

4726

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N S E N A T E

April 10, 2015

Introduced by Sen. ROBACH -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Children and Families

AN ACT to amend the domestic relations law and the family court act, in relation to prohibiting the court from granting custody of or unsupervised visitation with a child to a person who has been convicted of or charged with raping the parent of the child

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

1 Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subdivision 1 of section 240 of the domestic relations law, as amended by chapter 476 of the laws of 2009, is
2 amended to read as follows:
3 (a) In any action or proceeding brought (1) to annul a marriage or to
4 declare the nullity of a void marriage, or (2) for a separation, or (3)
5 for a divorce, or (4) to obtain, by a writ of habeas corpus or by petition and order to show cause, the custody of or right to visitation with
6 any child of a marriage, the court shall require verification of the
7 status of any child of the marriage with respect to such child's custody
8 and support, including any prior orders, and shall enter orders for
9 custody and support as, in the court's discretion, justice requires,
10 having regard to the circumstances of the case and of the respective
11 parties and to the best interests of the child and subject to the
12 provisions of subdivision one-c of this section. Where either party to
13 an action concerning custody of or a right to visitation with a child
14 alleges in a sworn petition or complaint or sworn answer, cross-petition, counterclaim or other sworn responsive pleading that the other
15 party has committed an act of domestic violence against the party making
16 the allegation or a family or household member of either party, as such
17 family or household member is defined in article eight of the family
18 court act, and such allegations are proven by a preponderance of the
19 evidence, the court must consider the effect of such domestic violence
20 upon the best interests of the child, together with such other facts and
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EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [] is old law to be omitted.

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1 circumstances as the court deems relevant in making a direction pursuant
2 to this section and state on the record how such findings, facts and
3 circumstances factored into the direction. NO COURT SHALL AWARD CUSTODY
4 TO OR ALLOW UNSUPERVISED VISITATION WITH A PERSON WHO HAS BEEN CONVICTED
5 OF RAPING THE PARENT OF SUCH CHILD AND ANY REQUEST FOR CUSTODY OR UNSU-
6 PERVISED VISITATION BY A PERSON CHARGED WITH RAPING THE PARENT OF SUCH
7 CHILD SHALL BE STAYED PENDING RESOLUTION OF ANY CRIMINAL CHARGES OF
8 RAPE. If a parent makes a good faith allegation based on a reasonable
9 belief supported by facts that the child is the victim of child abuse,
10 child neglect, or the effects of domestic violence, and if that parent
11 acts lawfully and in good faith in response to that reasonable belief to
12 protect the child or seek treatment for the child, then that parent
13 shall not be deprived of custody, visitation or contact with the child,
14 or restricted in custody, visitation or contact, based solely on that
15 belief or the reasonable actions taken based on that belief. If an alle-
16 gation that a child is abused is supported by a preponderance of the
17 evidence, then the court shall consider such evidence of abuse in deter-
18 mining the visitation arrangement that is in the best interest of the
19 child, and the court shall not place a child in the custody of a parent
20 who presents a substantial risk of harm to that child, and shall state
21 on the record how such findings were factored into the determination. An
22 order directing the payment of child support shall contain the social
23 security numbers of the named parties. In all cases there shall be no
24 prima facie right to the custody of the child in either parent. Such
25 direction shall make provision for child support out of the property of
26 either or both parents. The court shall make its award for child support
27 pursuant to subdivision one-b of this section. Such direction may
28 provide for reasonable visitation rights to the maternal and/or paternal
29 grandparents of any child of the parties. Such direction as it applies
30 to rights of visitation with a child remanded or placed in the care of a
31 person, official, agency or institution pursuant to article ten of the
32 family court act, or pursuant to an instrument approved under section
33 three hundred fifty-eight-a of the social services law, shall be
34 enforceable pursuant to part eight of article ten of the family court
35 act and sections three hundred fifty-eight-a and three hundred eighty-
36 four-a of the social services law and other applicable provisions of law
37 against any person having care and custody, or temporary care and custo-
38 dy, of the child. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any writ-
39 ten application or motion to the court for the establishment, modifica-
40 tion or enforcement of a child support obligation for persons not in
41 receipt of public assistance and care must contain either a request for
42 child support enforcement services which would authorize the collection
43 of the support obligation by the immediate issuance of an income
44 execution for support enforcement as provided for by this chapter,
45 completed in the manner specified in section one hundred eleven-g of the
46 social services law; or a statement that the applicant has applied for
47 or is in receipt of such services; or a statement that the applicant
48 knows of the availability of such services, has declined them at this
49 time and where support enforcement services pursuant to section one
50 hundred eleven-g of the social services law have been declined that the
51 applicant understands that an income deduction order may be issued
52 pursuant to subdivision (c) of section fifty-two hundred forty-two of
53 the civil practice law and rules without other child support enforcement
54 services and that payment of an administrative fee may be required. The
55 court shall provide a copy of any such request for child support
56 enforcement services to the support collection unit of the appropriate

1 social services district any time it directs payments to be made to such
2 support collection unit. Additionally, the copy of any such request
3 shall be accompanied by the name, address and social security number of
4 the parties; the date and place of the parties' marriage; the name and
5 date of birth of the child or children; and the name and address of the
6 employers and income payors of the party from whom child support is
7 sought or from the party ordered to pay child support to the other
8 party. Such direction may require the payment of a sum or sums of money
9 either directly to the custodial parent or to third persons for goods or
10 services furnished for such child, or for both payments to the custodial
11 parent and to such third persons; provided, however, that unless the
12 party seeking or receiving child support has applied for or is receiving
13 such services, the court shall not direct such payments to be made to
14 the support collection unit, as established in section one hundred
15 eleven-h of the social services law. Every order directing the payment
16 of support shall require that if either parent currently, or at any time
17 in the future, has health insurance benefits available that may be
18 extended or obtained to cover the child, such parent is required to
19 exercise the option of additional coverage in favor of such child and
20 execute and deliver to such person any forms, notices, documents or
21 instruments necessary to assure timely payment of any health insurance
22 claims for such child.

23 S 2. The family court act is amended by adding a new section 553 to
24 read as follows:

25 S 553. PATERNITY PROCEEDINGS STAYED FOR RAPE CHARGES AGAINST PUTATIVE
26 FATHER. 1. IF CRIMINAL CHARGES ALLEGING AN ACT OF RAPE ARE BROUGHT
27 AGAINST THE PUTATIVE FATHER OF A CHILD CONCEIVED AS THE RESULT OF THAT
28 ACT OF RAPE, THE COURT SHALL ISSUE AN AUTOMATIC STAY OF ANY PATERNITY
29 PROCEEDING INVOLVING BOTH THE CHILD AND THE ALLEGED PUTATIVE FATHER. THE
30 STAY SHALL NOT BE LIFTED UNTIL THERE IS A FINAL DISPOSITION OF SUCH
31 CRIMINAL CHARGES.

32 2. IN ANY FUTURE CUSTODY PROCEEDING, ANY DENIAL OF VISITATION UNDER
33 THIS SECTION SHALL NOT BE USED AGAINST THE MOTHER OF THE CHILD WHEN
34 DETERMINING ANY SUPPORT OBLIGATION.

35 S 3. Subdivisions (a), (b) and (c) of section 651 of the family court
36 act, subdivisions (a) and (c) as amended by chapter 85 of the laws of
37 1996 and subdivision (b) as amended by chapter 657 of the laws of 2003,
38 are amended to read as follows:

39 (a) When referred from the supreme court or county court to the family
40 court, the family court has jurisdiction to determine, in accordance
41 with subdivision one of section two hundred forty of the domestic
42 relations law and with the same powers possessed by the supreme court in
43 addition to its own powers, habeas corpus proceedings and proceedings
44 brought by petition and order to show cause, for the determination of
45 the custody or visitation of minors SUBJECT, HOWEVER, TO THE PROVISIONS
46 OF PARAGRAPH (A) OF SUBDIVISION ONE OF SECTION TWO HUNDRED FORTY OF THE
47 DOMESTIC RELATIONS LAW PROHIBITING THE COURT FROM GRANTING CUSTODY OR
48 UNSUPERVISED VISITATION OF A CHILD TO A PERSON WHO HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF
49 OR CHARGED WITH RAPING THE PARENT OF THE CHILD.

50 (b) When initiated in the family court, the family court has jurisdic-
51 tion to determine, in accordance with subdivision one of section two
52 hundred forty of the domestic relations law and with the same powers
53 possessed by the supreme court in addition to its own powers, habeas
54 corpus proceedings and proceedings brought by petition and order to show
55 cause, for the determination of the custody or visitation of minors,
56 including applications by a grandparent or grandparents for visitation

1 or custody rights pursuant to section seventy-two or two hundred forty
2 of the domestic relations law SUBJECT, HOWEVER, TO THE PROVISIONS OF
3 PARAGRAPH (A) OF SUBDIVISION ONE OF SECTION TWO HUNDRED FORTY OF THE
4 DOMESTIC RELATIONS LAW PROHIBITING THE COURT FROM GRANTING CUSTODY OR
5 UNSUPERVISED VISITATION OF A CHILD TO A PERSON WHO HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF
6 OR CHARGED WITH RAPING THE PARENT OF THE CHILD.

7 (c) When initiated in the family court pursuant to a petition under
8 part eight of article ten of this act or section three hundred fifty-
9 eight-a of the social services law, the family court has jurisdiction to
10 enforce or modify orders or judgments of the supreme court relating to
11 the visitation of minors in foster care, notwithstanding any limitation
12 contained in subdivision (b) of section four hundred sixty-seven of this
13 act BUT SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF PARAGRAPH (A) OF SUBDIVISION ONE OF
14 SECTION TWO HUNDRED FORTY OF THE DOMESTIC RELATIONS LAW PROHIBITING THE
15 COURT FROM GRANTING CUSTODY OR UNSUPERVISED VISITATION OF A CHILD TO A
16 PERSON WHO HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF OR CHARGED WITH RAPING THE PARENT OF
17 THE CHILD.

18 S 4. This act shall take effect immediately.