

7563

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

May 23, 2013

Introduced by M. of A. JORDAN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Judiciary

AN ACT to amend the domestic relations law and the family court act, in relation to changing the denotation of visitation to parenting time

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. Legislative intent. The legislature hereby finds and
2 declares that the term "visitation" carries a negative connotation with
3 respect to noncustodial parents who want to be a part of their chil-
4 dren's lives. Society has given the term "visitation" a negative conno-
5 tation that can be associated with the visiting of an inmate at a
6 correctional facility or prison. The purpose of this act is to reflect
7 the fact that a parent's time with a child is not merely as a visitor
8 but constitutes parenting time.

9 S 1-a. Section 2 of the domestic relations law, as amended by chapter
10 920 of the laws of 1974, is amended to read as follows:

11 S 2. Definitions. AS USED IN THIS CHAPTER:

12 1. A "minor" or "infant", [as used in this chapter,] is a person under
13 the age of eighteen years.

14 2. "VISITATION" REFERS TO TIME PERMITTED TO BE SPENT WITH A CHILD
15 PURSUANT TO A COURT ORDER UNDER THIS CHAPTER, THE FAMILY COURT ACT OR AN
16 ORDER ENFORCED UNDER ARTICLE FIVE-A OF THIS CHAPTER, BY A PERSON WHO IS
17 NOT A PARENT OF THE CHILD. THIS SHALL INCLUDE GRANDPARENTS, SIBLINGS AND
18 STEP-PARENTS.

19 3. "PARENTING TIME" REFERS TO THE PERIOD OF TIME THAT A PARENT MAY
20 SPEND WITH HIS OR HER CHILD PURSUANT TO A COURT ORDER UNDER THIS CHAP-
21 TER, THE FAMILY COURT ACT OR AN ORDER ENFORCED UNDER ARTICLE FIVE-A OF
22 THIS CHAPTER.

23 S 2. Subdivision (b) of section 70 of the domestic relations law, as
24 added by chapter 457 of the laws of 1988, is amended to read as follows:

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

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1 (b) Any order under this section which applies to rights of [visita-
2 tion] PARENTING TIME with a child remanded or placed in the care of a
3 person, official, agency or institution pursuant to article ten of the
4 family court act or pursuant to an instrument approved under section
5 three hundred fifty-eight-a of the social services law, shall be
6 enforceable pursuant to the provisions of part eight of article ten of
7 such act, sections three hundred fifty-eight-a and three hundred eight-
8 y-four-a of the social services law and other applicable provisions of
9 law against any person or official having care and custody, or temporary
10 care and custody, of such child.

11 S 3. Subdivisions 3 and 4 of section 75-a of the domestic relations
12 law, as added by chapter 386 of the laws of 2001, are amended to read as
13 follows:

14 3. "Child custody determination" means a judgment, decree, or other
15 order of a court providing for the legal custody, physical custody, or
16 [visitation] PARENTING TIME with respect to a child. The term includes a
17 permanent, temporary, initial, and modification order. The term does not
18 include an order relating to child support or other monetary obligation
19 of an individual.

20 4. "Child custody proceeding" means a proceeding in which legal custo-
21 dy, physical custody, [or] visitation OR PARENTING TIME with respect to
22 a child is an issue. The term includes a proceeding for divorce, sepa-
23 ration, neglect, abuse, dependency, guardianship, paternity, termination
24 of parental rights, and protection from domestic violence, in which the
25 issue may appear. The term does not include a proceeding involving juve-
26 nile delinquency, person in need of supervision, contractual emancipa-
27 tion, or enforcement under title three of this article.

28 S 4. Subdivision 1 of section 235 of the domestic relations law, as
29 amended by chapter 122 of the laws of 1979, is amended to read as
30 follows:

31 1. An officer of the court with whom the proceedings in a matrimonial
32 action or a written agreement of separation or an action or proceeding
33 for custody, [visitation] PARENTING TIME or maintenance of a child are
34 filed, or before whom the testimony is taken, or his clerk, either
35 before or after the termination of the suit, shall not permit a copy of
36 any of the pleadings, affidavits, findings of fact, conclusions of law,
37 judgment of dissolution, written agreement of separation or memorandum
38 thereof, or testimony, or any examination or perusal thereof, to be
39 taken by any other person than a party, or the attorney or counsel of a
40 party, except by order of the court.

41 S 5. Subdivision (b) of section 237 of the domestic relations law, as
42 amended by chapter 329 of the laws of 2010, is amended to read as
43 follows:

44 (b) Upon any application to enforce, annul or modify an order or judg-
45 ment for alimony, maintenance, distributive award, distribution of mari-
46 tal property or for custody, [visitation,] PARENTING TIME or maintenance
47 of a child, made as in section two hundred thirty-six or section two
48 hundred forty of this article provided, or upon any application by writ
49 of habeas corpus or by petition and order to show cause concerning
50 custody, [visitation] PARENTING TIME or maintenance of a child, the
51 court may direct a spouse or parent to pay counsel fees and fees and
52 expenses of experts directly to the attorney of the other spouse or
53 parent to enable the other party to carry on or defend the application
54 or proceeding by the other spouse or parent as, in the court's
55 discretion, justice requires, having regard to the circumstances of the
56 case and of the respective parties. There shall be a rebuttable presump-

1 tion that counsel fees shall be awarded to the less monied spouse. In
2 exercising the court's discretion, the court shall seek to assure that
3 each party shall be adequately represented and that where fees and
4 expenses are to be awarded, they shall be awarded on a timely basis,
5 pendente lite, so as to enable adequate representation from the
6 commencement of the proceeding. Applications for the award of fees and
7 expenses may be made at any time or times prior to final judgment. Both
8 parties to the action or proceeding and their respective attorneys,
9 shall file an affidavit with the court detailing the financial agree-
10 ment, between the party and the attorney. Such affidavit shall include
11 the amount of any retainer, the amounts paid and still owing thereunder,
12 the hourly amount charged by the attorney, the amounts paid, or to be
13 paid, any experts, and any additional costs, disbursements or expenses.
14 Any applications for fees and expenses may be maintained by the attorney
15 for either spouse in counsel's own name in the same proceeding. Payment
16 of any retainer fees to the attorney for the petitioning party shall not
17 preclude any awards of fees and expenses to an applicant which would
18 otherwise be allowed under this section.

19 S 6. Paragraphs (a) and (a-1) of subdivision 1 of section 240 of the
20 domestic relations law, paragraph (a) as amended by chapter 476 of the
21 laws of 2009 and paragraph (a-1) as amended by chapter 295 of the laws
22 of 2009, are amended to read as follows:

23 (a) In any action or proceeding brought (1) to annul a marriage or to
24 declare the nullity of a void marriage, or (2) for a separation, or (3)
25 for a divorce, or (4) to obtain, by a writ of habeas corpus or by peti-
26 tion and order to show cause, the custody of or right to [visitation]
27 PARENTING TIME with any child of a marriage, the court shall require
28 verification of the status of any child of the marriage with respect to
29 such child's custody and support, including any prior orders, and shall
30 enter orders for custody and support as, in the court's discretion,
31 justice requires, having regard to the circumstances of the case and of
32 the respective parties and to the best interests of the child and
33 subject to the provisions of subdivision one-c of this section. Where
34 either party to an action concerning custody of or a right to [visita-
35 tion] PARENTING TIME with a child alleges in a sworn petition or
36 complaint or sworn answer, cross-petition, counterclaim or other sworn
37 responsive pleading that the other party has committed an act of domes-
38 tic violence against the party making the allegation or a family or
39 household member of either party, as such family or household member is
40 defined in article eight of the family court act, and such allegations
41 are proven by a preponderance of the evidence, the court must consider
42 the effect of such domestic violence upon the best interests of the
43 child, together with such other facts and circumstances as the court
44 deems relevant in making a direction pursuant to this section and state
45 on the record how such findings, facts and circumstances factored into
46 the direction. If a parent makes a good faith allegation based on a
47 reasonable belief supported by facts that the child is the victim of
48 child abuse, child neglect, or the effects of domestic violence, and if
49 that parent acts lawfully and in good faith in response to that reason-
50 able belief to protect the child or seek treatment for the child, then
51 that parent shall not be deprived of custody, [visitation] PARENTING
52 TIME or contact with the child, or restricted in custody, [visitation]
53 PARENTING TIME or contact, based solely on that belief or the reasonable
54 actions taken based on that belief. If an allegation that a child is
55 abused is supported by a preponderance of the evidence, then the court
56 shall consider such evidence of abuse in determining the [visitation

1 arrangement] PARENTING TIME that is in the best interest of the child,
2 and the court shall not place a child in the custody of a parent who
3 presents a substantial risk of harm to that child, and shall state on
4 the record how such findings were factored into the determination. An
5 order directing the payment of child support shall contain the social
6 security numbers of the named parties. In all cases there shall be no
7 prima facie right to the custody of the child in either parent. Such
8 direction shall make provision for child support out of the property of
9 either or both parents. The court shall make its award for child support
10 pursuant to subdivision one-b of this section. Such direction may
11 provide for reasonable visitation rights to the maternal and/or paternal
12 grandparents of any child of the parties. Such direction as it applies
13 to rights of [visitation] PARENTING TIME with a child remanded or placed
14 in the care of a person, official, agency or institution pursuant to
15 article ten of the family court act, or pursuant to an instrument
16 approved under section three hundred fifty-eight-a of the social
17 services law, shall be enforceable pursuant to part eight of article ten
18 of the family court act and sections three hundred fifty-eight-a and
19 three hundred eighty-four-a of the social services law and other appli-
20 cable provisions of law against any person having care and custody, or
21 temporary care and custody, of the child. Notwithstanding any other
22 provision of law, any written application or motion to the court for the
23 establishment, modification or enforcement of a child support obligation
24 for persons not in receipt of public assistance and care must contain
25 either a request for child support enforcement services which would
26 authorize the collection of the support obligation by the immediate
27 issuance of an income execution for support enforcement as provided for
28 by this chapter, completed in the manner specified in section one
29 hundred eleven-g of the social services law; or a statement that the
30 applicant has applied for or is in receipt of such services; or a state-
31 ment that the applicant knows of the availability of such services, has
32 declined them at this time and where support enforcement services pursu-
33 ant to section one hundred eleven-g of the social services law have been
34 declined that the applicant understands that an income deduction order
35 may be issued pursuant to subdivision (c) of section fifty-two hundred
36 forty-two of the civil practice law and rules without other child
37 support enforcement services and that payment of an administrative fee
38 may be required. The court shall provide a copy of any such request for
39 child support enforcement services to the support collection unit of the
40 appropriate social services district any time it directs payments to be
41 made to such support collection unit. Additionally, the copy of any such
42 request shall be accompanied by the name, address and social security
43 number of the parties; the date and place of the parties' marriage; the
44 name and date of birth of the child or children; and the name and
45 address of the employers and income payors of the party from whom child
46 support is sought or from the party ordered to pay child support to the
47 other party. Such direction may require the payment of a sum or sums of
48 money either directly to the custodial parent or to third persons for
49 goods or services furnished for such child, or for both payments to the
50 custodial parent and to such third persons; provided, however, that
51 unless the party seeking or receiving child support has applied for or
52 is receiving such services, the court shall not direct such payments to
53 be made to the support collection unit, as established in section one
54 hundred eleven-h of the social services law. Every order directing the
55 payment of support shall require that if either parent currently, or at
56 any time in the future, has health insurance benefits available that may

1 be extended or obtained to cover the child, such parent is required to
2 exercise the option of additional coverage in favor of such child and
3 execute and deliver to such person any forms, notices, documents or
4 instruments necessary to assure timely payment of any health insurance
5 claims for such child.

6 (a-1)(1) Permanent and initial temporary orders of custody or [visita-
7 tion] PARENTING TIME. Prior to the issuance of any permanent or initial
8 temporary order of custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME, the court
9 shall conduct a review of the decisions and reports listed in subpara-
10 graph three of this paragraph.

11 (2) Successive temporary orders of custody or [visitation] PARENTING
12 TIME. Prior to the issuance of any successive temporary order of custo-
13 dy or [visitation] PARENTING TIME, the court shall conduct a review of
14 the decisions and reports listed in subparagraph three of this para-
15 graph, unless such a review has been conducted within ninety days prior
16 to the issuance of such order.

17 (3) Decisions and reports for review. The court shall conduct a review
18 of the following:

19 (i) related decisions in court proceedings initiated pursuant to arti-
20 cle ten of the family court act, and all warrants issued under the fami-
21 ly court act; and

22 (ii) reports of the statewide computerized registry of orders of
23 protection established and maintained pursuant to section two hundred
24 twenty-one-a of the executive law, and reports of the sex offender
25 registry established and maintained pursuant to section one hundred
26 sixty-eight-b of the correction law.

27 (4) Notifying counsel and issuing orders. Upon consideration of deci-
28 sions pursuant to article ten of the family court act, and registry
29 reports and notifying counsel involved in the proceeding, or in the
30 event of a self-represented party, notifying such party of the results
31 thereof, including any court appointed attorney for children, the court
32 may issue a temporary, successive temporary or final order of custody or
33 [visitation] PARENTING TIME.

34 (5) Temporary emergency order. Notwithstanding any other provision of
35 the law, upon emergency situations, including computer malfunctions, to
36 serve the best interest of the child, the court may issue a temporary
37 emergency order for custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME in the event
38 that it is not possible to timely review decisions and reports on regis-
39 tries as required pursuant to subparagraph three of this paragraph.

40 (6) After issuing a temporary emergency order. After issuing a tempo-
41 rary emergency order of custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME, the
42 court shall conduct reviews of the decisions and reports on registries
43 as required pursuant to subparagraph three of this paragraph within
44 twenty-four hours of the issuance of such temporary emergency order.
45 Should such twenty-four hour period fall on a day when court is not in
46 session, then the required reviews shall take place the next day the
47 court is in session. Upon reviewing decisions and reports the court
48 shall notify associated counsel, self-represented parties and attorneys
49 for children pursuant to subparagraph four of this paragraph and may
50 issue temporary or permanent custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME
51 orders.

52 (7) Feasibility study. The commissioner of the office of children and
53 family services, in conjunction with the office of court administration,
54 is hereby authorized and directed to examine, study, evaluate and make
55 recommendations concerning the feasibility of the utilization of comput-
56 ers in courts which are connected to the statewide central register of

1 child abuse and maltreatment established and maintained pursuant to
2 section four hundred twenty-two of the social services law, as a means
3 of providing courts with information regarding parties requesting orders
4 of custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME. Such commissioner shall make
5 a preliminary report to the governor and the legislature of findings,
6 conclusions and recommendations not later than January first, two thou-
7 sand nine, and a final report of findings, conclusions and recommenda-
8 tions not later than June first, two thousand nine, and shall submit
9 with the reports such legislative proposals as are deemed necessary to
10 implement the commissioner's recommendations.

11 S 7. Subdivision 1-a of section 240 of the domestic relations law, as
12 amended by chapter 12 of the laws of 1996, is amended to read as
13 follows:

14 1-a. In any proceeding brought pursuant to this section to determine
15 the custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME of minors, a report made to
16 the statewide central register of child abuse and maltreatment, pursuant
17 to title six of article six of the social services law, or a portion
18 thereof, which is otherwise admissible as a business record pursuant to
19 rule forty-five hundred eighteen of the civil practice law and rules
20 shall not be admissible in evidence, notwithstanding such rule, unless
21 an investigation of such report conducted pursuant to title six of arti-
22 cle six of the social services law has determined that there is some
23 credible evidence of the alleged abuse or maltreatment and that the
24 subject of the report has been notified that the report is indicated.
25 In addition, if such report has been reviewed by the state commissioner
26 of [social] THE OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY services or his designee
27 and has been determined to be unfounded, it shall not be admissible in
28 evidence. If such report has been so reviewed and has been amended to
29 delete any finding, each such deleted finding shall not be admissible.
30 If the state commissioner of [social] THE OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY
31 services or his designee has amended the report to add any new finding,
32 each such new finding, together with any portion of the original report
33 not deleted by [the] SUCH commissioner or his designee, shall be admis-
34 sible if it meets the other requirements of this subdivision and is
35 otherwise admissible as a business record. If such a report, or portion
36 thereof, is admissible in evidence but is uncorroborated, it shall not
37 be sufficient to make a fact finding of abuse or maltreatment in such
38 proceeding. Any other evidence tending to support the reliability of
39 such report shall be sufficient corroboration.

40 S 8. Subparagraph 9 of paragraph (f) of subdivision 1-b of section 240
41 of the domestic relations law, as added by chapter 567 of the laws of
42 1989, is amended to read as follows:

43 (9) Provided that the child is not on public assistance (i) extraor-
44 dinary expenses incurred by the non-custodial parent in exercising
45 [visitation] PARENTING TIME, or (ii) expenses incurred by the non-custo-
46 dial parent in extended [visitation] PARENTING TIME provided that the
47 custodial parent's expenses are substantially reduced as a result there-
48 of; and

49 S 9. Paragraph c of subdivision 3 of section 240 of the domestic
50 relations law, as amended by chapter 597 of the laws of 1998, is amended
51 to read as follows:

52 c. An order of protection entered pursuant to this subdivision may be
53 made in the final judgment in any matrimonial action or in a proceeding
54 to obtain custody of or [visitation] PARENTING TIME with any child under
55 this section, or by one or more orders from time to time before or
56 subsequent to final judgment, or by both such order or orders and the

1 final judgment. The order of protection may remain in effect after entry
2 of a final matrimonial judgment and during the minority of any child
3 whose custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME is the subject of a
4 provision of a final judgment or any order. An order of protection may
5 be entered notwithstanding that the court for any reason whatsoever,
6 other than lack of jurisdiction, refuses to grant the relief requested
7 in the action or proceeding.

8 S 10. Section 241 of the domestic relations law, as amended by chapter
9 892 of the laws of 1986, is amended to read as follows:

10 S 241. Interference with or withholding of [visitation] PARENTING TIME
11 rights; alimony or maintenance suspension. When it appears to the satis-
12 faction of the court that a custodial parent receiving alimony or main-
13 tenance pursuant to an order, judgment or decree of a court of competent
14 jurisdiction has wrongfully interfered with or withheld [visitation]
15 PARENTING TIME rights provided by such order, judgment or decree, the
16 court, in its discretion, may suspend such payments or cancel any
17 arrears that may have accrued during the time that [visitation] PARENT-
18 ING TIME rights have been or are being interfered with or withheld.
19 Nothing in this section shall constitute a defense in any court to an
20 application to enforce payment of child support or grounds for the
21 cancellation of arrears for child support.

22 S 11. Section 251 of the domestic relations law, as added by chapter
23 164 of the laws of 1973, is amended to read as follows:

24 S 251. Filing of order in family court. When, in a matrimonial action,
25 the supreme court refers the issues of support, custody or [visitation]
26 PARENTING TIME to the family court, the order or judgment shall provide
27 that a copy thereof shall be filed by the plaintiff's attorney, within
28 ten days, with the clerk of the family court therein specified.

29 S 12. Paragraph (b) of subdivision 1 of section 252 of the domestic
30 relations law, as amended by chapter 349 of the laws of 1995, is amended
31 to read as follows:

32 (b) to permit a parent, or a person entitled to visitation OR PARENT-
33 ING TIME by a court order or a separation agreement, to [visit] BE WITH
34 the child at stated periods;

35 S 13. Subdivision 3 of section 252 of the domestic relations law, as
36 added by chapter 349 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read as follows:

37 3. An order of protection entered pursuant to this subdivision may be
38 made in the final judgment in any matrimonial action, or by one or more
39 orders from time to time before or subsequent to final judgment, or by
40 both such order or orders and the final judgment. The order of
41 protection may remain in effect after entry of a final matrimonial judg-
42 ment and during the minority of any child whose custody or [visitation]
43 PARENTING TIME is the subject of a provision of a final judgment or any
44 order. An order of protection may be entered notwithstanding that the
45 court for any reason whatsoever, other than lack of jurisdiction,
46 refuses to grant the relief requested in the action or proceeding.

47 S 14. Subparagraph 9 of paragraph (f) of subdivision 1 of section 413
48 of the family court act, as amended by chapter 567 of the laws of 1989,
49 is amended to read as follows:

50 (9) Provided that the child is not on public assistance (i) extraor-
51 dinary expenses incurred by the non-custodial parent in exercising
52 [visitation] PARENTING TIME, or (ii) expenses incurred by the non-custo-
53 dial parent in extended [visitation] PARENTING TIME provided that the
54 custodial parent's expenses are substantially reduced as a result there-
55 of; and

1 S 15. Subdivisions (a) and (c) of section 439 of the family court act,
2 subdivision (a) as amended by section 1 of chapter 468 of the laws of
3 2012, and subdivision (c) as amended by chapter 576 of the laws of 2005,
4 are amended to read as follows:

5 (a) The chief administrator of the courts shall provide, in accordance
6 with subdivision (f) of this section, for the appointment of a suffi-
7 cient number of support magistrates to hear and determine support
8 proceedings. Except as hereinafter provided, support magistrates shall
9 be empowered to hear, determine and grant any relief within the powers
10 of the court in any proceeding under this article, articles five,
11 five-A, and five-B and sections two hundred thirty-four and two hundred
12 thirty-five of this act, and objections raised pursuant to section five
13 thousand two hundred forty-one of the civil practice law and rules.
14 Support magistrates shall not be empowered to hear, determine and grant
15 any relief with respect to issues specified in section four hundred
16 fifty-five of this article, issues of contested paternity involving
17 claims of equitable estoppel, custody, [visitation] PARENTING TIME
18 including [visitation] PARENTING TIME as a defense, and orders of
19 protection or exclusive possession of the home, which shall be referred
20 to a judge as provided in subdivision (b) or (c) of this section. Where
21 an order of filiation is issued by a judge in a paternity proceeding and
22 child support is in issue, the judge, or support magistrate upon refer-
23 ral from the judge, shall be authorized to immediately make a temporary
24 or final order of support, as applicable. A support magistrate shall
25 have the authority to hear and decide motions and issue summonses and
26 subpoenas to produce persons pursuant to section one hundred fifty-three
27 of this act, hear and decide proceedings and issue any order authorized
28 by subdivision (g) of section five thousand two hundred forty-one of the
29 civil practice law and rules, issue subpoenas to produce prisoners
30 pursuant to section two thousand three hundred two of the civil practice
31 law and rules and make a determination that any person before the
32 support magistrate is in violation of an order of the court as author-
33 ized by section one hundred fifty-six of this act subject to confirma-
34 tion by a judge of the court who shall impose any punishment for such
35 violation as provided by law. A determination by a support magistrate
36 that a person is in willful violation of an order under subdivision
37 three of section four hundred fifty-four of this article and that recom-
38 mends commitment shall be transmitted to the parties, accompanied by
39 findings of fact, but the determination shall have no force and effect
40 until confirmed by a judge of the court.

41 (c) The support magistrate, in any proceeding in which issues speci-
42 fied in section four hundred fifty-five of this act, or issues of custo-
43 dy, [visitation] PARENTING TIME, including [visitation] PARENTING TIME
44 as a defense, orders of protection or exclusive possession of the home
45 are present or in which paternity is contested on the grounds of equita-
46 ble estoppel, shall make a temporary order of support and refer the
47 proceeding to a judge. Upon determination of such issue by a judge, the
48 judge may make a final determination of the issue of support, or imme-
49 diately refer the proceeding to a support magistrate for further
50 proceedings regarding child support or other matters within the authori-
51 ty of the support magistrate.

52 S 16. Subdivision (a) of section 439 of the family court act, as
53 amended by section 2 of chapter 468 of the laws of 2012, is amended to
54 read as follows:

55 (a) The chief administrator of the courts shall provide, in accordance
56 with subdivision (f) of this section, for the appointment of a suffi-

1 cient number of support magistrates to hear and determine support
2 proceedings. Except as hereinafter provided, support magistrates shall
3 be empowered to hear, determine and grant any relief within the powers
4 of the court in any proceeding under this article, articles five,
5 five-A, and five-B and sections two hundred thirty-four and two hundred
6 thirty-five of this act, and objections raised pursuant to section five
7 thousand two hundred forty-one of the civil practice law and rules.
8 Support magistrates shall not be empowered to hear, determine and grant
9 any relief with respect to issues specified in section four hundred
10 fifty-five of this article, issues of contested paternity involving
11 claims of equitable estoppel, custody, [visitation] PARENTING TIME
12 including [visitation] PARENTING TIME as a defense, and orders of
13 protection or exclusive possession of the home, which shall be referred
14 to a judge as provided in subdivision (b) or (c) of this section. Where
15 an order of filiation is issued by a judge in a paternity proceeding and
16 child support is in issue, the judge, or support magistrate upon refer-
17 ral from the judge, shall be authorized to immediately make a temporary
18 or final order of support, as applicable. A support magistrate shall
19 have the authority to hear and decide motions and issue summonses and
20 subpoenas to produce persons pursuant to section one hundred fifty-three
21 of this act, hear and decide proceedings and issue any order authorized
22 by subdivision (g) of section five thousand two hundred forty-one of the
23 civil practice law and rules, issue subpoenas to produce prisoners
24 pursuant to section two thousand three hundred two of the civil practice
25 law and rules and make a determination that any person before the
26 support magistrate is in violation of an order of the court as author-
27 ized by section one hundred fifty-six of this act subject to confirma-
28 tion by a judge of the court who shall impose any punishment for such
29 violation as provided by law. A determination by a support magistrate
30 that a person is in willful violation of an order under subdivision
31 three of section four hundred fifty-four of this article and that recom-
32 mends commitment shall be transmitted to the parties, accompanied by
33 findings of fact, but the determination shall have no force and effect
34 until confirmed by a judge of the court.

35 S 17. Subdivision (b) of section 446 of the family court act, as
36 amended by chapter 483 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read as
37 follows:

38 (b) to permit a parent, or a person entitled to visitation OR PARENT-
39 ING TIME by a court order or a separation agreement, to [visit] BE WITH
40 the child at stated periods;

41 S 18. Section 447 of the family court act, subdivision (a) as amended
42 by chapter 85 of the laws of 1996, is amended to read as follows:

43 S 447. Order of [visitation] PARENTING TIME. (a) In the absence of an
44 order of custody or of [visitation] PARENTING TIME entered by the
45 supreme court, the court may make an order of custody or of [visitation]
46 PARENTING TIME, in accordance with subdivision one of section two
47 hundred forty of the domestic relations law, requiring one parent to
48 permit the other to [visit] BE WITH the children at stated periods with-
49 out an order of protection, even where the parents are divorced and the
50 support order is for a child only.

51 (b) Any order of the family court under this section shall terminate
52 when the supreme court makes an order of custody or of [visitation]
53 PARENTING TIME concerning the children, unless the supreme court contin-
54 ues the order of the family court.

1 S 19. Subdivision (a) of section 456 of the family court act, as
2 amended by chapter 809 of the laws of 1963, is amended to read as
3 follows:

4 (a) No person may be placed on probation under this article unless the
5 court makes an order to that effect, either at the time of the making of
6 an order of support or under section four hundred fifty-four OF THIS
7 PART. The period of probation may continue so long as an order of
8 support, order of protection or order of [visitation] PARENTING TIME
9 applies to such person.

10 S 20. Subdivisions (a) and (b) of section 467 of the family court act,
11 as amended by chapter 40 of the laws of 1981, are amended to read as
12 follows:

13 (a) In an action for divorce, separation or annulment, the supreme
14 court may refer to the family court the determination of applications to
15 fix temporary or permanent custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME,
16 applications to enforce judgments and orders of custody or [visitation]
17 PARENTING TIME, and applications to modify judgments and orders of
18 custody which modification may be granted only upon a showing to the
19 family court that there has been a subsequent change of circumstances
20 and that modification is required.

21 (b) In the event no such referral has been made and unless the supreme
22 court provides in the order or judgment awarding custody or [visitation]
23 PARENTING TIME in an action for divorce, separation or annulment, that
24 it may be enforced or modified only in the supreme court, the family
25 court may: (i) determine an application to enforce the order or judgment
26 awarding custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME, or (ii) determine an
27 application to modify the order or judgment awarding custody or [visita-
28 tion] PARENTING TIME upon a showing that there has been a subsequent
29 change of circumstances and modification is required.

30 S 21. Section 511 of the family court act, as amended by chapter 533
31 of the laws of 1999, is amended to read as follows:

32 S 511. Jurisdiction. Except as otherwise provided, the family court
33 has exclusive original jurisdiction in proceedings to establish paterni-
34 ty and, in any such proceedings in which it makes a finding of paterni-
35 ty, to order support and to make orders of custody or of [visitation]
36 PARENTING TIME, as set forth in this article. On its own motion, the
37 court may at any time in the proceedings also direct the filing of a
38 neglect petition in accord with the provisions of article ten of this
39 act. In accordance with the provisions of section one hundred eleven-b
40 of the domestic relations law, the surrogate's court has original juris-
41 diction concurrent with the family court to determine the issues relat-
42 ing to the establishment of paternity.

43 S 22. Section 549 of the family court act, as added by chapter 952 of
44 the laws of 1971, subdivision (a) as amended by chapter 85 of the laws
45 of 1996, is amended to read as follows:

46 S 549. Order of [visitation] PARENTING TIME. (a) If an order of fili-
47 ation is made or if a paternity agreement or compromise is approved by
48 the court, in the absence of an order of custody or of [visitation]
49 PARENTING TIME entered by the supreme court the family court may make an
50 order of custody or of [visitation] PARENTING TIME, in accordance with
51 subdivision one of section two hundred forty of the domestic relations
52 law, requiring one parent to permit the other to [visit] BE WITH the
53 child or children at stated periods.

54 (b) Any order of the family court under this section shall terminate
55 when the supreme court makes an order of custody or of [visitation]

1 PARENTING TIME concerning the child or children, unless the supreme
2 court continues the order of the family court.

3 S 23. Subdivision (b) of section 551 of the family court act, as
4 amended by chapter 483 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read as
5 follows:

6 (b) to permit a parent PARENTING TIME, or a person entitled to visita-
7 tion by a court order or a separation agreement to [visit] BE WITH the
8 child at stated periods;

9 S 24. Section 651 of the family court act, as amended by chapter 85 of
10 the laws of 1996, subdivision (b) as amended by chapter 657 of the laws
11 of 2003, subdivision (d) as amended by chapter 41 of the laws of 2010,
12 subdivision (e) as amended by chapter 295 of the laws of 2009 and subdi-
13 vision (f) as added by chapter 473 of the laws of 2009, is amended to
14 read as follows:

15 S 651. Jurisdiction over habeas corpus proceedings and petitions for
16 custody [and], visitation AND PARENTING TIME of minors. (a) When
17 referred from the supreme court or county court to the family court, the
18 family court has jurisdiction to determine, in accordance with subdivi-
19 sion one of section two hundred forty of the domestic relations law and
20 with the same powers possessed by the supreme court in addition to its
21 own powers, habeas corpus proceedings and proceedings brought by peti-
22 tion and order to show cause, for the determination of the custody [or],
23 visitation AND PARENTING TIME of minors.

24 (b) When initiated in the family court, the family court has jurisdic-
25 tion to determine, in accordance with subdivision one of section two
26 hundred forty of the domestic relations law and with the same powers
27 possessed by the supreme court in addition to its own powers, habeas
28 corpus proceedings and proceedings brought by petition and order to show
29 cause, for the determination of the custody [or], visitation AND PARENT-
30 ING TIME of minors, including applications by a grandparent or grandpar-
31 ents for visitation or custody rights pursuant to section seventy-two or
32 two hundred forty of the domestic relations law.

33 (c) When initiated in the family court pursuant to a petition under
34 part eight of article ten of this act or section three hundred fifty-
35 eight-a of the social services law, the family court has jurisdiction to
36 enforce or modify orders or judgments of the supreme court relating to
37 the [visitation] PARENTING TIME of minors in foster care, notwithstand-
38 ing any limitation contained in subdivision (b) of section four hundred
39 sixty-seven of this act.

40 (d) With respect to applications by a grandparent or grandparents for
41 visitation or custody rights, made pursuant to section seventy-two or
42 two hundred forty of the domestic relations law, with a child remanded
43 or placed in the care of a person, official, agency or institution
44 pursuant to the provisions of article ten of this act, the applicant, in
45 such manner as the court shall prescribe, shall serve a copy of the
46 application upon the social services official having care and custody of
47 such child, and the child's attorney, who shall be afforded an opportu-
48 nity to be heard thereon.

49 (e) 1. Permanent and initial temporary orders of custody or [visita-
50 tion] PARENTING TIME. Prior to the issuance of any permanent or initial
51 temporary order of custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME, the court
52 shall conduct a review of the decisions and reports listed in paragraph
53 three of this subdivision.

54 2. Successive temporary orders of custody or [visitation] PARENTING
55 TIME. Prior to the issuance of any successive temporary order of custo-
56 dy or [visitation] PARENTING TIME, the court shall conduct a review of

1 the decisions and reports listed in paragraph three of this subdivision,
2 unless such a review has been conducted within ninety days prior to the
3 issuance of such order.

4 3. Decisions and reports for review. The court shall conduct a review
5 of the following:

6 (i) related decisions in court proceedings initiated pursuant to arti-
7 cle ten of this act, and all warrants issued under this act; and

8 (ii) reports of the statewide computerized registry of orders of
9 protection established and maintained pursuant to section two hundred
10 twenty-one-a of the executive law, and reports of the sex offender
11 registry established and maintained pursuant to section one hundred
12 sixty-eight-b of the correction law.

13 4. Notifying counsel and issuing orders. Upon consideration of deci-
14 sions pursuant to article ten of this act, and registry reports and
15 notifying counsel involved in the proceeding, or in the event of a self-
16 represented party, notifying such party of the results thereof, includ-
17 ing any court appointed attorney for children, the court may issue a
18 temporary, successive temporary or final order of custody or [visita-
19 tion] PARENTING TIME.

20 5. Temporary emergency order. Notwithstanding any other provision of
21 the law, upon emergency situations, including computer malfunctions, to
22 serve the best interest of the child, the court may issue a temporary
23 emergency order for custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME in the event
24 that it is not possible to timely review decisions and reports on regis-
25 tries as required pursuant to paragraph three of this subdivision.

26 6. After issuing a temporary emergency order. After issuing a tempo-
27 rary emergency order of custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME, the
28 court shall conduct reviews of the decisions and reports on registries
29 as required pursuant to paragraph three of this subdivision within twen-
30 ty-four hours of the issuance of such temporary emergency order. Should
31 such twenty-four hour period fall on a day when court is not in session,
32 then the required reviews shall take place the next day the court is in
33 session. Upon reviewing decisions and reports the court shall notify
34 associated counsel, self-represented parties and attorneys for children
35 pursuant to paragraph four of this subdivision and may issue temporary
36 or permanent custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME orders.

37 7. Feasibility study. The commissioner of the office of children and
38 family services, in conjunction with the office of court administration,
39 is hereby authorized and directed to examine, study, evaluate and make
40 recommendations concerning the feasibility of the utilization of comput-
41 ers in family courts which are connected to the statewide central regis-
42 ter of child abuse and maltreatment established and maintained pursuant
43 to section four hundred twenty-two of the social services law, as a
44 means of providing family courts with information regarding parties
45 requesting orders of custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME. Such
46 commissioner shall make a preliminary report to the governor and the
47 legislature of findings, conclusions and recommendations not later than
48 January thirty-first, two thousand nine, and a final report of findings,
49 conclusions and recommendations not later than June first, two thousand
50 nine, and shall submit with the reports such legislative proposals as
51 are deemed necessary to implement the commissioner's recommendations.

52 (f) Military service by parent; effect on child custody orders. 1.
53 During the period of time that a parent is activated, deployed or tempo-
54 rarily assigned to military service, such that the parent's ability to
55 continue as a joint caretaker or the primary caretaker of a minor child
56 is materially affected by such military service, any orders issued

1 pursuant to this section, based on the fact that the parent is acti-
2 vated, deployed or temporarily assigned to military service, which would
3 materially affect or change a previous judgment or order regarding
4 custody of that parent's child or children as such judgment or order
5 existed on the date the parent was activated, deployed, or temporarily
6 assigned to military service, shall be subject to review pursuant to
7 paragraph three of this subdivision. Any relevant provisions of the
8 Service Member's Civil Relief Act shall apply to all proceedings
9 governed by this section.

10 2. During such period, the court may enter an order to modify custody
11 if there is clear and convincing evidence that the modification is in
12 the best interests of the child. An attorney for the child shall be
13 appointed in all cases where a modification is sought during such mili-
14 tary service. Such order shall be subject to review pursuant to para-
15 graph three of this subdivision. When entering an order pursuant to this
16 section, the court shall consider and provide for, if feasible and if in
17 the best interests of the child, contact between the military service
18 member and his or her child including, but not limited to, electronic
19 communication by e-mail, webcam, telephone, or other available means.
20 During the period of the parent's leave from military service, the court
21 shall consider the best interests of the child when establishing a
22 parenting schedule, including visiting and other contact. For such
23 purpose, a "leave from military service" shall be a period of not more
24 than three months.

25 3. Unless the parties have otherwise stipulated or agreed, if an order
26 is issued pursuant to this subdivision, the return of the parent from
27 active military service, deployment or temporary assignment shall be
28 considered a substantial change in circumstances. Upon the request of
29 either parent, the court shall determine on the basis of the child's
30 best interests whether the custody judgment or order previously in
31 effect should be modified.

32 4. This subdivision shall not apply to assignments to permanent duty
33 stations or permanent changes of station.

34 S 25. Section 651-a of the family court act, as amended by chapter 12
35 of the laws of 1996, is amended to read as follows:

36 S 651-a. Reports of child abuse and maltreatment; admissibility. In
37 any proceeding brought pursuant to this section to determine the custody
38 [or], visitation OR PARENTING TIME of minors, a report made to the
39 statewide central register of child abuse and maltreatment, pursuant to
40 title six of article six of the social services law, or a portion there-
41 of, which is otherwise admissible as a business record pursuant to rule
42 forty-five hundred eighteen of the civil practice law and rules shall
43 not be admissible in evidence, notwithstanding such rule, unless an
44 investigation of such report conducted pursuant to title six of article
45 six of the social services law has determined that there is some credi-
46 ble evidence of the alleged abuse or maltreatment, that the subject of
47 the report has been notified that the report is indicated. In addition,
48 if such report has been reviewed by the state commissioner of [social]
49 THE OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY services or his designee and has been
50 determined to be unfounded, it shall not be admissible in evidence. If
51 such report has been so reviewed and has been amended to delete any
52 finding, each such deleted finding shall not be admissible. If the state
53 commissioner of [social] THE OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY services or
54 his designee has amended the report to add any new finding, each such
55 new finding, together with any portion of the original report not
56 deleted by [the] SUCH commissioner or his designee, shall be admissible

1 if it meets the other requirements of this section and is otherwise
2 admissible as a business record. If such a report, or portion thereof,
3 is admissible in evidence but is uncorroborated, it shall not be suffi-
4 cient to make a fact finding of abuse or maltreatment in such proceed-
5 ing. Any other evidence tending to support the reliability of such
6 report shall be sufficient corroboration.

7 S 26. Subdivisions (a) and (b) of section 652 of the family court act,
8 as amended by chapter 40 of the laws of 1981, are amended to read as
9 follows:

10 (a) When referred from the supreme court to the family court, the
11 family court has jurisdiction to determine, with the same powers
12 possessed by the supreme court, applications to fix temporary or perma-
13 nent custody and applications to modify judgments and orders of custody
14 or [visitation] PARENTING TIME in actions and proceedings for marital
15 separation, divorce, annulment of marriage and dissolution of marriage.
16 Applications to modify judgments and orders of custody may be granted by
17 the family court under this section only upon the showing to the family
18 court that there has been a subsequent change of circumstances and that
19 modification is required.

20 (b) In the event no such referral has been made and unless the supreme
21 court provides in the order or judgment awarding custody or [visitation]
22 PARENTING TIME in an action for divorce, separation or annulment, that
23 it may be enforced or modified only in the supreme court, the family
24 court may: (i) determine an application to enforce the order or judgment
25 awarding custody or [visitation] PARENTING TIME, or (ii) determine an
26 application to modify the order or judgment awarding custody or [visita-
27 tion] PARENTING TIME upon a showing that there has been a subsequent
28 change of circumstances and modification is required.

29 S 27. Subdivision (b) of section 656 of the family court act, as
30 amended by chapter 483 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read as
31 follows:

32 (b) to permit a parent PARENTING TIME, or a person entitled to visita-
33 tion by a court order or a separation agreement, to [visit] BE WITH the
34 child at stated periods;

35 S 28. Subdivision (b) of section 759 of the family court act, as
36 amended by chapter 483 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read as
37 follows:

38 (b) to permit a parent PARENTING TIME, or a person entitled to visita-
39 tion by a court order or a separation agreement, to [visit] BE WITH the
40 child at stated periods;

41 S 29. Subdivision (b) of section 842 of the family court act, as
42 amended by chapter 483 of the laws of 1995, is amended to read as
43 follows:

44 (b) to permit a parent PARENTING TIME, or a person entitled to visita-
45 tion by a court order or a separation agreement, to [visit] BE WITH the
46 child at stated periods;

47 S 30. Section 119 of the family court act is amended by adding two new
48 subdivisions (d) and (e) to read as follows:

49 (D) "VISITATION" REFERS TO TIME PERMITTED TO BE SPENT WITH A CHILD
50 PURSUANT TO A COURT ORDER UNDER THIS CHAPTER, THE FAMILY COURT ACT OR AN
51 ORDER ENFORCED UNDER ARTICLE FIVE-A OF THIS CHAPTER, BY A PERSON WHO IS
52 NOT A PARENT OF THE CHILD. THIS SHALL INCLUDE GRANDPARENTS, SIBLINGS AND
53 STEP-PARENTS.

54 (E) "PARENTING TIME" REFERS TO THE PERIOD OF TIME THAT A PARENT MAY
55 SPEND WITH HIS OR HER CHILD PURSUANT TO A COURT ORDER UNDER THIS CHAP-

1 TER, THE FAMILY COURT ACT OR AN ORDER ENFORCED UNDER ARTICLE FIVE-A OF
2 THIS CHAPTER.

3 S 31. This act shall take effect immediately, provided that the amend-
4 ments to subdivision (a) of section 439 of the family court act made by
5 section fifteen of this act shall be subject to the expiration and
6 reversion of such subdivision pursuant to section 246 of chapter 81 of
7 the laws of 1995, as amended, when upon such date the provisions of
8 section sixteen of this act shall take effect.