

Act No. 325
Public Acts of 1998
Approved by the Governor
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STATE OF MICHIGAN
89TH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 1998

Introduced by Senators North, Hart and Bennett

ENROLLED SENATE BILL No. 883

AN ACT to amend 1939 PA 288, entitled "An act to revise and consolidate the statutes relating to certain aspects of the family division of circuit court, to the jurisdiction, powers, and duties of the family division of circuit court and its judges and other officers, to the change of name of adults and children, and to the adoption of adults and children; to prescribe certain jurisdiction, powers, and duties of the family division of circuit court and its judges and other officers; to prescribe the manner and time within which certain actions and proceedings may be brought in the family division of the circuit court; to prescribe pleading, evidence, practice, and procedure in certain actions and proceedings in the family division of circuit court; to provide for appeals from certain actions in the family division of circuit court; to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state departments, agencies, and officers; and to provide remedies and penalties," by amending sections 17 and 17b of chapter XIIA (MCL 712A.17 and 712A.17b), section 17 as amended by 1997 PA 169 and section 17b as amended by 1989 PA 254.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

CHAPTER XIIA

Sec. 17. (1) The court may conduct a hearing other than a criminal hearing in an informal manner. The court shall require stenographic notes or another transcript to be taken of the hearing. The court shall adjourn a hearing or grant a continuance regarding a case under section 2(b) of this chapter only for good cause with factual findings on the record and not solely upon stipulation of counsel or for the convenience of a party. In addition to a factual finding of good cause, the court shall not adjourn the hearing or grant a continuance unless 1 of the following is also true:

- (a) The motion for the adjournment or continuance is made in writing not less than 14 days before the hearing.
- (b) The court grants the adjournment or continuance upon its own motion after taking into consideration the child's best interests. An adjournment or continuance granted under this subdivision shall not last more than 28 days unless the court states on the record the specific reasons why a longer adjournment or continuance is necessary.

(2) In a hearing other than a criminal trial under this chapter, a person interested in the hearing may demand a jury of 6 individuals, or the court, on its own motion, may order a jury of 6 individuals to try the case. In a criminal trial, a jury may be demanded as provided by law. The jury shall be summoned and impaneled in accordance with chapter 13 of the revised judiciary act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.1300 to 600.1376, and, in the case of a criminal trial, as provided in chapter VIII of the code of criminal procedure, 1927 PA 175, MCL 768.1 to 768.36.

(3) A parent, guardian, or other custodian of a juvenile held under this chapter has the right to give bond or other security for the appearance of the juvenile at the hearing of the case.

(4) The prosecuting attorney shall appear for the people when requested by the court, and in a proceeding under section 2(a)(1) of this chapter, the prosecuting attorney shall appear if the proceeding requires a hearing and the taking of testimony.

(5) In a proceeding under section 2(b) of this chapter, upon request of the family independence agency or an agent of the family independence agency under contract with the family independence agency, the prosecuting attorney shall serve as a legal consultant to the family independence agency or its agent at all stages of the proceeding. If in a proceeding under section 2(b) of this chapter the prosecuting attorney does not appear on behalf of the family independence agency or its agent, the family independence agency may contract with an attorney of its choice for legal representation.

(6) A member of a local foster care review board established under 1984 PA 422, MCL 722.131 to 722.139a, shall be admitted to a hearing under subsection (1).

(7) Upon motion of a party or a victim, the court may close the hearing of a case brought under this chapter to members of the general public during the testimony of a juvenile witness or the victim if the court finds that closing the hearing is necessary to protect the welfare of the juvenile witness or the victim. In determining whether closing the hearing is necessary to protect the welfare of the juvenile witness or the victim, the court shall consider the following:

(a) The age of the juvenile witness or the victim.

(b) The nature of the proceeding.

(c) The desire of the juvenile witness, of the witness's family or guardian, or of the victim to have the testimony taken in a room closed to the public.

(8) As used in subsection (7), "juvenile witness" does not include a juvenile against whom a proceeding is brought under section 2(a)(1) of this chapter.

Sec. 17b. (1) As used in this section:

(a) "Developmental disability" means that term as defined in section 100a of the mental health code, 1974 PA 258, MCL 300.1100a except that, for the purposes of implementing this section, developmental disability includes only a condition that is attributable to a mental impairment or to a combination of mental and physical impairments, and does not include a condition attributable to a physical impairment unaccompanied by a mental impairment.

(b) "Witness" means an alleged victim of an offense listed under subsection (2) who is either of the following:

(i) A person under 16 years of age.

(ii) A person 16 years of age or older with a developmental disability.

(2) This section only applies to either of the following:

(a) A proceeding brought under section 2(a)(1) of this chapter in which the alleged offense, if committed by an adult, would be a felony under section 136b, 145c, 520b to 520e, or 520g of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.136b, 750.145c, 750.520b to 750.520e, and 750.520g, or under former section 136 or 136a of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328.

(b) A proceeding brought under section 2(b) of this chapter.

(3) If pertinent, the witness shall be permitted the use of dolls or mannequins, including, but not limited to, anatomically correct dolls or mannequins, to assist the witness in testifying on direct and cross-examination.

(4) A witness who is called upon to testify shall be permitted to have a support person sit with, accompany, or be in close proximity to the witness during his or her testimony. A notice of intent to use a support person shall name the support person, identify the relationship the support person has with the witness, and give notice to all parties to the proceeding that the witness may request that the named support person sit with the witness when the witness is called upon to testify during any stage of the proceeding. The notice of intent to use a named support person shall be filed with the court and shall be served upon all parties to the proceeding. The court shall rule on any motion objecting to the use of a named support person prior to the date at which the witness desires to use the support person.

(5) In order to avoid excessive questioning of a witness, a videotape statement of a witness may be taken by the investigating agency and shall be admitted at all proceedings except the adjudication stage instead of the live testimony of the witness. The videotape of a videotape statement shall state the date and time that the statement was taken; shall

identify the persons present in the room and state whether they were present for the entire videotaping or only a portion of the videotaping; and shall show a time clock that is running during the taking of the statement.

(6) In a videotape statement taken as provided in subsection (5), the questioning of the witness should be full and complete and shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following areas:

- (a) The time and date of the alleged offense or offenses.
- (b) The location and area of the alleged offense or offenses.
- (c) The relationship, if any, between the witness and the respondent.
- (d) The details of the offense or offenses.

(e) The names of any other persons known to the witness who may have personal knowledge of the offense or offenses.

(7) Each respondent and, if represented, his or her attorney has the right to view and hear the videotape taken as provided in subsection (5) not less than 48 hours before it is offered into evidence.

(8) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (11), if, upon the motion of any party or in the court's discretion, the court finds on the record that psychological harm to the witness would occur if the witness were to testify in the presence of the respondent at a court proceeding or in a videotape deposition taken as provided in subsection (9), the court shall order that the witness during his or her testimony be shielded from viewing the respondent in such a manner as to enable the respondent to consult with his or her attorney and to see and hear the testimony of the witness without the witness being able to see the respondent.

(9) In a proceeding brought under section 2(b) of this chapter, if, upon the motion of a party or in the court's discretion, the court finds on the record that psychological harm to the witness would occur if the witness were to testify at the adjudication stage, the court shall order to be taken a videotape deposition of a witness which shall be admitted into evidence at the adjudication stage instead of the live testimony of the witness. The examination and cross-examination of the witness in the videotape deposition shall proceed in the same manner as permitted at the adjudication stage.

(10) In a proceeding brought under section 2(a)(1) of this chapter in which the alleged offense, if committed by an adult, would be a felony under section 136b, 145c, 520b to 520e, or 520g of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.136b, 750.145c, 750.520b to 750.520e, and 750.520g, or under former section 136 or 136a of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, if, upon the motion of any party made before the adjudication stage, the court finds on the record that the special arrangements specified in subsection (11) are necessary to protect the welfare of the witness, the court shall order 1 or both of those special arrangements. In determining whether it is necessary to protect the welfare of the witness, the court shall consider both of the following:

- (a) The age of the witness.
- (b) The nature of the offense or offenses.

(11) If the court determines on the record that it is necessary to protect the welfare of the witness and grants the motion made under subsection (10), the court shall order 1 or both of the following:

(a) In order to protect the witness from directly viewing the respondent, the courtroom shall be arranged so that the respondent is seated as far from the witness stand as is reasonable and not directly in front of the witness stand. The respondent's position shall be located so as to allow the respondent to hear and see all witnesses and be able to communicate with his or her attorney.

(b) A questioner's stand or podium shall be used for all questioning of all witnesses by all parties, and shall be located in front of the witness stand.

(12) In a proceeding brought under section 2(a)(1) of this chapter in which the alleged offense, if committed by an adult, would be a felony under section 136b, 145c, 520b to 520e, or 520g of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.136b, 750.145c, 750.520b to 750.520e, and 750.520g, or under former section 136 or 136a of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, if, upon the motion of a party or in the court's discretion, the court finds on the record that the witness is or will be psychologically or emotionally unable to testify at a court proceeding even with the benefit of the protections afforded the witness in subsections (3), (4), and (11), the court shall order that a videotape deposition of a witness shall be taken to be admitted at the adjudication stage instead of the witness's live testimony.

(13) For purposes of the videotape deposition under subsection (12), the witness's examination and cross-examination shall proceed in the same manner as if the witness testified at the adjudication stage, and the court shall order that the witness, during his or her testimony, shall not be confronted by the respondent but shall permit the respondent to hear the testimony of the witness and to consult with his or her attorney.

(14) This section is in addition to other protections or procedures afforded to a witness by law or court rule.

This act is ordered to take immediate effect.

Carol Morey Viventi

Secretary of the Senate.

Maya Rudolph

Clerk of the House of Representatives.

Approved _____

Governor.