

Domestic Relations

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UNIFORM CHILD CUSTODY JURISDICTION AND ENFORCEMENT ACT
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§ 75. Short title and statement of legislative intent. 1. This article may be cited as the "uniform child custody jurisdiction and enforcement act".

2. It is the intent of the legislature in enacting this article to provide an effective mechanism to obtain and enforce orders of custody and visitation across state lines and to do so in a manner that ensures that the safety of the children is paramount and that victims of domestic violence and child abuse are protected. It is further the intent of the legislature that this article be construed so as to ensure that custody and visitation by perpetrators of domestic violence or homicide of a parent, legal custodian, legal guardian, sibling, half-sibling or step-sibling of a child is restricted pursuant to subdivision one-c of section two hundred forty of this chapter and section one thousand eighty-five of the family court act.

§ 75-a. Definitions. In this article:

1. "Abandoned" means left without provision for reasonable and necessary care or supervision.

2. "Child" means an individual who has not attained eighteen years of age.

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

4. "Child custody proceeding" means a proceeding in which legal custody, physical custody, or visitation with respect to a child is an issue. The term includes a proceeding for divorce, separation, neglect, abuse, dependency, guardianship, paternity, termination of parental rights, and protection from domestic violence, in which the issue may appear. The term does not include a proceeding involving juvenile delinquency, person in need of supervision, contractual emancipation, or enforcement under title three of this article.

5. "Commencement" means the filing of the first pleading in a proceeding.

6. "Court" means an entity authorized under the law of a state to establish, enforce, or modify a child custody determination.

7. "Home state" means the state in which a child lived with a parent or a person acting as a parent for at least six consecutive months immediately before the commencement of a child custody proceeding. In the case of a child less than six months of age, the term means the state in which the child lived from birth with any of the persons mentioned. A period of temporary absence of any of the mentioned persons is part of the period.

8. "Initial determination" means the first child custody determination concerning a particular child.

9. "Issuing court" means the court that makes a child custody determination for which enforcement is sought under this article.

10. "Issuing state" means the state in which a child custody determination is made.

11. "Modification" means a child custody determination that changes, replaces, supersedes, or is otherwise made after a previous determination concerning the same child, whether or not it is made by the court that made the previous determination.

12. "Person" means an individual, corporation, business trust, estate, trust, partnership, limited liability company, association, joint venture, government, governmental subdivision, agency or instrumentality, public corporation or any other legal or commercial entity.

13. "Person acting as a parent" means a person, other than a parent, who:

(a) has physical custody of the child or has had physical custody for a period of six consecutive months, including any temporary absence, within one year immediately before the commencement of a child custody proceeding; and

(b) has been awarded legal custody by a court or claims a right to legal custody under the law of this state.

14. "Physical custody" means the physical care and supervision of a child.

15. "State" means a state of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, or any territory or insular possession subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

16. "Tribe" means an Indian tribe or band, or Alaskan Native village, which is recognized by federal law or formally acknowledged by a state.

17. "Warrant" means an order issued by a court authorizing law enforcement officers to take physical custody of a child.

18. "Law enforcement officer" means a police officer as defined in subdivision thirty-four of section 1.20 of the criminal procedure law.

§ 75-b. Proceedings governed by other laws. This article does not govern an adoption proceeding or a proceeding pertaining to the

authorization of emergency medical care for a child.

§ 75-c. Application to Indian tribes. 1. A child custody proceeding that pertains to an Indian child as defined in the Indian Child Welfare Act, 25 U.S.C. § 1901 et seq., is not subject to this article to the extent that it is governed by the Indian Child Welfare Act.

2. A court of this state shall treat a tribe as if it were a state of the United States for the purpose of applying this title and title two of this article.

3. A child custody determination made by a tribe under factual circumstances in substantial conformity with the jurisdictional standards of this article must be recognized and enforced under title three of this article.

§ 75-d. International application of article. 1. A court of this state shall treat a foreign country as if it were a state of the United States for the purpose of applying this title and title two of this article.

2. Except as otherwise provided in subdivision three of this section, a child custody determination made in a foreign country under factual circumstances in substantial conformity with the jurisdictional standards of this article must be recognized and enforced under title three of this article.

3. A court of this state need not apply this article if the child custody law of a foreign country as written or as applied violates fundamental principles of human rights.

§ 75-e. Effect of child custody determination. A child custody determination made by a court of this state that had jurisdiction under this article binds all persons who have been served in accordance with the laws of this state or notified in accordance with section seventy-five-g of this title or who have submitted to the jurisdiction of the court, and who have been given an opportunity to be heard. As to those persons, the determination is conclusive as to all decided issues of law and fact except to the extent the determination is modified or except to the extent that enforcement of an order would violate subdivision one-c of section two hundred forty of this chapter or section one thousand eighty-five of the family court act.

§ 75-f. Priority. If a question of existence or exercise of jurisdiction under this article is raised in a child custody proceeding, the question, upon request of a party, child or child's attorney must be given priority on the calendar and handled expeditiously.

§ 75-g. Notice to persons outside state. 1. Notice required for the exercise of jurisdiction when a person is outside this state shall be given in a manner prescribed by the law of this state for service of process, as provided in paragraph (a), (b) or (c) of this subdivision, or by the law of the state in which the service is made, as provided in paragraph (d) of this subdivision. Notice must be given in a manner reasonably calculated to give actual notice. If a person cannot be served with notice within the state, the court shall require that such person be served in a manner reasonably calculated to give actual notice, as follows:

(a) by personal delivery outside the state in the manner prescribed by section three hundred thirteen of the civil practice law and rules; or

(b) by any form of mail requesting a receipt; or

(c) in such manner as the court, upon motion, directs, including publication, if service is impracticable under paragraph (a) or (b) of this subdivision; or

(d) in such manner as prescribed by the law of the state in which service is made.

2. Proof of service outside the state shall be by affidavit of the individual who made the service, or in the manner prescribed by the order pursuant to which service is made. If service is made by mail, proof may be by a receipt signed by the addressee or other evidence of delivery to the addressee. Proof of service may also be in the manner prescribed by the law of the state in which the service is made.

3. Notice is not required for the exercise of jurisdiction with respect to a person who submits to the jurisdiction of the court.

§ 75-h. Appearance and limited immunity. 1. A party to a child custody proceeding, including a modification proceeding, or a petitioner or respondent in a proceeding to enforce or register a child custody determination, is not subject to personal jurisdiction in this state for another proceeding or purpose solely by reason of having participated, or of having been physically present for the purpose of participating, in the proceeding.

2. A person who is subject to personal jurisdiction in this state on a basis other than physical presence is not immune from service of process in this state. A party present in this state who is subject to the jurisdiction of another state is not immune from service of process allowable under the laws of that state.

3. The immunity granted by subdivision one of this section does not extend to civil litigation based on acts unrelated to the participation in a proceeding under this article committed by an individual while present in this state.

§ 75-i. Communication between courts. 1. A court of this state may communicate and, pursuant to subdivision four of section seventy-six-c, subdivision two of section seventy-six-e and section seventy-seven-f of this article, must communicate, with a court in another state concerning a proceeding arising under this article.

2. The court may allow the parties to participate in the communication. If the parties are not able to participate in the communication, they must be given the opportunity to present facts and legal arguments before a decision on jurisdiction is made.

3. Communication between courts on schedules, calendars, court records, and similar matters may occur without informing the parties. A record need not be made of the communication.

4. Except as otherwise provided in subdivision three of this section, a record must be made of a communication under this section. The parties must be informed promptly of the communication and granted access to the record.

5. For the purposes of this section, "record" means information that is inscribed on a tangible medium or that is stored in an electronic or other medium and is retrievable in perceivable form.

§ 75-j. Taking testimony in another state. 1. In addition to other procedures available to a party, a party to a child custody proceeding may offer testimony of witnesses who are located in another state, including testimony of the parties and the child, by deposition or other means allowable in this state for testimony taken in another state. The court on its own motion may order that the testimony of a person be taken in another state and may prescribe the manner in which and the terms upon which the testimony is taken.

2. A court of this state may permit an individual residing in another state to be deposed or to testify by telephone, audiovisual means, or other electronic means before a designated court or at another location in that state. A court of this state shall cooperate with courts of other states in designating an appropriate location for the deposition or testimony and the procedures to be followed by the persons taking

such deposition or testimony. Any such testimony or deposition shall be recorded and preserved for transcription.

3. Documentary evidence transmitted from another state to a court of this state by technological means that do not produce an original writing may not be excluded from evidence on an objection based on the means of transmission.

§ 75-k. Cooperation between courts; preservation of records. 1. A court of this state may request the appropriate court of another state to:

- (a) hold an evidentiary hearing;
- (b) order a person to produce or give evidence pursuant to procedures of that state;
- (c) order that an evaluation be made with respect to the custody of a child involved in a pending proceeding;
- (d) forward to the court of this state a certified copy of the transcript of the record of the hearing, the evidence otherwise presented, and any evaluation prepared in compliance with the request; and
- (e) order a party to a child custody proceeding or any person having physical custody of the child to appear in the proceeding with or without the child.

2. Upon the request of a court of another state, a court of this state may hold a hearing or enter an order described in subdivision one of this section.

3. Travel and other necessary and reasonable expenses incurred under subdivisions one and two of this section may be assessed against the parties according to the law of this state.

4. A court of this state shall preserve the pleadings, orders, decrees, records of hearings, evaluations, and other pertinent records with respect to a child custody proceeding at least until the child attains eighteen years of age. Upon appropriate request by a court or law enforcement official of another state, the court shall forward a certified copy of those records.

§ 75-l. Military service by parent; effect on child custody orders pursuant to this article. 1. During the period of time that a parent is activated, deployed or temporarily assigned to military service, such that the parent's ability to continue as a joint caretaker or the primary caretaker of a minor child is materially affected by such military service, any orders issued pursuant to this article, based on the fact that the parent is activated, deployed or temporarily assigned to military service, which would materially affect or change a previous judgment or order regarding custody of that parent's child or children as such judgment or order existed on the date the parent was activated, deployed, or temporarily assigned to military service shall be subject to review pursuant to subdivision three of this section. Any relevant provisions of the Service Member's Civil Relief Act shall apply to all proceedings governed by this section.

2. During such period the court may enter an order to modify custody if there is clear and convincing evidence that the modification is in the best interests of the child. An attorney for the child shall be appointed in all cases where a modification is sought during such military service. Such order shall be subject to review pursuant to subdivision three of this section. When entering an order under this section, the court shall consider and provide for, if feasible and if in the best interests of the child, contact between the military service member and his or her child including, but not limited to, electronic communication by e-mail, webcam, telephone, or other available means.

During the period of the parent's leave from military service, the court shall consider the best interests of the child when establishing a parenting schedule, including visiting and other contact. For such purpose, a "leave from service" shall be a period of not more than three months.

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

4. This section shall not apply to assignments to permanent duty stations or permanent changes of station.

TITLE II

JURISDICTION

- Section 76. Initial child custody jurisdiction.
- 76-a. Exclusive, continuing jurisdiction.
 - 76-b. Jurisdiction to modify determination.
 - 76-c. Temporary emergency jurisdiction.
 - 76-d. Notice; opportunity to be heard; joinder.
 - 76-e. Simultaneous proceedings.
 - 76-f. Inconvenient forum.
 - 76-g. Jurisdiction declined by reason of conduct.
 - 76-h. Information to be submitted to court.
 - 76-i. Appearance of parties and child.

- § 76. Initial child custody jurisdiction. 1. Except as otherwise provided in section seventy-six-c of this title, a court of this state has jurisdiction to make an initial child custody determination only if:
- (a) this state is the home state of the child on the date of the commencement of the proceeding, or was the home state of the child within six months before the commencement of the proceeding and the child is absent from this state but a parent or person acting as a parent continues to live in this state;
 - (b) a court of another state does not have jurisdiction under paragraph (a) of this subdivision, or a court of the home state of the child has declined to exercise jurisdiction on the ground that this state is the more appropriate forum under section seventy-six-f or seventy-six-g of this title, and:
 - (i) the child and the child's parents, or the child and at least one parent or a person acting as a parent, have a significant connection with this state other than mere physical presence; and
 - (ii) substantial evidence is available in this state concerning the child's care, protection, training, and personal relationships;
 - (c) all courts having jurisdiction under paragraph (a) or (b) of this subdivision have declined to exercise jurisdiction on the ground that a court of this state is the more appropriate forum to determine the custody of the child under section seventy-six-f or seventy-six-g of this title; or
 - (d) no court of any other state would have jurisdiction under the criteria specified in paragraph (a), (b) or (c) of this subdivision.
2. Subdivision one of this section is the exclusive jurisdictional basis for making a child custody determination by a court of this state.
3. Physical presence of, or personal jurisdiction over, a party or a child is not necessary or sufficient to make a child custody

determination.

§ 76-a. Exclusive, continuing jurisdiction. 1. Except as otherwise provided in section seventy-six-c of this title, a court of this state which has made a child custody determination consistent with section seventy-six or seventy-six-b of this title has exclusive, continuing jurisdiction over the determination until:

(a) a court of this state determines that neither the child, the child and one parent, nor the child and a person acting as a parent have a significant connection with this state and that substantial evidence is no longer available in this state concerning the child's care, protection, training, and personal relationships; or

(b) a court of this state or a court of another state determines that the child, the child's parents, and any person acting as a parent do not presently reside in this state.

2. A court of this state which has made a child custody determination and does not have exclusive, continuing jurisdiction under this section may modify that determination only if it has jurisdiction to make an initial determination under section seventy-six of this title.

§ 76-b. Jurisdiction to modify determination. Except as otherwise provided in section seventy-six-c of this title, a court of this state may not modify a child custody determination made by a court of another state unless a court of this state has jurisdiction to make an initial determination under paragraph (a) or (b) of subdivision one of section seventy-six of this title and:

1. The court of the other state determines it no longer has exclusive, continuing jurisdiction under section seventy-six-a of this title or that a court of this state would be a more convenient forum under section seventy-six-f of this title; or

2. A court of this state or a court of the other state determines that the child, the child's parents, and any person acting as a parent do not presently reside in the other state.

§ 76-c. Temporary emergency jurisdiction. 1. A court of this state has temporary emergency jurisdiction if the child is present in this state and the child has been abandoned or it is necessary in an emergency to protect the child, a sibling or parent of the child.

2. If there is no previous child custody determination that is entitled to be enforced under this article and a child custody proceeding has not been commenced in a court of a state having jurisdiction under sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title, a child custody determination made under this section remains in effect until an order is obtained from a court of a state having jurisdiction under sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title. Where the child who is the subject of a child custody determination under this section is in imminent risk of harm, any order issued under this section shall remain in effect until a court of a state having jurisdiction under sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title has taken steps to assure the protection of the child. If a child custody proceeding has not been or is not commenced in a court of a state having jurisdiction under sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title, a child custody determination made under this section becomes a final determination, if it so provides and this state becomes the home state of the child.

3. If there is a previous child custody determination that is entitled to be enforced under this article, or a child custody proceeding has been commenced in a court of a state having jurisdiction under sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title, any order issued by a court of this state under this section must specify in the order a

period that the court considers adequate to allow the person seeking an order to obtain an order from the state having jurisdiction under sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title. The order issued in this state remains in effect until an order is obtained from the other state within the period specified or the period expires, provided, however, that where the child who is the subject of a child custody determination under this section is in imminent risk of harm, any order issued under this section shall remain in effect until a court of a state having jurisdiction under sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title has taken steps to assure the protection of the child.

4. A court of this state which has been asked to make a child custody determination under this section, upon being informed that a child custody proceeding has been commenced in, or a child custody determination has been made by, a court of a state having jurisdiction under sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title, shall immediately communicate with the other court. A court of this state which is exercising jurisdiction pursuant to sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title, upon being informed that a child custody proceeding has been commenced in, or a child custody determination has been made by, a court of another state under a statute similar to this section shall immediately communicate with the court of that state to resolve the emergency, protect the safety of the parties and the child, and determine a period for the duration of the temporary order.

§ 76-d. Notice; opportunity to be heard; joinder. 1. Before a child custody determination is made under this article, notice and an opportunity to be heard in accordance with the standards of section seventy-five-g of this article must be given to all persons entitled to notice under the law of this state as in child custody proceedings between residents of this state, any parent whose parental rights have not been previously terminated, and any person having physical custody of the child.

2. This article does not govern the enforceability of a child custody determination made without notice or an opportunity to be heard.

3. The obligation to join a party and the right to intervene as a party in a child custody proceeding under this article are governed by the laws of this state as in child custody proceedings between residents of this state.

§ 76-e. Simultaneous proceedings. 1. Except as otherwise provided in section seventy-six-c of this title, a court of this state may not exercise its jurisdiction under this title if, at the time of the commencement of the proceeding, a proceeding concerning the custody of the child has been commenced in a court of another state having jurisdiction substantially in conformity with this article, unless the proceeding has been terminated or is stayed by the court of the other state because a court of this state is a more convenient forum under section seventy-six-f of this title.

2. Except as otherwise provided in section seventy-six-c of this title, a court of this state, before hearing a child custody proceeding, shall examine the court documents and other information supplied by the parties pursuant to section seventy-six-h of this title. If the court determines that a child custody proceeding has been commenced in a court in another state having jurisdiction substantially in accordance with this article, the court of this state shall stay its proceeding and communicate with the court of the other state. If the court of the state

having jurisdiction substantially in accordance with this article does not determine that the court of this state is a more appropriate forum, the court of this state shall dismiss the proceeding.

3. In a proceeding to modify a child custody determination, a court of this state shall determine whether a proceeding to enforce the determination has been commenced in another state. If a proceeding to enforce a child custody determination has been commenced in another state, the court may:

(a) stay the proceeding for modification pending the entry of an order of a court of the other state enforcing, staying, denying, or dismissing the proceeding for enforcement;

(b) enjoin the parties from continuing with the proceeding for enforcement; or

(c) proceed with the modification under conditions it considers appropriate.

§ 76-f. Inconvenient forum. 1. A court of this state which has jurisdiction under this article to make a child custody determination may decline to exercise its jurisdiction at any time if it determines that it is an inconvenient forum under the circumstances and that a court of another state is a more appropriate forum. The issue of inconvenient forum may be raised upon motion of a party, the child or the child's attorney, or upon the court's own motion, or request of another court.

2. Before determining whether it is an inconvenient forum, a court of this state shall consider whether it is appropriate for a court of another state to exercise jurisdiction. For this purpose, the court shall allow the parties to submit information and shall consider all relevant factors, including:

(a) whether domestic violence or mistreatment or abuse of a child or sibling has occurred and is likely to continue in the future and which state could best protect the parties and the child;

(b) the length of time the child has resided outside this state;

(c) the distance between the court in this state and the court in the state that would assume jurisdiction;

(d) the relative financial circumstances of the parties;

(e) any agreement of the parties as to which state should assume jurisdiction;

(f) the nature and location of the evidence required to resolve the pending litigation, including testimony of the child;

(g) the ability of the court of each state to decide the issue expeditiously and the procedures necessary to present the evidence; and

(h) the familiarity of the court of each state with the facts and issues in the pending litigation.

3. If a court of this state determines that it is an inconvenient forum and that a court of another state is a more appropriate forum, it shall stay the proceedings upon condition that a child custody proceeding be promptly commenced in another designated state and may impose any other condition the court considers just and proper.

4. A court of this state may decline to exercise its jurisdiction under this article if a child custody determination is incidental to an action for divorce or another proceeding while still retaining jurisdiction over the divorce or other proceeding.

§ 76-g. Jurisdiction declined by reason of conduct. 1. Except as otherwise provided in section seventy-six-c of this title or by other law of this state, if a court of this state has jurisdiction under this article because a person seeking to invoke its jurisdiction has engaged

in unjustifiable conduct, the court shall decline to exercise its jurisdiction unless:

(a) the parents and all persons acting as parents have acquiesced in the exercise of jurisdiction;

(b) a court of the state otherwise having jurisdiction under sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title determines that this state is a more appropriate forum under section seventy-six-f of this title; or

(c) no court of any other state would have jurisdiction under the criteria specified in sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title.

2. If a court of this state declines to exercise its jurisdiction pursuant to subdivision one of this section, it may fashion an appropriate remedy to ensure the safety of the child and prevent a repetition of the unjustifiable conduct, including staying the proceeding until a child custody proceeding is commenced in a court having jurisdiction under sections seventy-six through seventy-six-b of this title.

3. If a court dismisses a petition or stays a proceeding because it declines to exercise its jurisdiction pursuant to subdivision one of this section, it shall assess against the party seeking to invoke its jurisdiction necessary and reasonable expenses including costs, communication expenses, attorney's fees, investigative fees, expenses for witnesses, travel expenses, and child care during the course of the proceedings, unless the party from whom fees are sought establishes that the assessment would be inappropriate. No fees, costs or expenses shall be assessed against a party who is fleeing an incident or pattern of domestic violence or mistreatment or abuse of a child or sibling, unless the court is convinced by a preponderance of evidence that such assessment would be clearly appropriate. The court may not assess fees, costs, or expenses against this state unless authorized by law other than this article.

4. In making a determination under this section, a court shall not consider as a factor weighing against the petitioner any taking of the child, or retention of the child after a visit or other temporary relinquishment of physical custody, from the person who has legal custody, if there is evidence that the taking or retention of the child was to protect the petitioner from domestic violence or the child or sibling from mistreatment or abuse.

§ 76-h. Information to be submitted to court. 1. Subject to subdivision five of this section, in a child custody proceeding, each party, in its first pleading or in an attached affidavit, shall give information, if reasonably ascertainable, under oath as to the child's present address or whereabouts, the places where the child has lived during the last five years, and the names and present addresses of the persons with whom the child has lived during that period. The pleading or affidavit must state whether the party:

(a) has participated, as a party or witness or in any other capacity, in any other proceeding concerning the custody of or visitation with the child and, if so, identify the court, the case number, and the date of the child custody determination, if any;

(b) knows of any proceeding that could affect the current proceeding, including proceedings for enforcement and proceedings relating to domestic violence, protective orders, termination of parental rights, and adoptions and, if so, identify the court, the case number, and the nature of the proceeding; and

(c) knows the names and addresses of any person not a party to the proceeding who has physical custody of the child or claims rights of legal custody or physical custody of, or visitation with, the child and, if so, the names and addresses of those persons.

2. If the information required by subdivision one of this section is not furnished, the court, upon motion of a party or its own motion, may stay the proceeding until the information is furnished.

3. If the declaration as to any of the items described in paragraphs (a) through (c) of subdivision one of this section is in the affirmative, the declarant shall give additional information under oath as required by the court. The court may examine the parties under oath as to details of the information furnished and other matters pertinent to the court's jurisdiction and the disposition of the case.

4. Each party has a continuing duty to inform the court of any proceeding in this or any other state that could affect the current proceeding.

5. Upon a finding, which may be made ex parte, that the health or safety of a party or child would be unreasonably put at risk by the disclosure of identifying information, or if an existing order so provides, a tribunal shall order that the address of the child or party or other identifying information not be disclosed in a pleading or other document filed in a proceeding under this article. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if the party seeking custody of the child has resided or resides in a residential program for victims of domestic violence as defined in section four hundred fifty-nine-a of the social services law, the present address of the child and the present address of the party seeking custody and the address of the residential program for victims of domestic violence shall not be revealed. Upon making an order that the address of the child or party or other identifying information not be disclosed, the court shall designate the clerk of the court or such other disinterested person as the agent for service of process for the party whose address is to remain confidential and shall notify the adverse party of such designation in writing. The clerk or disinterested person designated by the court shall, when served with process on behalf of the party whose address is to remain confidential, promptly notify such party whose address is to remain confidential and forward such process to him or her. The party whose address is to remain confidential shall inform the clerk of the court or disinterested person designated by the court of any change in address for purposes of receipt of service of process.

§ 76-i. Appearance of parties and child. 1. In a child custody proceeding in this state, the court may order a party to the proceeding who is in this state to appear before the court in person with or without the child. The court may order any person who is in this state and who has physical custody or control of the child to appear in person with the child.

2. If a party to a child custody proceeding whose presence is desired by the court is outside this state, the court may order that a notice given pursuant to section seventy-five-g of this article include a statement directing the party to appear in person with or without the child and informing the party that failure to appear may result in a decision adverse to the party.

3. The court may enter any orders necessary to ensure the safety of the child and of any person ordered to appear under this section.

4. If a party to a child custody proceeding who is outside this state is directed to appear under subdivision two of this section or desires to appear personally before the court with or without the child, the

court may require another party to pay reasonable and necessary travel and other expenses of the party so appearing and of the child.

TITLE III

ENFORCEMENT

Section 77. Definitions.

77-a. Enforcement under Hague Convention.

77-b. Duty to enforce.

77-c. Temporary visitation.

77-d. Registration of child custody determination.

77-e. Enforcement of registered determination.

77-f. Simultaneous proceedings.

77-g. Expedited enforcement of child custody determination.

77-h. Service of petition and order.

77-i. Hearing and order.

77-j. Warrant to take physical custody of child.

77-k. Costs, fees and expenses.

77-l. Recognition and enforcement.

77-m. Appeals.

77-n. Role of prosecutor or public official.

77-o. Role of law enforcement.

77-p. Costs and expenses.

§ 77. Definitions. As used in this title:

1. "Petitioner" means a person who seeks enforcement of an order for return of a child under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction or enforcement of a child custody determination.

2. "Respondent" means a person against whom a proceeding has been commenced for enforcement of an order for return of a child under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction or enforcement of a child custody determination.

§ 77-a. Enforcement under Hague Convention. Under this act, a court of this state may enforce an order for the return of the child made under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction as if it were a child custody determination.

§ 77-b. Duty to enforce. 1. A court of this state shall recognize and enforce a child custody determination of a court of another state if the latter court exercised jurisdiction in substantial conformity with this article or the determination was made under factual circumstances meeting the jurisdictional standards of this article and the determination has not been modified in accordance with this article; provided, however, that recognition and enforcement of the determination would not violate subdivision one-c of section two hundred forty of this chapter or section one thousand eighty-five of the family court act.

2. A court of this state may utilize any remedy available under other law of this state to enforce a child custody determination made by a court of another state. The remedies provided in this title are cumulative and do not affect the availability of other remedies to enforce a child custody determination.

§ 77-c. Temporary visitation. 1. A court of this state which does not have jurisdiction to modify a child custody determination, may, if consistent with subdivision one-c of section two hundred forty of this chapter or section one thousand eighty-five of the family court act, issue a temporary order enforcing:

(a) a visitation schedule made by a court of another state; or

(b) the visitation provisions of a child custody determination of

another state that does not provide for a specific visitation schedule.

2. If a court of this state makes an order under paragraph (b) of subdivision one of this section, it shall specify in the order a period that it considers adequate to allow the petitioner to obtain an order from a court having jurisdiction under the criteria specified in title two of this article. The order remains in effect until an order is obtained from the other court or the period expires.

§ 77-d. Registration of child custody determination. 1. A child custody determination issued by a court of another state may be registered in this state, with or without a simultaneous request for enforcement, by sending to the appropriate court in this state;

(a) a letter or other document requesting registration;

(b) two copies, including one certified copy, of the determination sought to be registered, and a statement under penalty of perjury that to the best of the knowledge and belief of the person seeking registration the order has not been modified; and

(c) except as otherwise provided in section seventy-six-h of this article, the name and address of the person seeking registration and any parent or person acting as a parent who has been awarded custody or visitation in the child custody determination sought to be registered.

2. On receipt of the documents required by subdivision one of this section, the registering court shall:

(a) cause the determination to be filed as a foreign judgment, together with one copy of any accompanying documents and information, regardless of their form; and

(b) serve notice upon the persons named pursuant to subdivision one of this section and provide them with an opportunity to contest the registration in accordance with this section.

3. The notice required by paragraph (b) of subdivision two of this section must state that:

(a) a registered determination is enforceable as of the date of the registration in the same manner as a determination issued by a court of this state;

(b) a hearing to contest the validity of the registered determination must be requested within twenty days after service of notice; and

(c) failure to contest the registration will result in confirmation of the child custody determination and preclude further contest of that determination with respect to any matter that could have been asserted.

4. A person seeking to contest the validity of a registered order must request a hearing within twenty days after service of the notice. At that hearing, the court shall confirm the registered order unless the person contesting registration establishes that:

(a) the issuing court did not have jurisdiction under title two of this article;

(b) the child custody determination sought to be registered has been vacated, stayed, or modified by a court having jurisdiction to do so under title two of this article; or

(c) the person contesting registration was entitled to notice, but notice was not given in accordance with the standards of section seventy-five-g of this article, in the proceedings before the court that issued the order for which registration is sought.

5. If a timely request for a hearing to contest the validity of the registration is not made, the registration is confirmed as a matter of law and the person requesting registration and all persons served must be notified of the confirmation.

6. Confirmation of a registered order, whether by operation of law or after notice and hearing, precludes further contest of the order with

respect to any matter that could have been asserted at the time of registration.

§ 77-e. Enforcement of registered determination. 1. A court of this state may grant any relief normally available under the laws of this state to enforce a registered child custody determination made by a court of another state.

2. A court of this state shall recognize and enforce, but may not modify, except in accordance with title two of this article, a registered child custody determination of a court of another state; provided, however, that recognition and enforcement of the determination would not violate subdivision one-c of section two hundred forty of this chapter or section one thousand eighty-five of the family court act.

§ 77-f. Simultaneous proceedings. If a proceeding for enforcement under this title is commenced in a court of this state and the court determines that a proceeding to modify the determination is pending in a court of another state having jurisdiction to modify the determination under title two of this article, the enforcing court shall immediately communicate with the modifying court. The proceeding for enforcement continues unless the enforcing court, after consultation with the modifying court, stays or dismisses the proceeding.

§ 77-g. Expedited enforcement of child custody determination. 1. A petition under this title must be verified. Certified copies of all orders sought to be enforced and of any order confirming registration must be attached to the petition. A copy of a certified copy of an order may be attached instead of the original.

2. A petition for enforcement of a child custody determination must state:

(a) whether the court that issued the determination identified the jurisdictional basis it relied upon in exercising jurisdiction and, if so, what the basis was;

(b) whether the determination for which enforcement is sought has been vacated, stayed, or modified by a court whose decision must be enforced under this article and, if so, identify the court, the case number, and the nature of the proceeding;

(c) whether any proceeding has been commenced that could affect the current proceeding, including proceedings relating to domestic violence, child abuse or neglect, protective orders, termination of parental rights, and adoptions and, if so, identify the court, the case number, and the nature of the proceeding;

(d) the present physical address of the child and the respondent, if known;

(e) whether relief in addition to the immediate physical custody of the child and attorney's fees is sought, including a request for assistance from law enforcement officials and, if so, the relief sought; and

(f) if the child custody determination has been registered and confirmed under section seventy-seven-d of this title, the date and place of registration.

3. Upon the filing of a petition, the court shall issue an order directing the respondent to appear in person with or without the child at a hearing within three court days and may enter any order necessary to ensure the safety of the parties and the child. The hearing must be held not more than three court days after the filing of the petition, provided that the petition has been served not less than twenty-four hours prior to the hearing. Service may be by any means directed by the court pursuant to section three hundred eight of the civil practice law and rules. The court may extend the date of the hearing briefly for good

cause shown or upon the request of the petitioner.

4. An order issued under subdivision three of this section must state the time and place of the hearing and advise the respondent that at the hearing the court will order that the petitioner may take immediate physical custody of the child and the payment of fees, costs, and expenses under section seventy-seven-k of this title, and may schedule a hearing to determine whether further relief is appropriate, unless the respondent appears and establishes that:

(a) the child custody determination has not been registered and confirmed under section seventy-seven-d of this title and that:

(1) the issuing court did not have jurisdiction under title two of this article;

(2) the child custody determination for which enforcement is sought has been vacated, stayed, or modified by a court having jurisdiction to do so under title two of this article or that enforcement would violate subdivision one-c of section two hundred forty of this chapter or section one thousand eighty-five of the family court act;

(3) the respondent was entitled to notice, but notice was not given in accordance with the standards of section seventy-five-g of this article, in the proceedings before the court that issued the order for which enforcement is sought; or

(b) the child custody determination for which enforcement is sought was registered and confirmed under section seventy-seven-c of this title, but has been vacated, stayed, or modified by a court of a state having jurisdiction to do so under title two of this article.

§ 77-h. Service of petition and order. Except as otherwise provided in section seventy-seven-j of this title, the petition and order must be served, by any method authorized by the law of this state, upon respondent and any person who has physical custody of the child. Service may be made outside the state in the manner prescribed by section seventy-five-g of this article.

§ 77-i. Hearing and order. 1. Unless the court issues a temporary emergency order pursuant to section seventy-six-c of this article, upon a finding that a petitioner is entitled to immediate physical custody of the child, the court shall order that the petitioner may take immediate physical custody of the child unless the respondent establishes that:

(a) the child custody determination has not been registered and confirmed under section seventy-seven-d of this title and that:

(i) the issuing court did not have jurisdiction under title two of this article;

(ii) the child custody determination for which enforcement is sought has been vacated, stayed, or modified by a court of a state having jurisdiction to do so under title two of this article or enforcement of the determination would violate subdivision one-c of section two hundred forty of this chapter or section one thousand eighty-five of the family court act; or

(iii) the respondent was entitled to notice, but notice was not given in accordance with the standards of section seventy-five-g of this article, in the proceedings before the court that issued the order for which enforcement is sought; or

(b) the child custody determination for which enforcement is sought was registered and confirmed under section seventy-seven-d of this title but has been vacated, stayed, or modified by a court of a state having jurisdiction to do so under title two of this article.

2. The court shall award the fees, costs, and expenses authorized under section seventy-seven-k of this title and may grant additional relief, including a request for the assistance of law enforcement

officials, and set a further hearing to determine whether additional relief is appropriate.

3. If a party called to testify refuses to answer on the ground that the testimony may be self-incriminating, the court may draw an adverse inference from the refusal.

4. A privilege against disclosure of communications between spouses and a defense of immunity based on the relationship of husband and wife or parent and child may not be invoked in a proceeding under this act.

§ 77-j. Warrant to take physical custody of child. 1. Upon the filing of a petition seeking enforcement of a child custody determination, the petitioner may file a verified application for the issuance of a warrant to take physical custody of the child if the child is at imminent risk of suffering serious physical harm or of removal from this state.

2. If the court, upon the testimony of the petitioner or other witness, finds that the child is likely to suffer imminent serious physical harm or to be removed from this state, it may issue a warrant to take physical custody of the child. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the petition must be heard on the next court day after the warrant is executed. Any adjournment for extraordinary circumstances shall be for not more than three court days. The application for the warrant must include the statements required by subdivision two of section seventy-seven-g of this title.

3. A warrant to take physical custody of a child must:

(a) recite the facts upon which a conclusion of imminent serious physical harm or removal from the jurisdiction is based;

(b) direct law enforcement officers to take physical custody of the child immediately and deliver the child to the petitioner or, where necessary, to act jointly with the local child protective service to take immediate steps to protect the child; and

(c) provide for the placement of the child pending final relief.

4. The respondent must be served with the petition, warrant, and order immediately after the child is taken into physical custody.

5. A warrant to take physical custody of a child is enforceable throughout this state. If the court finds on the basis of the testimony of the petitioner or other witness that a less intrusive remedy is not effective, it may authorize law enforcement officers to enter private property in order to execute the warrant and take physical custody of the child. If required by exigent circumstances of the case and necessary to the protection of the child, the court may authorize law enforcement officers to make a forcible entry at any hour.

6. The court may impose conditions upon placement of a child to ensure the appearance of the child and the child's custodian.

§ 77-k. Costs, fees and expenses. 1. The court shall award the prevailing party, including a state, necessary and reasonable expenses incurred by or on behalf of the party, including costs, communication expenses, attorney's fees, investigative fees, expenses for witnesses, travel expenses, and child care during the course of the proceedings, unless the party from whom fees or expenses are sought establishes that the award would be inappropriate. No fees, costs or expenses shall be assessed against a party who is fleeing an incident of domestic violence or mistreatment or abuse of a child or sibling, unless the court is convinced by a preponderance of evidence that such assessment would be clearly appropriate.

2. The court may not assess fees, costs, or expenses against a state unless authorized by law other than this article.

§ 77-l. Recognition and enforcement. A court of this state shall accord full faith and credit to an order issued by another state and

consistent with this article which enforces a child custody determination by a court of another state unless the order has been vacated, stayed, or modified by a court having jurisdiction to do so under title two of this article, unless recognition and enforcement would violate subdivision one-c of section two hundred forty of this chapter or section one thousand eighty-five of the family court act.

§ 77-m. Appeals. An appeal may be taken from a final order in a proceeding under this title in accordance with article fifty-five of the civil practice law and rules and article eleven of the family court act and may be granted a preference in the discretion of the court to which the appeal is taken. Unless the court enters a temporary emergency order under section seventy-six-c of this article, the enforcing court may not stay an order enforcing a child custody determination pending appeal.

§ 77-n. Role of prosecutor or public official. 1. In a case arising under this article or involving the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, the prosecutor or other appropriate public official may take any lawful action, including resort to a proceeding under this title or any other available civil proceeding to locate a child, obtain the return of a child, or enforce a child custody determination if there is:

(a) an existing child custody determination;

(b) a request to do so from a court in a pending child custody proceeding;

(c) a reasonable belief that a criminal statute has been violated; or

(d) a reasonable belief that the child has been wrongfully removed or retained in violation of the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

2. A prosecutor or appropriate public official acting under this section acts on behalf of the state or local government entity and may not represent any private party.

§ 77-o. Role of law enforcement. At the request of a prosecutor or other appropriate public official acting under section seventy-seven-n of this title, a law enforcement officer, as defined in subdivision thirty-four of section 1.20 of the criminal procedure law, may take any lawful action reasonably necessary to locate a child or a party and assist a prosecutor or appropriate public official with responsibilities under section seventy-seven-n of this title.

§ 77-p. Costs and expenses. If the respondent is not the prevailing party, the court may assess against the respondent all direct expenses and costs incurred by the prosecutor or other appropriate public official and law enforcement officers under section seventy-seven-n or seventy-seven-o of this title.

TITLE IV

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 78. Application and construction.

78-a. Severability clause.

§ 78. Application and construction. In applying and construing this article, consideration must be given to the need to promote uniformity of the law with respect to its subject matter among states that enact it.

§ 78-a. Severability clause. If any provision of this article or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this article which can be given effect without the invalid provision or

application, and to this end the provisions of this article are severable.