%	28%	30%	32%
\$ 601 - 650	17%	21%	24%	27%	29%	32%	34%
\$ 651 - 700	18%	22%	25%	28%	31%	34%	36%
\$ 701 - 750	19%	23%	27%	30%	33%	36%	38%
\$ 751 - 800	20%	24%	28%	31%	35%	38%	40%
\$ 801 - 850	21%	25%	29%	33%	36%	40%	42%
\$ 851 - 900	22%	27%	31%	34%	38%	41%	44%
\$ 901 - 950	23%	28%	32%	36%	40%	43%	46%
\$ 951 - 1000	24%	29%	34%	38%	41%	45%	48%
\$1001 - 4000	25%	30%	35%	39%	43%	47%	50%

Guidelines for support for an obligor with a monthly income of \$4,001 or more shall be the same dollar amounts as provided for in the guidelines for an obligor with a monthly income of \$4,000.

Net Income defined as:

Total monthly income less	* (i) Federal Income Tax
	* (ii) State Income Tax
	(iii) Social Security Deductions
	(iv) Reasonable Pension Deductions
*Standard Deductions apply- use of tax tables recommended	(v) Union Dues
	(vi) Cost of Dependent Health Insurance Coverage
	(vii) Cost of Individual or Group Health/Hospitalization Coverage or an Amount for Actual Medical Expenses
	(viii) A Child Support or Maintenance Order that is Currently Being Paid.

"Net income" does not include:

(1) the income of the obligor's spouse, but does include in-kind payments received by the obligor in the course of employment, self-employment, or operation of a business if the payments reduce the obligor's living expenses; or

(2) compensation received by a party for employment in excess of a 40-hour work week, provided that:

(i) support is nonetheless ordered in an amount at least equal to the guidelines amount based on income not excluded under this clause; and

(ii) the party demonstrates, and the court finds, that:

(A) the excess employment began after the filing of the petition for dissolution;

(B) the excess employment reflects an increase in the work schedule or hours worked over that of the two years immediately preceding the filing of the petition;

(C) the excess employment is voluntary and not a condition of employment;

(D) the excess employment is in the nature of additional, part-time or overtime employment compensable by the hour or fraction of an hour; and

(E) the party's compensation structure has not been changed for the purpose of affecting a support or maintenance obligation.

(b) In addition to the child support guidelines, the court shall take into consideration the following factors in setting or modifying child support:

(1) all earnings, income, and resources of the parents, including real and personal property, but excluding income from excess employment of the obligor or obligee that meets the criteria of paragraph (a), clause (2)(ii);

(2) the financial needs and resources, physical and emotional condition, and educational needs of the child or children to be supported;

(3) the standards of living the child would have enjoyed had the marriage not been dissolved, but recognizing that the parents now have separate households;

(4) the amount of the aid to families with dependent children grant for the child or children;

(5) which parent receives the income taxation dependency exemption and what financial benefit the parent receives from it; and

(6) the parents' debts as provided in paragraph (c).

(c) In establishing or modifying a support obligation, the court may consider debts owed to private creditors, but only if:

- (1) the right to support has not been assigned under section 256.74;
- (2) the court determines that the debt was reasonably incurred for necessary support of the child or parent or for the necessary generation of income. If the debt was incurred for the necessary generation of income, the court shall consider only the amount of debt that is essential to the continuing generation of income; and
- (3) the party requesting a departure produces a sworn schedule of the debts, with supporting documentation, showing goods or services purchased, the recipient of them, the amount of the original debt, the outstanding balance, the monthly payment, and the number of months until the debt will be fully paid.
- (d) Any schedule prepared under paragraph (c), clause (3), shall contain a statement that the debt will be fully paid after the number of months shown in the schedule, barring emergencies beyond the party's control.
- (e) Any further departure below the guidelines that is based on a consideration of debts owed to private creditors shall not exceed 18 months in duration, after which the support shall increase automatically to the level ordered by the court. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit one or more step increases in support to reflect debt retirement during the 18-month period.
- (f) Where payment of debt is ordered pursuant to this section, the payment shall be ordered to be in the nature of child support.
- (g) Nothing shall preclude the court from receiving evidence on the above factors to determine if the guidelines should be exceeded or modified in a particular case.
- (h) The guidelines in this subdivision are a rebuttable presumption and shall be used in all cases when establishing or modifying child support. If the court does not deviate from the guidelines, the court shall make written findings concerning the amount of the obligor's income used as the basis for the guidelines calculation and any other significant evidentiary factors affecting the determination of child support. If the court deviates from the guidelines, the court shall make written findings giving the reasons for the deviation and shall specifically address the criteria in paragraph (b) and how the deviation serves the best interest of the child. The provisions of this paragraph apply whether or not the parties are each represented by independent counsel and have entered into a written agreement. The court shall review stipulations presented to it for conformity to the guidelines and the court is not required to conduct a hearing, but the parties shall provide the documentation of earnings required under subdivision 5b.

[For text of subd 5a, see M.S.1990]

Subd. 5b. Determination of income. (a) The parties shall timely serve and file documentation of earnings and income. When there is a prehearing conference, the court must receive the documentation of income at least ten days prior to the prehearing conference. Documentation of earnings and income also includes, but is not limited to, pay stubs for the most recent three months, employer statements, or statement of receipts and expenses if self-employed. Documentation of earnings and income also includes copies of each parent's most recent federal tax returns, including W-2 forms, 1099 forms, unemployment compensation statements, workers' compensation statements, and all other documents evidencing income as received that provide verification of income over a longer period.

(b) If a parent under the jurisdiction of the court does not appear at a court hearing after proper notice of the time and place of the hearing, the court shall set income for that parent based on credible evidence before the court or in accordance with paragraph (c). Credible evidence may include documentation of current or recent income, testimony of the other parent concerning recent earnings and income levels, and the parent's wage reports filed with the Minnesota department of jobs and training under section 268.121.

(c) If the court finds that a parent is voluntarily unemployed or underemployed, child support shall be calculated based on a determination of imputed income. A parent is not considered voluntarily unemployed or underemployed upon a showing by the

parent that the unemployment or underemployment: (1) is temporary and will ultimately lead to an increase in income; or (2) represents a bona fide career change that outweighs the adverse effect of that parent's diminished income on the child. Imputed income means the estimated earning ability of a parent based on the parent's prior earnings history, education, and job skills, and on availability of jobs within the community for an individual with the parent's qualifications. If the court is unable to determine or estimate the earning ability of a parent, the court may calculate child support based on full-time employment of 40 hours per week at the federal minimum wage or the Minnesota minimum wage, whichever is higher. If a parent is physically or mentally incapacitated, it shall be presumed that the parent is not voluntarily unemployed or underemployed.

Subd. 5c. Child support guidelines to be reviewed every four years. No later than 1994 and every four years after that, the department of human services shall conduct a review of the child support guidelines.

[For text of subs 6 to 11, see M.S.1990]

Subd. 12. Occupational license suspension. Upon petition of an obligee or public agency responsible for child support enforcement, if the court finds that the obligor is or may be licensed by a licensing board listed in section 214.01 and the obligor is in arrears in court-ordered child support payments, the court may direct the licensing board to conduct a hearing under section 214.101 concerning suspension of the obligor's license. If the obligor is a licensed attorney, the court may report the matter to the lawyers professional responsibility board for appropriate action in accordance with the rules of professional conduct. The remedy under this subdivision is in addition to any other enforcement remedy available to the court.

History: 1991 c 266 s 2; 1991 c 292 art 5 s 75-78

NOTE: Subdivision 12, as added by Laws 1991, chapter 292, article 5, section 78, is effective May 1, 1992. See Laws 1991, chapter 292, article 5, section 85, subdivision 4.

518.57 MINOR CHILDREN; SUPPORT.

[For text of subs 1 and 2, see M.S.1990]

Subd. 3. Satisfaction of child support obligation. The court may conclude that an obligor has satisfied a child support obligation by providing a home, care, and support for the child while the child is living with the obligor, if the court finds that the child was integrated into the family of the obligor with the consent of the obligee and child support payments were not assigned to the public agency under section 256.74.

History: 1991 c 266 s 3

518.58 DIVISION OF MARITAL PROPERTY.

Subdivision 1. General. Upon a dissolution of a marriage, an annulment, or in a proceeding for disposition of property following a dissolution of marriage by a court which lacked personal jurisdiction over the absent spouse or lacked jurisdiction to dispose of the property and which has since acquired jurisdiction, the court shall make a just and equitable division of the marital property of the parties without regard to marital misconduct, after making findings regarding the division of the property. The court shall base its findings on all relevant factors including the length of the marriage, any prior marriage of a party, the age, health, station, occupation, amount and sources of income, vocational skills, employability, estate, liabilities, needs, opportunity for future acquisition of capital assets, and income of each party. The court shall also consider the contribution of each in the acquisition, preservation, depreciation or appreciation in the amount or value of the marital property, as well as the contribution of a spouse as a homemaker. It shall be conclusively presumed that each spouse made a substantial contribution to the acquisition of income and property while they were living together as husband and wife. The court may also award to either spouse the household goods and furniture of the parties, whether or not acquired during the marriage. The

court shall value marital assets for purposes of division between the parties as of the day of the initially scheduled prehearing settlement conference, unless a different date is agreed upon by the parties, or unless the court makes specific findings that another date of valuation is fair and equitable. If there is a substantial change in value of an asset between the date of valuation and the final distribution, the court may adjust the valuation of that asset as necessary to effect an equitable distribution.

Subd. 1a. Transfer, encumbrance, concealment, or disposition of marital assets. During the pendency of a marriage dissolution, separation, or annulment proceeding, or in contemplation of commencing a marriage dissolution, separation, or annulment proceeding, each party owes a fiduciary duty to the other for any profit or loss derived by the party, without the consent of the other, from a transaction or from any use by the party of the marital assets. If the court finds that a party to a marriage, without consent of the other party, has in contemplation of commencing, or during the pendency of, the current dissolution, separation, or annulment proceeding, transferred, encumbered, concealed, or disposed of marital assets except in the usual course of business or for the necessities of life, the court shall compensate the other party by placing both parties in the same position that they would have been in had the transfer, encumbrance, concealment, or disposal not occurred. The burden of proof under this subdivision is on the party claiming that the other party transferred, encumbered, concealed, or disposed of marital assets in contemplation of commencing or during the pendency of the current dissolution, separation, or annulment proceeding, without consent of the claiming party, and that the transfer, encumbrance, concealment, or disposal was not in the usual course of business or for the necessities of life. In compensating a party under this section, the court, in dividing the marital property, may impute the entire value of an asset and a fair return on the asset to the party who transferred, encumbered, concealed, or disposed of it. The absence of a restraining order against the transfer, encumbrance, concealment, or disposal of marital property is not available as a defense under this subdivision.

[For text of subs 2 to 4, see M.S.1990]

History: 1991 c 266 s 4,5

518.619 CUSTODY OR VISITATION; MEDIATION SERVICES.

[For text of subs 1 to 5, see M.S.1990]

Subd. 6. Mediator recommendations. When the parties have not reached agreement as a result of the mediation proceeding, the mediator may recommend to the court that an investigation be conducted under section 518.167, or that other action be taken to assist the parties to resolve the controversy before hearing on the issues. The mediator may not conduct the investigation or evaluation unless: (1) the parties agree in writing, executed after the termination of mediation, that the mediator may conduct the investigation or evaluation, or (2) there is no other person reasonably available to conduct the investigation or evaluation. The mediator may recommend that mutual restraining orders be issued in appropriate cases, pending determination of the controversy, to protect the well-being of the children involved in the controversy.

[For text of subs 7 and 8, see M.S.1990]

History: 1991 c 266 s 6

518.64 MODIFICATION OF ORDERS OR DECREES.

Subdivision 1. After an order for maintenance or support money, temporary or permanent, or for the appointment of trustees to receive property awarded as maintenance or support money, the court may from time to time, on motion of either of the parties, a copy of which is served on the public authority responsible for child support enforcement if payments are made through it, or on motion of the public authority responsible for support enforcement, modify the order respecting the amount of main-

tenance or support money, and the payment of it, and also respecting the appropriation and payment of the principal and income of property held in trust, and may make an order respecting these matters which it might have made in the original proceeding, except as herein otherwise provided.

Subd. 2. Modification. (a) The terms of an order respecting maintenance or support may be modified upon a showing of one or more of the following: (1) substantially increased or decreased earnings of a party; (2) substantially increased or decreased need of a party or the child or children that are the subject of these proceedings; (3) receipt of assistance under sections 256.72 to 256.87; or (4) a change in the cost of living for either party as measured by the federal bureau of statistics, any of which makes the terms unreasonable and unfair.

The terms of a current support order shall be rebuttably presumed to be unreasonable and unfair if the application of the child support guidelines in section 518.551, subdivision 5, to the current circumstances of the parties results in a calculated court order that is at least 20 percent and at least \$50 per month higher or lower than the current support order.

(b) On a motion for modification of maintenance, including a motion for the extension of the duration of a maintenance award, the court shall apply, in addition to all other relevant factors, the factors for an award of maintenance under section 518.552 that exist at the time of the motion. On a motion for modification of support, the court:

(1) shall apply section 518.551, subdivision 5, and shall not consider the financial circumstances of each party's spouse, if any; and

(2) shall not consider compensation received by a party for employment in excess of a 40-hour work week, provided that the party demonstrates, and the court finds, that:

(i) the excess employment began after entry of the existing support order;

(ii) the excess employment is voluntary and not a condition of employment;

(iii) the excess employment is in the nature of additional, part-time employment, or overtime employment compensable by the hour or fractions of an hour;

(iv) the party's compensation structure has not been changed for the purpose of affecting a support or maintenance obligation;

(v) in the case of an obligor, current child support payments are at least equal to the guidelines amount based on income not excluded under this clause; and

(vi) in the case of an obligor who is in arrears in child support payments to the obligee, any net income from excess employment must be used to pay the arrearages until the arrearages are paid in full.

(c) A modification of support or maintenance may be made retroactive only with respect to any period during which the petitioning party has pending a motion for modification but only from the date of service of notice of the motion on the responding party and on the public authority if public assistance is being furnished or the county attorney is the attorney of record. However, modification may be applied to an earlier period if the court makes express findings that the party seeking modification was precluded from serving a motion by reason of a significant physical or mental disability, a material misrepresentation of another party, or fraud upon the court and that the party seeking modification, when no longer precluded, promptly served a motion.

(d) Except for an award of the right of occupancy of the homestead, provided in section 518.63, all divisions of real and personal property provided by section 518.58 shall be final, and may be revoked or modified only where the court finds the existence of conditions that justify reopening a judgment under the laws of this state, including motions under section 518.145, subdivision 2. The court may impose a lien or charge on the divided property at any time while the property, or subsequently acquired property, is owned by the parties or either of them, for the payment of maintenance or support money, or may sequester the property as is provided by section 518.24.

(e) The court need not hold an evidentiary hearing on a motion for modification of maintenance or support.

(f) Section 518.14 shall govern the award of attorney fees for motions brought under this subdivision.

Subd. 3. Unless otherwise agreed in writing or expressly provided in the decree, the obligation to pay future maintenance is terminated upon the death of either party or the remarriage of the party receiving maintenance.

Subd. 4. Unless otherwise agreed in writing or expressly provided in the order, provisions for the support of a child are terminated by emancipation of the child but not by the death of a parent obligated to support the child. When a parent obligated to pay support dies, the amount of support may be modified, revoked, or commuted to a lump sum payment, to the extent just and appropriate in the circumstances.

Subd. 5. **Form.** The department of human services shall prepare and make available to courts, obligors and persons to whom child support is owed a form to be submitted by the obligor or the person to whom child support is owed in support of a motion for a modification of an order for support or maintenance. The rulemaking provisions of chapter 14 shall not apply to the preparation of the form.

Subd. 6. **Expedited procedure.** (a) The public authority may seek a modification of the child support order in accordance with the rules of civil procedure or under the expedited procedures in this subdivision.

(b) The public authority may serve the following documents upon the obligor either by certified mail or in the manner provided for service of a summons under the rules of civil procedure:

(i) a notice of its application for modification of the obligor's support order stating the amount and effective date of the proposed modification which date shall be no sooner than 30 days from the date of service;

(ii) an affidavit setting out the basis for the modification under subdivision 2, including evidence of the current income of the parties;

(iii) any other documents the public authority intends to file with the court in support of the modification;

(iv) the proposed order;

(v) notice to the obligor that if the obligor fails to move the court and request a hearing on the issue of modification of the support order within 30 days of service of the notice of application for modification, the public authority will likely obtain an order, ex parte, modifying the support order; and

(vi) an explanation to the obligor of how a hearing can be requested, together with a motion for review form that the obligor can complete and file with the court to request a hearing.

(c) If the obligor moves the court for a hearing, any modification must be stayed until the court has had the opportunity to determine the issue. Any modification ordered by the court is effective on the date set out in the notice of application for modification, but no earlier than 30 days following the date the obligor was served.

(d) If the obligor fails to move the court for hearing within 30 days of service of the notice, the public authority shall file with the court a copy of the notice served on the obligor as well as all documents served on the obligor, proof of service, and a proposed order modifying support.

(e) If, following judicial review, the court determines that the procedures provided for in this subdivision have been followed and the requested modification is appropriate, the order shall be signed ex parte and entered.

(f) Failure of the court to enter an order under this subdivision does not prejudice the right of the public authority or either party to seek modification in accordance with the rules of civil procedure.

(g) The supreme court shall develop standard forms for the notice of application of modification of the support order, the supporting affidavit, the obligor's responsive motion, and proposed order granting the modification.

History: 1991 c 266 s 7; 1991 c 292 art 5 s 79

518.641 COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS IN MAINTENANCE OR CHILD SUPPORT ORDER.

Subdivision 1. Requirement. An order for maintenance or child support shall provide for a biennial adjustment in the amount to be paid based on a change in the cost of living. An order that provides for a cost-of-living adjustment shall specify the cost-of-living index to be applied and the date on which the cost-of-living adjustment shall become effective. The court may use the consumer price index for all urban consumers, Minneapolis-St. Paul (CPI-U), the consumer price index for wage earners and clerical, Minneapolis-St. Paul (CPI-W), or another cost-of-living index published by the department of labor which it specifically finds is more appropriate. Cost-of-living increases under this section shall be compounded. The court may also increase the amount by more than the cost-of-living adjustment by agreement of the parties or by making further findings. The adjustment becomes effective on the first of May of the year in which it is made, for cases in which payment is made to the public authority. For cases in which payment is not made to the public authority, application for an adjustment may be made in any month but no application for an adjustment may be made sooner than two years after the date of the dissolution decree. A court may waive the requirement of the cost-of-living clause if it expressly finds that the obligor's occupation or income, or both, does not provide for cost-of-living adjustment or that the order for maintenance or child support has a provision such as a step increase that has the effect of a cost-of-living clause. The court may waive a cost-of-living adjustment in a maintenance order if the parties so agree in writing. The commissioner of human services may promulgate rules for child support adjustments under this section in accordance with the rulemaking provisions of chapter 14.

Subd. 2. Conditions. No adjustment under this section may be made unless the order provides for it and until the following conditions are met:

(a) the obligee or public authority serves notice of its application for adjustment by mail on the obligor at the obligor's last known address at least 20 days before the effective date of the adjustment;

(b) the notice to the obligor informs the obligor of the date on which the adjustment in payments will become effective; and

(c) after receipt of notice and before the effective day of the adjustment, the obligor fails to request a hearing on the issue of whether the adjustment should take effect, and ex parte, to stay imposition of the adjustment pending outcome of the hearing.

[For text of subs 3 to 5, see M.S.1990]

History: 1991 c 266 s 8,9