

Chapter 10.05

FAMILY RELATIONS

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Prior legislation: Resos. 04-R-32, 05-R-13, 08-R-101.

Article I. Policy, Purpose and Scope

10.05.010 Policy – Best interests of the child.

Parents have the responsibility to make decisions and perform other parental functions necessary for the care and growth of their minor children. In any proceeding between parents under this article, the best interest of the child shall be the standard by which the Tribal Court determines and allocates parental responsibilities. The Tribe recognizes the fundamental importance of the parent-child relationship and that the relationship between the child and each parent should be fostered unless inconsistent with the best interest of the child. The best interests of the child are served by a parenting arrangement that best maintains a child's emotional growth, Tribal and cultural ties, health and stability, and physical care. Furthermore, the best interests of the child are ordinarily served when the existing pattern of interaction between a parent and child is altered only to the extent necessitated by the changed relationship of the parents or as required to protect the child from physical, mental or emotional harm. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (1)(A), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.020 Purpose.

This chapter shall be liberally construed and interpreted to fulfill the following purposes whenever possible:

- (A) To provide adequate procedures for the ceremony and registration of marriage;
- (B) To strengthen and preserve the institution of marriage and safeguard family relationships;
- (C) To promote the peaceful and fair settlement of disputes between parties to a marriage;
- (D) To minimize the potential harm to spouses and their children caused by the process of legal dissolution of marriage (divorce);
- (E) To make reasonable provisions for spouse and minor children during and after Tribal Court intervention; and

(F) To provide adequate procedures for establishing the legal relationship existing between a child and his or her natural or adoptive parents. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (1)(B), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.030 Scope.

Except as otherwise specified herein, civil actions as outlined in the Rules of Court of the Karuk Tribal Court (Chapter [3.10](#) KTC), shall govern all proceedings under this chapter.

(A) A proceeding under this chapter shall be entitled "In re ___ and ___."

(B) The initial pleading in all proceedings under this chapter shall be designated a petition. A responsive pleading shall be designated a response.

(C) The parties may request any settlement conference (mediation) be held off the record. Even where the Court consents to the conference being held off the record, the Court must go on the record at the conclusion of the conference (mediation) and record any agreements reached by the parties. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (1)(C), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.040 Dispute resolution – Mediation/peacemaking.

The purpose of the dispute resolution process is to encourage cooperation, reduce bitterness and develop an agreement that to the extent possible meets the needs and best interests of all the parties involved consistent with the provisions of this chapter. If stipulated to by the parties, the Court shall apply the customs and traditions of the Karuk Tribe pursuant to Chapter [3.05](#) KTC, Tribal Court.

In any proceeding under this chapter, the dispute resolution process outlined in KTC [10.10.270](#) shall be arranged at or before the time the matter is set for hearing. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (1)(D), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.050 Sovereign immunity preserved.

Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to constitute a waiver by the Karuk Tribe of its sovereign immunity, rights, powers or privileges. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (1)(E), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.060 Inconsistent provisions of other law.

It is the intent of the Tribal Council to enact this chapter to supplement the jurisdiction of the Tribal Court as authorized by Chapter [3.05](#) KTC, Tribal Court; the Children and Family Code (this title); and other provisions of Tribal law. If any provision of the Children and Family Code is found to be inconsistent with this chapter, the provisions of this chapter shall govern in family relations proceedings, unless there is good cause shown that

application of this chapter would not be in the best interests of the child(ren). Chapter [10.10](#) KTC remains in full force and effect for children and youth in need of care proceedings. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (1)(F), 4/30/2009.]

Article II. Definitions

10.05.070 Definitions.

For purposes of this chapter, unless otherwise expressly provided, the following definitions shall apply:

“Child Support Schedule” means the formula for calculating in a fair and consistent manner the amount of child support payments equitable in any given situation approved under Article [VII](#) of this chapter. The Tribal Court shall use the Child Support Schedule (KTC [10.05.570](#)) as a guideline for its child support orders.

“Community property” generally means property acquired during marriage, except by gift, inheritance or devise to either spouse individually. All property acquired during marriage is presumed to be community property.

“Conference” means a conference conducted by the Karuk Peacemaker Mediation Forum providing for an impartial third party to assist the married parties in determining the prospects of preserving the marital relationship as opposed to instituting or continuing with dissolution proceedings.

“Dissolution” means the act of terminating a marriage (i.e., divorce).

“Family violence” means acts or threats of physical harm that occur among members of the same family, intimate friends, or residents of the same household.

“Irretrievably broken” means that there is no reasonable prospect for reconciliation.

“Parent and child relationship” means the legal relationship existing between a child and his or her natural or adoptive parents incident to which the law confers or imposes rights, privileges, duties, and obligations. It includes the mother and child relationship and the father and child relationship.

“Parenting plan” means a plan for parenting the child, including allocation of parenting functions, which plan is incorporated in any final decree or decree of modification in an action for dissolution of marriage, declaration of invalidity, legal separation, or child custody.

“Separate property” generally means property acquired before marriage or acquired during marriage by either spouse individually as a result of a gift, inheritance or devise. Property acquired after a legal separation is also separate property provided community property did not generate the funds for the acquisition (e.g., money from a community business).

“Temporary parenting plan” means a plan for parenting of the child pending final resolution of any action for dissolution of marriage, declaration of invalidity, legal separation, or child custody.

“Tribal Council” means the Karuk Tribal Council.

"Tribe" means the Karuk Tribe. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § 2, 4/30/2009.]

Article III. Marriage

10.05.080 Persons who may marry.

Marriage is a personal relationship between two (2) persons arising out of a civil contract to which the consent of the parties is essential. No marriage license shall be issued or marriage performed unless the persons to be married meet the following qualifications:

(A) Both persons to be married are at least eighteen (18) years old; or an emancipated minor, or with parental consent. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (3)(A), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.090 Prohibited marriages.

Marriages in the following cases are prohibited:

(A) When either party thereto has a wife or husband living at the time of marriage;

(B) When the parties thereto are nearer of kin to each other than second cousins;

(C) It shall be unlawful for any person to marry their father's sister, mother's sister, daughter, sister, son's daughter, daughter's daughter, brother's daughter, or sister's daughter; and

(D) It shall be unlawful for any person to marry their father's brother, mother's brother, son, brother, son's son, daughter's son, brother's son, or sister's son. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (3)(B), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.100 Who may perform marriage ceremonies.

A marriage may be solemnized and performed by the following:

(A) A recognized member of the clergy or person recognized by their religion as having authority to perform marriages, recognized spiritual leader; or

(B) A judge of the Tribal Court;

(C) A Council member as designated by the Tribal Council. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (3)(C), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.110 Marriage ceremony.

No particular form of marriage ceremony is required; provided, that the persons to be married shall declare in the presence of the person performing the marriage ceremony that they take each other to be partners and that such declaration is made in the presence of at least two (2) attending witnesses. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (3)(D), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.120 Marriage licenses, affidavits and certificates.

(A) In addition to collecting the payment of a fee to be set by the Tribal Court, the Clerk prior to issuing a marriage license shall require each party to:

- (1) Make and file an affidavit upon forms provided by the Tribal Court showing that the applicants qualify under this article.
- (2) Properly endorse the marriage license by the authorized person performing the marriage and the two (2) attending witnesses.
- (3) Return the license to the Clerk within thirty (30) days of the ceremony, who shall then issue a marriage certificate to the parties.

(B) The Clerk shall keep a public record of all marriage licenses and certificates issued. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (3)(E), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.130 Voidable marriages.

When either party to a marriage shall be incapable of consenting thereto, for want of legal age or a sufficient understanding, or when the consent of either party shall be obtained by force or fraud, such marriage is voidable, but only by the party laboring under the disability or upon whom the force or fraud is imposed. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (3)(F), 4/30/2009.]

Article IV. Dissolution of Marriage, Legal Separation and Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage**10.05.140 Pleadings – Contents – Defense – Joinder of parties.**

(A) The petition in a proceeding for dissolution of marriage, legal separation or a declaration of invalidity shall allege that the marriage is irretrievably broken or was never legally valid and shall set forth:

- (1) The name, last known address and Tribal enrollment, if any, of each party and the length of domicile in this community;
 - (2) The date of the marriage and the place at which the marriage ceremony was performed;
 - (3) If the parties are separated, the date on which the separation occurred;
 - (4) The names, ages and addresses of all living children, natural or adopted, common to the parties and whether the wife is pregnant;
 - (5) The details of any agreements between the parties as to the parenting of the children and payment for sustainment (support) and maintenance of a spouse;
 - (6) A statement specifying whether the Tribal Court needs to divide property between the parties; and
 - (7) The relief sought.
- (B) Either or both parties to the marriage may initiate the proceeding.
- (C) The only defense to a petition for declaration of invalidity of marriage shall be that the marriage is legally valid.
- (D) The Tribal Court may join additional parties necessary for the exercise of its authority. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(A), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.150 Temporary order or preliminary injunction – Effect.

(A) In a proceeding for dissolution of marriage, legal separation, declaration of invalidity or parenting and support hearing, either party may move for temporary maintenance or support of a child, or a parenting plan. The motion shall be accompanied by an affidavit setting forth the factual basis for the motion and the relief requested. As a part of a motion for temporary spousal maintenance or child support or by independent motion accompanied by affidavit, either party may request that the Tribal Court issue a preliminary order for any of the following relief:

- (1) Restraining any person from transferring, encumbering, concealing or otherwise disposing of any property except in the usual course of business or for the necessities of life, and, if so restrained, requiring him to notify the moving party of any proposed extraordinary expenditures made after the order is issued;
- (2) Prohibiting a party from assault or disturbing the peace of the other party or of any child;
- (3) Excluding a party from the family home or from the home of the other party upon a showing that physical or emotional harm may otherwise result;
- (4) Prohibiting a party from removing a child from the jurisdiction of the Tribal Court; and
- (5) Providing other injunctive relief proper under the circumstances.

(B) The Tribal Court may issue a temporary restraining order without requiring notice to the other party only if it finds on the basis of the moving party's affidavit or other evidence that irreparable injury will result to the moving party if no order is issued until the time for responding has elapsed. No bond shall be required unless the Tribal Court deems it appropriate.

(C) On the basis of the showing made, and in conformity with the computation factors for maintenance and support under this chapter, the Tribal Court may issue a preliminary injunction and issue an order for temporary maintenance or support in amounts and on terms just and proper under the circumstances. A temporary order or preliminary injunction:

- (1) Does not prejudice the rights of the parties or any child that are to be adjudicated at the subsequent hearings in the proceedings;
- (2) May be revoked or modified, before a final decree is issued, on a showing by affidavits of the facts necessary for revocation or modification of a final decree; or
- (3) Terminates when the final decree is entered or when the petition for dissolution of marriage, legal separation, or declaration of invalidity is dismissed. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(B), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.160 Separation agreement – Effect.

To promote agreeable settlement of disputes between parties to a marriage or parental relationship attendant upon their separation or upon the filing of a petition for dissolution of marriage, legal separation or declaration of invalidity, the parties shall attempt to enter into a written separation agreement, utilizing Peacemaker/Mediation Services, containing provisions for disposition of any property owned by either of them, maintenance of either of them, and the parenting plan and support for their children.

(A) The terms of the separation agreement, except for those terms providing for a parenting plan for the children, shall be binding upon the Tribal Court unless it finds, after considering the economic circumstances of the parties and any other relevant evidence produced by the parties, on their own motion or on request of the Tribal Court, that the separation agreement is unfair.

(B) Child support may be included in the separation agreement and shall be reviewed in any subsequent proceeding as to its reasonableness consistent with Article [VII](#) of this chapter.

(C) If the Tribal Court finds the separation agreement unfair as to disposition of property or maintenance, it may request the parties back to the Peacemaker Mediation Forum and submit a revised separation agreement or may make orders for the disposition of property or maintenance.

(D) If the Tribal Court finds that the separation agreement is not unfair as to disposition of property or maintenance, and that it is reasonable as to the parenting plan and child support, the separation agreement shall be set forth or incorporated by reference in the decree of dissolution, legal separation, or declaration of invalidity, and the parties shall be ordered to comply with the terms.

(E) Terms of the agreement set forth or incorporated by reference in the decree or declaration shall be enforceable by all remedies available for enforcement of a judgment, including contempt, and are enforceable as contract terms.

(F) Except for terms concerning the maintenance of either party or the parenting plan and support for their children, entry of the decree or declaration shall thereafter preclude the modification of the terms of the decree or declaration, and the property settlement, if any, set forth or incorporated by reference therein. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(C), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.170 Decree of legal separation, dissolution of marriage or declaration of invalidity of marriage findings necessary.

(A) The Tribal Court shall enter a decree of legal separation or a decree of dissolution if it finds each of the following:

- (1) At least one (1) of the persons is a Karuk Tribal member;
- (2) That the marriage is irretrievably broken in accordance with KTC [10.05.140\(A\)](#); and
- (3) That the other party does not object to a decree of legal separation or dissolution of marriage. If the other party objects to a decree of legal separation, the Tribal Court shall direct one (1) of the parties to amend the pleadings to seek dissolution of the marriage.

(B) The Tribal Court shall enter a declaration of invalidity of marriage if the Tribal Court finds each of the following:

- (1) That at least one (1) of the persons is a Karuk Tribal member.
- (2) The marriage should not have been contracted because of the age of one (1) or both of the parties, lack of required parental or Tribal Court approval, a prior undissolved marriage of one (1) or both of the parties, reasons of consanguinity, or because a party lacked capacity to consent to the marriage, either because of mental incapacity or because of the influence of alcohol or other incapacitating substances, or because a party was induced to enter into the marriage by force or duress, or by fraud involving the essentials of marriage and that the parties have not ratified their marriage by voluntarily cohabiting after attaining the age of consent, or after attaining capacity to consent, or after cessation of the force or duress or discovery of the fraud.
- (3) If the Tribal Court finds that a marriage contracted in a jurisdiction other than this Tribe was void or voidable under the law of the place where the marriage was contracted and in the absence of proof that such marriage was subsequently validated by the laws of the place of contract, or of a subsequent domicile of the parties, it shall declare the marriage invalid as of the date of the marriage.

(C) If the issue of child support or the maintenance of either spouse is before the Tribal Court at the time it issues a decree of legal separation, dissolution of marriage or declaration of invalidity of marriage under this article, the

Tribal Court shall concurrently issue an order for support, in accordance with Article [VII](#) of this chapter, or for maintenance in accordance with KTC [10.05.210](#).

(D) At the time the Tribal Court issues a decree of legal separation, dissolution of marriage or declaration of invalidity of marriage under this article, the Tribal Court shall concurrently divide the property and liabilities of the parties in accordance with KTC [10.05.190](#).

(E) If the issue of child custody is before the Tribal Court at the time it issues a decree of legal separation, dissolution of marriage or declaration of invalidity of marriage under this article, the Tribal Court shall concurrently issue a parenting plan in accordance with Article [V](#) of this chapter. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(D), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.180 Irretrievable breakdown of the marriage – Finding.

(A) If both of the parties by petition or otherwise have stated under oath or affirmation that the marriage is irretrievably broken, or one (1) of the parties has so stated and the other has not denied it, the Tribal Court shall make a finding that the marriage is irretrievably broken and enter a decree of dissolution.

(B) If one (1) of the parties has denied under oath or affirmation that the marriage is irretrievably broken, the Tribal Court shall, upon hearing, consider all relevant factors as to the prospect of reconciliation, and shall either:

- (1) Make a finding that the marriage is irretrievably broken and enter a decree of dissolution; or
- (2) Continue the matter for further hearing, not more than ninety (90) days later. The Tribal Court, at the request of either party, or on its own motion, shall order a reconciliation conference. At the rescheduled hearing the Tribal Court shall:
 - (a) Find that the parties have agreed to reconciliation and dismiss the petition; or
 - (b) Find that the parties have not reconciled and that either party continues to allege that the marriage is irretrievably broken. When such facts are found, the Tribal Court shall enter a decree of dissolution of the marriage. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(E), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.190 Disposition of property.

In a proceeding under this article, the Tribal Court shall, without regard to marital misconduct, divide the property and liabilities of the parties, either community or separate, as shall appear just and equitable after considering all relevant factors including:

- (A) The nature and extent of the community property; the separate property; any trust or restricted property, which is subject to the jurisdiction of the United States;
- (B) The duration of the marriage;

(C) The economic circumstances of each spouse at the time the division of property is to become effective, including:

- (1) The desirability of awarding the family home or the right to live therein for reasonable periods to a spouse with whom the children reside the majority of the time; and
- (2) The desirability of ensuring that both spouses' ability to continue working in their chosen field or livelihood is not unreasonably jeopardized (e.g., court ordered sale of vehicles or equipment necessary to the pursuit of a spouse's livelihood);

(D) The direct or indirect contribution to the education or career development of the other spouse; and

(E) The interruption in education or career opportunities to benefit the other's career, the marriage, or any children. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(F), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.200 Modification and termination of property disposition.

The provisions as to property disposition may not be revoked or modified, unless the Tribal Court finds the existence of conditions that justify the reopening of a judgment under the laws of the Karuk Tribe. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(G), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.210 Spousal maintenance – Computation factors.

(A) In a proceeding for dissolution of marriage, legal separation, or a declaration of invalidity, the Tribal Court may grant a maintenance order for either spouse only if the Tribal Court finds that the spouse seeking maintenance:

- (1) Lacks sufficient property, including property apportioned to him or her, to provide for his or her reasonable needs; or
- (2) Is unable to support himself or herself through appropriate employment or is the custodian of a child whose age or condition is such that the custodian should not be required to seek employment outside the home.

(B) The maintenance order shall be in such amounts and for such periods of time as the Tribal Court deems just, without regard to marital misconduct, and after considering all relevant factors, including:

- (1) The financial resources of the party seeking maintenance, including marital property apportioned to him or her and his or her ability to meet his or her other needs independently;
- (2) The time necessary to acquire sufficient education or training to enable the party seeking maintenance to find appropriate employment;
- (3) The standard of living established during the marriage;

- (4) The education of each spouse during the marriage;
- (5) The duration of the marriage;
- (6) The age and the physical and emotional condition of the spouse seeking maintenance;
- (7) The ability of the spouse from whom maintenance is sought to meet his or her needs while meeting those of the spouse seeking maintenance; and
- (8) Excessive or abnormal expenditures, destruction, concealment or fraudulent disposition of community, joint tenancy and other property held in common. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(H), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.220 Payment of spousal maintenance – Records.

- (A) The Tribal Court may upon its own motion or upon motion of either party, order maintenance payments be made to:
- (1) The person entitled to receive the payments; or
 - (2) The Clerk of the Tribal Court for remittance to the person entitled to receive the payments.
- (B) If payments are made to the Clerk of the Tribal Court:
- (1) The Clerk shall maintain records listing the amount of payments, the date payments are required to be made, and the names and addresses of the parties affected by the order; and
 - (2) The parties affected by the order shall inform the Clerk of the Tribal Court of any change of address.
- (C) If the person obligated to pay support has left or is beyond the jurisdiction of the Tribal Court, any party may institute any other proceeding available under the laws of the Karuk Tribe for enforcement of the duties of support and maintenance. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(I), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.230 Modification and termination of spousal maintenance.

- (A) Except as otherwise provided in KTC [10.05.160\(F\)](#), the provisions of any decree respecting maintenance or support may be modified only as to installments accruing subsequent to the motion for modification and, except as otherwise provided in subsection [\(B\)](#) of this section, only upon a showing of changed circumstances that are substantial and continuing.
- (B) 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. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(J), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.240 Costs and expenses.

The Tribal Court from time to time, after considering the financial resources of both parties, may order a party to pay a reasonable amount to the other party for the costs and expenses of maintaining or defending any proceeding under this article. For the purpose of this article, costs and expenses may include fees of a spokesperson, mediator, peacemaker or attorney, deposition costs and such other reasonable expenses as the Tribal Court finds necessary to the full and proper presentation of the action, including any appeal. The Tribal Court may order all such amounts paid directly to the attorney, spokesperson, mediator or peacemaker who may enforce the order in his or her name with the same force and effect, and in the same manner, as if the order had been made on behalf of any party to the action. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(K), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.250 Decree – Finality – Restoration of former name.

(A) A decree of dissolution of marriage or legal separation, or declaration of invalidity of marriage is final when entered, subject to the right of appeal. An appeal from a decree of dissolution that does not challenge the finding that the marriage is irretrievably broken does not delay the finality of the provision of the decree that dissolved the marriage beyond the time for appealing from that provision, and either of the parties may remarry pending appeal. An order directing payment of money for support or maintenance of the spouse or minor child(ren) shall not be suspended or the execution thereof stayed pending the appeal.

(B) The Tribal Court may, upon hearing within six (6) months after the entry of a decree of legal separation, convert the decree of legal separation to a decree of dissolution of marriage.

(C) The Tribal Court shall, upon motion of either party after expiration of six (6) months from the entry of a legal separation, convert the decree of legal separation to a decree of dissolution of marriage.

(D) Upon request by a party whose marriage is dissolved or declared invalid, the Tribal Court shall order his or her former name restored. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(L), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.260 Independence of provisions of decree or temporary order.

If a party fails to comply with a provision of a decree or temporary order or injunction, the obligation of the other party to make payments for support or maintenance or to comply with a parenting plan is not suspended, but he or she may move the Tribal Court to grant an appropriate order. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (4)(M), 4/30/2009.]

Article V. Parenting Plans and Visitation

10.05.270 Petition for parenting plan.

Either parent may petition the Tribal Court for resolution of a child custody dispute. The Tribal Court shall refer the parents to mediation to develop a parenting plan on the basis of the best interests of the child. In determining the best interests of the child, the mediator shall consider all relevant factors including those factors enumerated in Article [I](#) of this chapter.

(A) Before ordering a parenting plan, the Court shall determine whether one (1) parent is entitled to preference in the awarding of custody. Custody preference shall be measured by the best interests of the child.

(B) If the Tribal Court finds by clear and convincing evidence that a parent or child is a victim of family violence, the Tribal Court may make an order that adequately provides for the safety of the victimized parent, including any of the following:

- (1) The address and telephone number of the parent or child be kept confidential in the proceedings;
- (2) An exchange of the child to occur in a protected setting;
- (3) Visitation be supervised by another person or agency with any conditions of visitation stated specifically within the order. The perpetrator may be ordered to pay a fee to defray the costs of supervised visitation;
- (4) The perpetrator of family violence attend and complete a family violence batterer's program and/or counseling;
- (5) Prohibit overnight visitation;
- (6) Require a bond from the perpetrator of family violence for the return and safety of the minor child;
- (7) Order that the perpetrator of family violence cannot remove the child from "on or near Tribal lands" as defined in KTC [10.10.030](#) during visitation.

(C) If the Tribal Court finds by clear and convincing evidence that a parent habitually or frequently uses a controlled substance or alcohol, the Court may make an order that the parent undergo periodic drug or alcohol testing by the Division of Behavioral Health Services, or the Court probation officer, prior to visitation.

- (1) The person administering the test must notify the testing parent immediately of the results, and must notify the other parent by phone or in person as soon as possible if the results are positive. It will be the responsibility of each parent to ensure that the Court and the testing agency have current contact information.
- (2) A positive drug screen will automatically cancel the visitation.
- (3) The results of this testing are confidential, and must be placed as a sealed record in the Court file, and may not be released to any person except the Court, the parties, their attorneys, and any person to whom the

Court expressly grants access by written order made after prior notice to all parties. Any person who has access to the test results may not distribute copies or disclose information about the test results to any person other than a person who is authorized to receive the test results pursuant to this section. Any breach of the confidentiality of test results may be punishable by civil sanctions not to exceed three hundred dollars (\$300).

(4) Any person ordered to drug test under this section has a right to a hearing, if requested, to challenge a positive result.

(5) Any person ordered to drug test under this section may request a retest of the sample, at their own expense, to challenge a positive result. The request must be made at the time the person is initially told of the positive result.

(6) The results of testing may not be used for any purpose, including any criminal, civil, or administrative proceeding, except to assist the Court in determining for purpose of any order determining custody or visitation in the best interest of the child pursuant to subsection [\(A\)](#) of this section.

(D) The objectives of any proposed or ordered parenting plan shall be:

(1) To provide for the child's physical care and to maintain the child's emotional stability;

(2) To provide for the child's changing needs as the child grows;

(3) To promote and preserve the child's Indian heritage and to provide for the maintenance of the child's Tribal affiliation;

(4) To set forth the authority and responsibilities of each parent consistent with the restrictions noted in subsection [\(H\)](#) of this section;

(5) To minimize the child's exposure to harmful parental conflict;

(6) To encourage parents to meet their responsibilities through the parenting plan rather than by relying on Tribal Court intervention; and

(7) To otherwise protect the best interests of the child consistent with the policy expressed in subsection [\(A\)](#) of this section.

(E) The contents of any proposed or ordered parenting plan shall include:

(1) A process for resolving disputes, other than Tribal Court action, shall be provided unless it is beyond the financial means of the parties, or precluded or limited by the Tribal Court as provided herein. The dispute resolution process may include counseling, mediation, peacemaking, family unity, arbitration or other method agreed upon by the parties. In the dispute resolution process:

(a) Preference shall be given to carrying out the parenting plan;

(b) The parents shall use the designated process to resolve disputes relating to implementation of the plan, except those related to child support, unless there is an emergency;

- (c) If the Tribal Court finds that a parent has used or frustrated the dispute resolution process without good reason, the Tribal Court may impose financial sanctions against that parent; and
 - (d) Both parents have the right of court review of the dispute resolution process.
- (2) The parenting plan shall allocate decision-making authority to one (1) or both parents regarding the children's education, health care, and religious or spiritual upbringing. The plan shall state that:
- (a) Each parent may make decisions regarding the day-to-day care and control of the child while the child is residing with that parent, including emergency decisions affecting the health and safety of the child; and
 - (b) When mutual decision-making is designated but cannot be achieved, the parents shall make a good faith effort to resolve the issue through the dispute resolution process.
- (3) The residential schedule shall designate in which parent's home each child shall reside on given days of the year, including provisions for holidays, birthdays, vacations and other special occasions.
- (F) If a parent fails to comply with a provision of the parenting plan, the other parent's obligations under the parenting plan are not affected.
- (G) The Tribal Court may authorize and approve the utilization of a uniform parenting plan form for all proceedings under this article.
- (H) The Tribal Court may restrict or limit any provision of a parenting plan based on factors or conduct that the Court finds by a preponderance of the evidence is adverse to the best interests of the child, including:
- (1) Willful abandonment that continues for an extended period of time or substantial refusal to perform parenting functions;
 - (2) Physical, sexual or a pattern of emotional abuse of a child;
 - (3) A history of acts of family violence;
 - (4) An assault or sexual assault that causes grievous bodily harm or the reasonable fear of such harm;
 - (5) Neglect or substantial nonperformance of parenting functions;
 - (6) Long-term emotional or physical impairment that interferes with the parent's performance of parenting functions;
 - (7) Long-term impairment resulting from drug, alcohol or other substance abuse that interferes with the performance of parenting functions;
 - (8) Abusive use of conflict by the parent that creates the danger of serious damage to the child's psychological development;
 - (9) Withholding from the other parent access to the child for a protracted period without good cause; or

- (10) Such other factors as the Tribal Court expressly finds adverse to the best interests of the child.
- (I) If a party offers evidence of abuse, neglect or family violence, the Court shall schedule a separate hearing to consider such evidence. Prior to the hearing, the Court shall provide confidential notice to the parties that accusations of abuse, neglect, or family violence have been raised. At the hearing, the accused party may offer evidence of rehabilitation or other circumstances to rebut the presumption that placement with that party is not in the best interests of the child. If the accused party fails to appear or does not offer evidence, the Court may only make a finding of abuse, neglect, or family violence by clear and convincing evidence.
- (1) If the Court makes a finding of abuse, neglect, family violence, or substance abuse by either or both parents, the Court may recommend that the parties seek appropriate treatment, services or training. The success of any remedial or rehabilitative efforts will be reviewed under subsection [\(J\)](#) of this section.
- (J) If the parents are unable to reach agreement on the terms of the parenting plan and the Tribal Court determines that it needs additional information before ordering a parenting plan, the Tribal Court may:
- (1) Interview the child in chambers to ascertain the child's needs and desires. The Tribal Court may permit counsel to be present at the interview. The Tribal Court shall cause a record of the interview to be made and to be made part of the record in the case; and/or
- (2) Seek the advice of the Tribe's Department of Human Services. Human Services shall evaluate the parents' ability to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, love and emotional support, and day-to-day supervision. The evaluation should also report on circumstances indicating any conduct outlined in subsection [\(I\)](#) of this section. The advice given shall be in writing and shall be made available by the Tribal Court to counsel upon request. Counsel may call for cross-examination of any persons consulted by the Tribal Court.
- (K) In ordering a permanent parenting plan, the Tribal Court shall not draw any presumptions from the provisions of a temporary parenting plan or separation agreement.
- (L) If the issue of child custody is before the Tribal Court at the time it issues a judgment under Article [III](#) of this chapter, the Tribal Court shall concurrently issue a parenting plan under this article. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (5)(A), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.280 Temporary or interim parenting plan.

Unless it is shown to be detrimental to the welfare of the child, the child shall have, to the greatest degree practical, equal access to both parents during the time that the Tribal Court considers a parenting plan under this article. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (5)(B), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.290 Visitation rights – Person other than parent.

(A) A person other than a parent may petition the Court for visitation rights in any case pending under this chapter.

- (B) A petition for visitation will be dismissed unless the petitioner can demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that a significant relationship exists with the child with whom visitation is sought. If the petition is dismissed for failure to establish the existence of a significant relationship, the petitioner will be ordered to pay reasonable representation fees and costs to the parent, parents, other custodian, or representative of the child who responds to the petition.
- (C) The Court may order visitation between the petitioner and the child between whom a significant relationship exists upon a finding supported by the evidence that the visitation is in the child's best interests and that the visitation would not significantly interfere with any parent-child relationship or with the parent's rightful authority over the child.
- (D) If the Court finds that reasonable visitation by a grandparent would be in the child's best interest except for hostilities that exist between the grandparent and one (1) or both of the parents or person with whom the child lives, the Court may set the matter for mediation.
- (E) The Court may consider the following factors when making a determination of the child's best interests:
- (1) The strength of the relationship between the child and the petitioner;
 - (2) The relationship between each of the child's parents or the person with whom the child is residing and the petitioner;
 - (3) The nature and reason for either parent's objection to granting the petitioner visitation;
 - (4) The effect that granting visitation will have on the relationship between the child and the child's parents or the person with whom the child is residing;
 - (5) The residential time sharing arrangements between the parents;
 - (6) The good faith of the petitioner;
 - (7) Any criminal history or history of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse or neglect by the petitioner; and
 - (8) Any other factor relevant to the child's best interest.
- (F) Visitation granted pursuant to this section will be incorporated into the parenting plan for the child.
- (G) The Court may modify or terminate visitation rights granted pursuant to this section in any subsequent modification action upon a showing that the visitation is no longer in the best interest of the child. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (5)(C), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.300 Modification of parenting plan or visitation.

- (A) A parenting plan or visitation with the child may be modified if the Tribal Court determines that a change in circumstances requires the modification of the award and the modification is in the best interests of the child. If a

parent opposes the modification of the parenting plan or visitation with the child and the modification is granted, the Tribal Court shall enter on the record its reason for the modification.

(B) In a proceeding involving the modification of a parenting plan or visitation with a child, a finding by clear and convincing evidence that a crime involving family violence has occurred since the last parenting plan or visitation determination is a finding of change of circumstances under subsection [\(A\)](#) of this section. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (5)(D), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.310 Representation of child by CASA/spokesperson – Fees.

The Tribal Court may appoint a CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) or any other spokesperson to represent the interests of a minor or dependent child with respect to his or her parenting plan. The Tribal Court may enter an order for costs, fees and disbursements in favor of the child's representative. The order may be made against either or both parents. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (5)(E), 4/30/2009.]

Article VI. Parent and Child Relationship

10.05.320 Generally.

(A) The parent and child relationship extends equally to every child and to every parent, without regard to the marital status of the parents.

(B) The parent and child relationship between a child and:

(1) The natural mother may be established by proof of her having given birth to the child, or under this article;

(2) The natural father may be established under this article; or

(3) An adoptive parent may be established by proof of adoption or under the laws of the Karuk Tribe. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § 6, 4/30/2009.]

10.05.330 Presumption of paternity.

(A) A man is presumed to be the natural father of a child if:

(1) He and the child's natural mother are or have been married to each other and the child is born during the marriage, or within three hundred (300) days after the marriage is terminated by death, annulment, declaration of invalidity, divorce, or dissolution, or after a decree of separation is entered by a court;

- (2) Before the child's birth, he and the child's natural mother have attempted to marry each other by a marriage solemnized in apparent compliance with law, although the attempted marriage is or could be declared invalid, and the child is born within three hundred (300) days after the termination of cohabitation;
- (3) While the child is under the age of majority, he receives the child into his home and openly holds out the child as his child;
- (4) He acknowledges his paternity of the child in writing filed with the Office of Vital Statistics of the state of California, or the Karuk Tribal Enrollment Office, who shall promptly inform the mother of the filing of the acknowledgement, and she does not dispute the acknowledgement within a reasonable time after being informed thereof, in a writing filed with the Office of Vital Statistics or the Karuk Enrollment Office. In order to enforce rights of residential time, custody and visitation, a man presumed to be the father as a result of filing a written acknowledgement must seek appropriate judicial orders under this Code; or
- (5) After the child's birth, he and the child's natural mother have married, or attempted to marry each other by a marriage solemnized in apparent compliance with law, although the attempted marriage is or could be declared invalid; and:
 - (a) He has acknowledged his paternity of the child in writing filed with the Office of Vital Statistics or the Karuk Tribal Enrollment Office;
 - (b) With his consent, he is named as the child's father on the child's birth certificate; or
 - (c) He is obligated to support the child under a written voluntary promise or by Court order.

(B) A presumption under this article may be rebutted in an appropriate action only by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence. If two (2) or more presumptions arise that conflict with each other, the presumption that on the facts is founded on the weightier considerations of policy and logic controls. The presumption is rebutted by a Court decree establishing paternity of the child by another man. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(B), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.340 Artificial insemination.

(A) If, under the supervision of a licensed physician and with the consent of her husband, a wife is inseminated artificially with semen donated by a man not her husband, the husband is treated in law as if he were the natural father of the child thereby conceived. The husband's consent must be in writing and signed by him and his wife. The physician shall certify their signatures and the date of the insemination, and file the husband's consent with the Office of Vital Statistics, where it shall be kept confidential and in a sealed file.

(B) The donor of semen provided to a licensed physician for use in artificial insemination of a woman other than the donor's wife is treated in law as if he were not the natural father of a child thereby conceived, unless the donor and the woman agree in writing that said donor shall be the father. The agreement must be in writing and signed by the donor and the woman. The physician shall certify their signatures and the date of the insemination and file the agreement with the Office of Vital Statistics, where it shall be kept confidential and in a sealed file.

(C) The failure of a licensed physician to perform any administrative act required by this article shall not affect the father and child relationship. All papers and records pertaining to the insemination, whether part of the permanent record of a court or of a file held by the supervising physician or elsewhere, are subject to inspection only in exceptional cases upon an order of the Tribal Court for good cause shown. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(C), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.350 Determination of father and child relationship – Who may bring action – When action may be brought.

(A) A child, a child's natural mother, a man alleged or alleging himself to be the father, a child's guardian, a child's personal representative, the Karuk Tribe, or any interested party may bring an action at any time for the purpose of declaring the existence or nonexistence of the father and child relationship.

(B) A man presumed to be a child's father under this article may bring an action for the purpose of declaring the nonexistence of the father and child relationship only if the action is brought within a reasonable time after obtaining knowledge of relevant facts. After the presumption has been rebutted, paternity of the child by another man may be determined in the same action, if he has been made a party.

(C) Regardless of its terms, no agreement between an alleged or presumed father and the mother or child, shall bar an action under this article.

(D) If an action under this article is brought before the birth of the child, all proceedings may be stayed until after the birth, except service of process and discovery, including the taking of depositions to perpetuate testimony.

(E) Actions under this article may be maintained as to any child, whether born before or after the enactment of this article. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(D), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.360 DNA tests.

(A) The Tribal Court may, and upon request of a party shall, require the child, mother, and any alleged father who has been made a party to submit to DNA tests.

(B) If an alleged father objects to a proposed order requiring him to submit to paternity DNA tests, the Tribal Court may:

(1) Require the party making the allegation of possible paternity to provide sworn testimony, by affidavit or otherwise, stating the facts upon which the allegation is based.

(2) The Tribal Court shall order DNA tests if it appears that a reasonable possibility exists that the requisite sexual contact occurred.

(C) The tests shall be performed by an expert in paternity DNA testing appointed by the Tribal Court.

- (1) The expert's verified report identifying the DNA characteristics observed is admissible in evidence in any hearing or trial in the parentage action, if (a) the alleged or presumed father has had the opportunity to gain information about the security, validity, and interpretation of the tests and the qualifications of any experts, and (b) the report is accompanied by an affidavit from the expert that describes the expert's qualifications as an expert and analyzes and interprets the results.
 - (2) Verified documentation of the chain of custody of the DNA samples is admissible to establish the chain of custody. The Tribal Court may consider published sources as aids to interpretation of the test results.
- (D) The Tribal Court, upon request by a party, shall order that additional DNA tests be performed by the same or other experts qualified in paternity DNA testing, if the party requesting additional tests advances the full costs of the additional testing within a reasonable time.
- (1) The Tribal Court may order additional testing without requiring that the requesting party advance the costs only if another party agrees to advance the costs or if the Tribal Court finds, after hearing, that (a) the requesting party is indigent, and (b) the laboratory performing the initial tests recommends additional testing or there is substantial evidence to support a finding as to paternity contrary to the initial DNA test results.
 - (2) The Tribal Court may later order any other party to reimburse the party who advanced the costs of additional testing for all or a portion of the costs.
- (E) In all cases, the Tribal Court shall determine the number and qualifications of the experts. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(E), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.370 Evidence relating to paternity.

Evidence relating to paternity may include:

- (A) Evidence of sexual intercourse between the mother and alleged father at any possible time of conception;
- (B) An expert's opinion concerning the statistical probability of the alleged father's paternity based upon the duration of the mother's pregnancy;
- (C) Blood or DNA test results, weighted in accordance with evidence of the statistical probability of the alleged father's paternity;
- (D) Medical or anthropological evidence relating to the alleged father's paternity of the child based on tests performed by experts. If a man has been identified as a possible father of the child, the Tribal Court may, and upon request of a party shall, require the child, the mother, and the man to submit to appropriate tests; and
- (E) All other evidence relevant to the issue of paternity of the child. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(F), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.380 Civil action – Testimony – Evidence.

- (A) An action under this article is a civil action governed by civil actions of the Karuk Tribal Court.
- (B) The mother of the child and the alleged father are competent to testify and may be compelled to testify.
- (C) Upon refusal of any witness, including a party, to testify under oath or produce evidence of any other kind on the ground that said witness may be incriminated thereby, and if a party requests the Tribal Court to order that person to testify or provide the evidence, the Tribal Court shall then hold a hearing and shall so order, unless it finds that to do so would be clearly contrary to the public interest, and that person shall comply with the order. The witness may be prosecuted for failing to comply with the order to answer, or for perjury or for offering false evidence to the Tribal Court.
- (D) Testimony of a physician concerning the medical circumstances of the pregnancy and the condition and characteristics of the child upon birth is not privileged.
- (E) In an action against an alleged father, evidence offered by him with respect to a man who is not subject to the jurisdiction of the Tribal Court concerning his sexual intercourse with the mother at or about the probable time of conception of the child is admissible in evidence only if he has undergone and made available to the Tribal Court DNA tests the results of which do not exclude the possibility of the nonparty's paternity of the child.
- (F) The trial shall be by the Tribal Court without a jury. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(G), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.390 Judgment or order determining parent and child relationship support judgment and orders – Custody.

- (A) The judgment and order of the Tribal Court determining the existence or nonexistence of the parent and child relationship shall be determinative for all purposes.
- (B) If the judgment and order of the Tribal Court is at variance with the child's birth certificate, the Tribal Court shall order that an amended birth certificate be issued.
- (C) The judgment and order shall contain other appropriate provisions directed to the appropriate parties to the proceeding, concerning the duty of current and future support, the extent of any liability for past support furnished to the child if that issue is before the Tribal Court; the furnishing of bond or other security for the payment of the judgment; or any other matter in the best interest of the child. The judgment and order may direct the father to pay the reasonable expenses of the mother's pregnancy and confinement.
- (D) Support judgments and orders shall be for periodic payments, which may vary in amount. The Tribal Court may limit the father's liability for the past support to the child to the proportion of the expenses already incurred as the Tribal Court deems just. The Tribal Court shall not limit or affect in any manner the right of nonparties to seek reimbursement for support and other services previously furnished to the child.

(E) After considering all relevant factors, the Tribal Court shall order either or both parents to pay an amount of support determined pursuant to this article.

(F) On the same basis as provided in Article [IV](#) of this chapter, the Tribal Court shall make residential provisions with regard to minor children of the parties, except that a parenting plan shall not be required unless requested by a party.

(G) In any dispute between the natural parents of a child and a person or persons who have (1) commenced adoption proceedings or who have been granted an order of adoption, and (2) pursuant to a court order, or placement by the Tribe's Department of Human Services or by a licensed agency, have had actual custody of the child for a period of one (1) year or more before court action is commenced by the natural parent or parents, the Tribal Court shall consider the best interest and welfare of the child, including the child's need for situational stability, in determining the matter of custody, and the parent or person who is more fit shall have the superior right to custody. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(H), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.400 Support orders – Time limit, exception.

The Tribal Court may not order payment for support provided or expenses incurred more than five (5) years prior to the commencement of the action. Any period of time in which the responsible party has concealed himself or avoided the jurisdiction of the Tribal Court under this article shall not be included within the five (5) year period. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(I), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.410 Temporary support – Temporary restraining order preliminary injunction – Support debts, notice.

(A) If the Tribal Court has made a finding as to the paternity of a child, or if a party's acknowledgement of paternity has been filed with the Tribal Court, or a party alleges he is the father of the child, any party may move for temporary support for the child prior to the date of entry of the final order. The motion shall be accompanied by an affidavit setting forth the factual basis for the motion and the amounts requested.

(B) Any party may request the Tribal Court to issue a temporary restraining order or preliminary injunction providing relief proper in the circumstances, and restraining or enjoining any party from:

- (1) Disturbing the peace of another party;
- (2) Entering the home of another party; or
- (3) Removing a child from the jurisdiction of the Tribal Court.

(C) The Tribal Court may issue a temporary restraining order without requiring notice to the other party only if it finds on the basis of the moving affidavit or other evidence that irreparable injury could result if an order is not issued until the time for responding has elapsed.

(D) The Tribal Court may issue a temporary restraining order or preliminary injunction and an order for temporary support in such amounts and on such terms as are just and proper in the circumstances.

(E) A temporary order, temporary restraining order, or preliminary injunction:

- (1) Does not prejudice the rights of a party or any child that are to be adjudicated at subsequent hearings in the proceeding;
- (2) May be revoked or modified;
- (3) Terminates when the final order is entered or when the petition is dismissed; and
- (4) May be entered in a proceeding for the modification of an existing order. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(J), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.420 Costs.

(A) The Tribal Court may order reasonable fees of experts and the child's CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate), and other costs of the action, including the cost of DNA tests, to be paid by the parties in proportions and at times determined by the Tribal Court.

(B) The Tribal Court may order that all or a portion of a party's reasonable attorneys' or spokesperson fees be paid by another party. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(K), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.430 Enforcement of judgments or orders.

(A) If existence of the father and child relationship is declared, or paternity or a duty of support has been acknowledged or adjudicated under this article or under other or prior law, the obligation of the father may be enforced in the same or other proceedings by the mother, the child, the public authority that has furnished or may furnish the reasonable expenses of pregnancy, or the child's confinement, education, support, or funeral, or by any other person, including a private agency, to the extent it has furnished or is furnishing these expenses.

(B) The Tribal Court may order support payments to be made to a parent, the Clerk of the Tribal Court, or a person, corporation, or agency designated to administer them for the benefit of the child under the supervision of the Tribal Court.

(C) All remedies for the enforcement of judgments apply. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(L), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.440 Modification of judgment or order – Continuing jurisdiction.

(A) The Tribal Court has continuing jurisdiction to prospectively modify a judgment and order for future support upon a showing of a substantial change of circumstances.

(B) A judgment or order entered under this article may be modified without a showing of substantial change of circumstances that are substantial and continuing if:

- (1) The order works a severe economic hardship on either party or the child;
- (2) A party requests an adjustment in an order that was based on guidelines that determined the amount of support according to the child's age, and the child is no longer in the age category on which the current support amount is based;
- (3) A child is still in high school, upon a finding that there is a need to extend support beyond the eighteenth birthday to complete high school; or
- (4) There has been a change in the Court-adopted Child Support Schedule (KTC [10.05.570](#)). [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(M), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.450 Action to determine mother and child relationship.

Any interested party may bring an action to determine the existence or nonexistence of a mother and child relationship. Insofar as practicable, the provisions of this article applicable to the father and child relationship apply. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(N), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.460 Hearing or trials to be in closed court – Records confidential.

(A) Any hearing or trial held under this article shall be held in closed Tribal Court without admittance of any person other than those necessary to the action or proceeding or for the orderly administration of justice.

(B) All papers and records, other than the final judgment and matters related to the enforcement of the final judgment, pertaining to the action or proceeding are subject to inspection by a nonparty only upon an order of the Tribal Court for good cause shown following reasonable notice to all parties of the hearing where such order is sought. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (6)(O), 4/30/2009.]

Article VII. Child Support

10.05.470 Generally.

Children are the most vital resource to the continued existence and integrity of the Karuk Tribe. Therefore, the Tribe has a compelling interest in promoting and maintaining the health and well-being of all Karuk children. Karuk Child Support Guidelines are in the best interests of Indian families, especially Indian children who have a right and a need to receive parental support. The adoption of these Child Support Guidelines and Child Support Schedule (KTC [10.05.570](#)) by the Tribal Council is a proper exercise of its Tribal sovereignty.

By adopting these Child Support Guidelines and Schedule the Tribe affirms and recognizes both parents' obligation to provide support for their children as their respective income, resources and abilities allow. Furthermore, child support orders shall reflect the understanding that in order for children to prosper, their parents must also prosper. Therefore child support awards should not be so burdensome that the parents obligated to provide them are left with insufficient resources necessary for their own livelihood. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § 7, 4/30/2009.]

10.05.480 Authority to establish a Child Support Schedule.

- (A) The Tribal Court may adopt or amend the Karuk Child Support Schedule (KTC [10.05.570](#)) as needed in order to comply with the Tribe's intent stated above.
- (B) In addition to incorporating the computation factors set out in this article, the Child Support Schedule shall provide for the use of innovative ways of satisfying child support obligations as provided in KTC [10.05.520](#).
- (C) The Tribal Court is authorized to adopt supplemental policies, such as worksheets and explanatory materials, as are found necessary for the effective implementation of this article. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (7)(A), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.490 General standards for the application and use of the Child Support Schedule.

- (A) In a proceeding for dissolution of marriage, legal separation, declaration of invalidity, custody or visitation, maintenance, or child support, the Tribal Court may order either or both parents owing a duty of support to a child, born to or adopted by the parents, to pay an amount reasonable and necessary for support, without regard to marital misconduct. The parents' obligation for support shall be based on the factors and guidelines set out below.
- (B) The basic child support obligation derived from the Child Support Schedule (KTC [10.05.570](#)) shall be apportioned between the parents based on each parent's share of their combined monthly net income.
- (C) Ordinary health care expenses are included in the Child Support Schedule. Extraordinary health care expenses not covered by private health insurance or Indian Health Service (i.e., those expenses that exceed five (5) percent of the basic support obligation) shall be shared by the parents in the same proportion as the basic child support obligation.
- (D) Work-related day care and special child rearing expenses are not included in the Child Support Schedule. The parents shall share these expenses in the same proportion as the basic child support obligation. The Tribal Court may enter a child support order to include a duty to provide for day care expenses.
- (E) The Tribal Court may deviate from the basic allocation formula if the child(ren) spend(s) a significant amount of time with the parent who is obligated to make support transfer payments.

- (F) When combined monthly net income is less than six hundred dollars (\$600), a support order for not less than twenty-five dollars (\$25) per month per child shall be ordered.
- (G) Neither parent's child support obligation shall exceed thirty-five (35) percent of their net earnings unless good cause is shown, in which case the support obligation shall not exceed fifty (50) percent of their net earnings.
- (H) All income and resources of each parent's household shall be disclosed and considered by the Tribal Court. All such disclosures, including worksheets, paystubs, tax returns, etc., shall be confidential and available only to the parties and the Tribal Court, and solely for the purpose of establishing child support obligations.
- (I) Before applying any disability benefits into gross income calculations, the Tribal Court shall consider the actual needs of the disabled party and the effect of the inclusion of such benefit on the disabled party, as well as the needs of the child(ren).
- (J) The original order for child support may be made retroactive to the date of filing the petition. If the parent ordered to pay support was not served with the petition within sixty (60) days after filing and the Court finds that the parent was not intentionally evading service, the child support order shall be effective no earlier than the date of service. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (7)(B), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.500 Child Support Schedule and calculations.

A child support obligation shall be set at the basic support amount listed in the Karuk Child Support Schedule (KTC [10.05.570](#)) and be based on the combined net income of both parents. Monthly net income shall be determined by subtracting the appropriate deductions, in accordance with KTC [10.05.510](#), from monthly gross income.

- (A) Monthly gross income shall be calculated by adding income received from all sources including: salaries; wages; commissions; revenue from sales of goods and products; deferred compensation; overtime; contract-related benefits; income from second jobs; dividends; Tribal per capita benefits; interest; trust income; severance pay; annuities; capital gains; pension/retirement benefits; workers' compensation; unemployment benefits; spousal maintenance actually received; bonuses; social security benefits (SSA); disability insurance benefits; and gifts and prizes greater than or equal to two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) in value.
- (B) The following sources of income and resources shall be disclosed but not included in gross income: income of a new spouse or income of other adults in the household; child support received from other relationships; gifts and prizes less than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) in value; temporary assistance to needy families (TANF); supplemental security income (SSI); general assistance; and food stamps.
- (C) Monthly net income shall be calculated by deducting the following expenses from monthly gross income: federal, state and Tribal income taxes; Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) deductions; mandatory pension plan payments; mandatory union or professional dues; state industrial insurance premiums; Court-ordered spousal maintenance to the extent actually paid; up to two thousand dollars (\$2,000) per year in voluntary pension payments actually made; and normal business expenses and self-employment taxes for self-employed persons. Justification shall be required for any business expense deduction about which there is disagreement.

(D) When combined monthly net income exceeds five thousand dollars (\$5,000), support shall not be set at an amount lower than the presumptive amount of support set for combined monthly net incomes of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) unless good cause is found to deviate below that amount, but the Tribal Court may exceed the presumptive amount of support set for combined monthly net income of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) upon written findings of fact establishing such increase as both necessary and in the best interests of the child(ren). [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (7)(C), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.510 Guidelines for deviation from support obligation.

(A) The child support obligations found in the schedule (KTC [10.05.570](#)) are presumptive and may be increased or decreased when based on the factors in this article and supported by the evidence.

(B) In deviating from the basic support obligation, the Tribal Court shall enter a written finding for the record that the application of the guidelines or schedule would be unjust or inappropriate, state the amount of support that would have been required under the schedule, and include justification why the order varies from the guidelines or schedule. The Tribal Court may take into consideration the following factors:

(1) *Age(s) of the Child(ren)*. The obligation shall be set closer to the higher end of the basic support obligation for older children (columns B), and closer to the lower end of the basic support obligation for younger children (columns A). See schedule (KTC [10.05.570](#)).

(2) *Number of Children in Family*. The obligation shall be set lower per child the greater the number of children for which the obligation is being paid. See schedule (KTC [10.05.570](#)).

(3) *Children from Other Relationships*. The obligation may be set at a lower amount than it otherwise would be when either or both parents before the Tribal Court have children from other relationships to whom the parent owes a duty of support and is actually providing support.

(4) *Seasonal or Nonrecurring Income*. If the income of either parent is seasonal or nonrecurring, the obligation may be set at a lower amount than it otherwise would be, or it may be set on a schedule that varies the amount at different times of the year.

(5) *Social Services Provided by Tribe or Other Agency*. Whenever the Tribe or other agency provides health care, housing, or other basic needs for the child(ren) at no cost or reduced cost, such services may be considered as a basis for setting a lower amount of support than would otherwise be determined.

(6) *Mentally or Physically Disabled Child*. In the case of a mentally or physically disabled child, if the Tribal Court deems it appropriate, the Tribal Court may order support to continue past the age of emancipation and to be paid to the parent or guardian, with whom the child resides, or to the child. A child's special needs may be considered as a basis for setting a higher amount of support than would otherwise be determined.

(7) *Substantial Wealth*. In the case of a parent with substantial wealth, if the Tribal Court deems it appropriate, the Tribal Court may set a higher amount of support than would otherwise be determined.

(8) *Voluntary Unemployment.* Unemployment shall not be cause for a finding of substantial hardship where the Tribal Court determines that the person contesting application of these guidelines, or supplemental policies adopted by the Court, has declined to pursue employment opportunities reasonably open to the respondent based on his or her ability and local employment opportunities. In such cases, the Court shall impute to the respondent that amount of income that the respondent is reasonably capable of earning and calculate a child support award based on the imputed income. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (7)(D), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.520 In-kind services and resources.

Although consistent with Karuk Tribe community standards, in-kind services are extremely difficult to monitor and guarantee, particularly as they relate to issues of quantity, quality and value. As a consequence, the Tribal Court shall only utilize in-kind services as a setoff against a child support obligation in those exceptional cases where full financial support is not possible. Both parties shall agree to the provision and terms of such in-kind services and the Tribal Court shall incorporate clear written standards and requirements for their delivery in its order.

(A) Whenever a parent is able to provide appropriate and acceptable in-kind services or resources for the support of the child(ren), such as fish, game, firewood, clothing, childcare or other basic needs, such services or resources may be applied as a setoff against the future months' support obligation if authorized by court order.

(B) Whenever extended family or community members are able to provide food, clothing, shelter, child care or other basic needs for the child(ren), such services or resources may be applied as a setoff against the next month's support obligation if authorized by court order.

(C) The cash equivalency of the in-kind services will be set by the Tribal Court and included in the order. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (7)(E), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.530 Modification and termination of provisions for child support.

(A) A child support award may be modified upon a showing of a change of circumstances that are substantial and continuing as provided by Tribal law. A substantial and continuing change of circumstances will be presumed if support as calculated under this article is more than fifteen (15) percent greater or less than the outstanding support order.

(B) An order of child support may be modified one (1) year or more after it has been entered without a showing of changed circumstances that are substantial and continuing if:

(1) The order works a severe economic hardship on either party or the child;

(2) A party requests an adjustment in an order that was based on guidelines that determined the amount of support according to the child's age, and the child is no longer in the age category on which the current support amount is based;

- (3) A child is still in high school, upon a finding that there is a need to extend support beyond the eighteenth birthday to complete high school; or
- (4) There has been a change in the Court-adopted Child Support Schedule (KTC [10.05.570](#)).
- (5) Unless otherwise agreed in writing or expressly provided in the decree, provisions for the support of a child are terminated by emancipation of the child, but not by 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. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (7)(F), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.540 Collection of past due support.

- (A) To collect the payment due, the custodian of a child shall file with the Tribal Court:
- (1) A motion requesting establishment of a judgment;
 - (2) An affidavit that states that one (1) or more payments of support are thirty (30) or more days past due and that specifies the amounts past due and the dates they became past due; and
 - (3) Notice of the obligor's right to respond. Service on the obligor must be in the manner provided in Tribal Court Rules of Court (Chapter [3.10](#) KTC).
 - (4) The child's custodian shall file with the Tribal Court proof of service of the petition, affidavit, and notice.
 - (5) The obligor shall respond no later than twenty (20) days after service by filing an affidavit with the Tribal Court.
 - (6) If the obligor's affidavit states that the obligor has paid any of the amounts claimed to be delinquent, describes in detail the method of payment or offers any other defense to the petition, then the obligor is entitled to a hearing.
 - (7) After the hearing, if any, the Tribal Court shall enter a judgment for the amount of money owed.
 - (8) If the obligor does not file an affidavit under this article, the Tribal Court shall enter a default judgment against the obligor. The amount owed will include interest in the amount of five (5) percent on the past-due support.
- (B) For each noncustodial parent against whom a support order is or has been issued or modified, so much of his or her income must be withheld as is necessary to comply with the order. At any time, the Tribal Council may determine whether "income" should exclude per capita, trust, or IIM payments as allowed under [45](#) C.F.R. Section [309.05](#).
- (C) In addition to amounts withheld by garnishment or assignment to pay the current month's obligation, the amount withheld must include an amount to be applied toward liquidation of any overdue support amount.

- (D) The total amount to be withheld under subsections (B) and (C) of this section may not exceed the maximum amount permitted under Section 303(b) of the Consumer Credit Protection Act (15 U.S.C. Section 1673(b)), but may be set at a lower amount.
- (E) Income withholding, by assignment or garnishment, must comply with procedural due process requirements as established by Tribal law.
- (F) The Tribe, its departments, entities and other relevant entities through MOUs, including a Tribal Child Support Enforcement Agency if and when established, shall promptly refund amounts which have been improperly withheld.
- (G) The Tribe, its departments and entities, including a Tribal Child Support Enforcement Agency if and when established, shall promptly terminate income withholding in cases where there is no longer a current order for support and all arrearages have been satisfied.
- (H) If the employer fails to withhold income in accordance with the provisions of the income withholding order, the employer will be liable for the accumulated amount the employer should have withheld from the noncustodial parent's income.
- (I) Income shall not be subject to withholding in any case where:
- (1) Either the custodial or noncustodial parent demonstrates, and the Tribal Court enters a finding, that there is good cause not to require income withholding; or
 - (2) A signed written agreement is reached between the noncustodial and custodial parent, which provides for an alternative arrangement, and is reviewed and entered into the record by the Tribal Court.
- (J) Where immediate income withholding is not in place, the income of the noncustodial parent shall become subject to withholding, at the earliest, on the date on which payments which the noncustodial parent has failed to make under a Tribal Court support order are at least equal to the support payable for one (1) month.
- (K) The only basis for contesting a withholding is a mistake of fact, which for purposes of this subsection means an error in the amount of current or overdue support or in the identity of the alleged noncustodial parent.
- (L) Any employer who discharges a noncustodial parent from employment, refuses to employ, or takes disciplinary action against any noncustodial parent because of the withholding shall be subject to a maximum fine of three hundred dollars (\$300) per incident.
- (M) The Tribal Court, or a Tribal Child Support Enforcement Agency, if established, must send the noncustodial parent's employer a notice using the standard federal income withholding form to initiate income withholding.
- (N) The Tribal Court, or a Tribal Child Support Enforcement Agency, if established, must allocate withheld amounts across multiple withholding orders to ensure that in no case shall allocation result in a withholding for one (1) of the support obligations not being implemented.

(O) The Tribal Court, or a Tribal Child Support Enforcement Agency, if established, is responsible for receiving and processing income withholding orders from states, tribes, and other entities, and ensuring orders are properly and promptly served on employers within the Tribe's jurisdiction.

(P) The Tribal Council may enter into a reciprocal child support enforcement agreement with the state of California, or its political subdivisions, for the purpose of enforcing and distributing support obligations in the Karuk Ancestral Territory. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (7)(G), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.550 Payment of support – Records.

(A) The Tribal Court may upon its own motion or upon motion of either party, order support payments be made to:

- (1) The person entitled to receive the payments;
- (2) The Clerk of the Tribal Court for remittance to the person entitled to receive the payments;
- (3) Any local child support enforcement agency, pursuant to a reciprocal child support enforcement agreement between the Karuk Tribe and the local state/county government; or
- (4) The Karuk Tribal Child Support Enforcement Agency, if established.

(B) If payments are made to the Clerk of the Tribal Court:

- (1) The Clerk shall maintain records listing the amount of payments, the date payments are required to be made, and the names and addresses of the parties affected by the order; and
- (2) The parties affected by the order shall inform the Clerk of the Tribal Court of any change of address.

(C) If the person obligated to pay support has left or is beyond the jurisdiction of the Tribal Court, any party may institute any other proceeding available under the laws of the Karuk Tribe for enforcement of the duties of support and maintenance. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (7)(H), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.560 Wage assignments and garnishment.

(A) In the event a person obligated to pay child support is in arrears for at least one (1) month, the Tribal Court may order the person obligated to pay child support to make an assignment of part of his or her periodic earnings or trust income to the person entitled to receive the payments. The assignment is binding on the employer, trustee, or other payor of the funds two (2) weeks after service upon such person of notice that the assignment has been made. The payor shall withhold the earnings or trust income payable to the person obligated to support the amount specified in the assignment and shall transmit the payments to the Clerk of the Tribal Court. The payor may deduct from each payment a sum not exceeding one dollar (\$1) as reimbursements for costs. An employer shall not discharge or otherwise discipline an employee as a result of a wage or salary assignment authorized by this article.

(B) Persons who are owed child support that is in arrears and is based on an order, judgment or decree from a court other than the Karuk Tribal Court may seek garnishment of the debtor's wages or salary; provided, that the Tribal Court shall hear the petition for enforcement of a foreign court's child support order in accordance with this chapter. [Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § (7)(l), 4/30/2009.]

10.05.570 Child Support Schedule.

Child Support Schedule: Columns A = Children ages 0 – 12 years/Columns B = Children ages 13 – 18 years

Combined Monthly Net Income	One-Child Family		Two-Child Family		Three-Child Family		Four-Child Family		Five-Child Family	
	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-
\$600	\$100	\$123	\$77	\$95	\$65	\$80	\$55	\$68	\$47	\$59
700	116	143	90	111	75	93	64	79	56	68
800	133	164	103	128	86	107	73	90	63	78
900	149	185	116	143	97	119	82	101	71	89
1,000	165	204	128	158	107	133	91	112	79	98
1,100	182	224	141	174	118	145	100	123	87	107
1,200	198	245	154	190	128	158	108	134	95	117
1,300	214	264	166	206	139	171	117	145	102	126
1,400	230	284	179	221	149	185	126	156	110	136
1,500	245	303	191	235	159	197	134	166	117	145
1,600	260	321	202	250	169	209	143	176	125	154
1,700	275	340	214	264	179	221	151	186	131	163
1,800	290	359	225	278	188	233	159	197	139	171
1,900	305	377	237	293	198	245	167	206	146	180
2,000	320	395	248	307	208	257	176	217	153	189

**Child Support Schedule: Columns A = Children ages 0 – 12 years/Columns B =
Children ages 13 – 18 years**

Combined Monthly Net Income	One-Child Family		Two-Child Family		Three-Child Family		Four-Child Family		Five-Child Family	
	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-
2,100	335	414	260	322	217	269	184	227	160	198
2,200	350	433	272	336	227	281	192	237	167	207
2,300	365	451	284	350	236	293	200	248	175	216
2,400	380	470	295	365	246	305	209	257	182	224
2,500	395	488	306	379	256	316	216	267	188	233
2,600	401	496	312	385	260	321	220	272	192	237
2,700	407	503	316	390	263	326	224	276	194	241
2,800	412	509	320	395	267	330	226	279	197	243
2,900	417	515	323	400	270	334	229	282	200	246
3,000	421	520	327	404	273	337	231	285	201	248
3,100	425	524	329	407	275	340	233	287	203	251
3,200	427	528	332	410	277	343	234	290	204	252
3,300	430	531	334	412	278	344	235	291	205	254
3,400	431	533	335	413	279	345	236	292	206	255
3,500	431	533	335	414	280	346	237	293	206	256
3,600	433	534	336	415	281	347	238	293	207	257
3,700	434	535	337	416	281	347	239	294	208	257
3,800	436	539	339	419	283	350	239	296	209	258
3,900	447	552	347	429	290	358	245	303	213	264

**Child Support Schedule: Columns A = Children ages 0 – 12 years/Columns B =
Children ages 13 – 18 years**

Combined Monthly Net Income	One-Child Family		Two-Child Family		Three-Child Family		Four-Child Family		Five-Child Family	
	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-	-A-	-B-
4,000	457	565	355	438	296	366	251	310	218	270
4,100	467	578	363	449	303	375	256	317	224	276
4,200	479	591	371	458	310	383	263	323	229	283
4,300	488	604	380	469	317	392	268	331	233	289
4,400	498	616	387	478	323	399	273	337	238	294
4,500	508	627	394	487	329	407	278	344	242	300
4,600	517	638	401	496	335	414	283	350	247	305
4,700	526	650	409	505	341	422	288	356	251	311
4,800	535	662	416	514	347	429	293	362	256	317
4,900	545	673	423	523	353	436	299	368	260	322
5,000	554	684	431	531	359	444	303	375	265	328

[Res. 09-R-062 Title 2 § 7, 4/30/2009.]

The Karuk Tribal Code is current through Resolution 21-R-171, passed December 9, 2021.

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