

**PROBATE CODE OF 1939 (EXCERPT)**  
**Act 288 of 1939**

**712A.17c Advising child or respondent of right to attorney; appointment of attorney; waiver; appointment of lawyer-guardian ad litem; costs; service until discharged by court; assistance to court.**

Sec. 17c. (1) In a proceeding under section 2(a) or (d) of this chapter or a proceeding regarding a supplemental petition alleging a violation of a personal protection order under section 2(h) of this chapter, the court shall advise the child that he or she has a right to an attorney at each stage of the proceeding.

(2) In a proceeding under section 2(a) or (d) of this chapter, the court shall appoint an attorney to represent the child if 1 or more of the following apply:

(a) The child's parent refuses or fails to appear and participate in the proceedings.

(b) The child's parent is the complainant or victim.

(c) The child and those responsible for his or her support are financially unable to employ an attorney and the child does not waive his or her right to an attorney.

(d) Those responsible for the child's support refuse or neglect to employ an attorney for the child and the child does not waive his or her right to an attorney.

(e) The court determines that the best interests of the child or the public require appointment.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, in a proceeding under section 2(a) or (d) of this chapter, the child may waive his or her right to an attorney. The waiver by a child shall be made in open court, on the record, and shall not be made unless the court finds on the record that the waiver was voluntarily and understandingly made. The child may not waive his or her right to an attorney if the child's parent or guardian ad litem objects or if the appointment is made under subsection (2)(e).

(4) In a proceeding under section 2(b) or (c) of this chapter, the court shall advise the respondent at the respondent's first court appearance of all of the following:

(a) The right to an attorney at each stage of the proceeding.

(b) The right to a court-appointed attorney if the respondent is financially unable to employ an attorney.

(c) If the respondent is not represented by an attorney, the right to request and receive a court-appointed attorney at a later proceeding.

(5) If it appears to the court in a proceeding under section 2(b) or (c) of this chapter that the respondent wants an attorney and is financially unable to retain an attorney, the court shall appoint an attorney to represent the respondent.

(6) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, in a proceeding under section 2(b) or (c) of this chapter, the respondent may waive his or her right to an attorney. A respondent who is a minor may not waive his or her right to an attorney if the respondent's parent or guardian ad litem objects.

(7) In a proceeding under section 2(b) or (c) of this chapter, the court shall appoint a lawyer-guardian ad litem to represent the child. The child shall not waive the assistance of the lawyer-guardian ad litem. In addition to any other powers and duties, a lawyer-guardian ad litem's powers and duties include those prescribed in section 17d.

(8) If an attorney or lawyer-guardian ad litem is appointed for a party under this act, after a determination of ability to pay the court may enter an order assessing attorney costs against the party or the person responsible for that party's support, or against the money allocated from marriage license fees for family counseling services under section 3 of 1887 PA 128, MCL 551.103. An order assessing attorney costs may be enforced through contempt proceedings.

(9) An attorney or lawyer-guardian ad litem appointed by the court under this section shall serve until discharged by the court. If the child's case was petitioned under section 2(b) of this chapter, the court shall not discharge the lawyer-guardian ad litem for the child as long as the child is subject to the jurisdiction, control, or supervision of the court, or of the Michigan children's institute or other agency, unless the court discharges the lawyer-guardian ad litem for good cause shown on the record. If the child remains subject to the jurisdiction, control, or supervision of the court, or the Michigan children's institute or other agency, the court shall immediately appoint another lawyer-guardian ad litem to represent the child.

(10) To assist the court in determining a child's best interests, the court may appoint a guardian ad litem for a child involved in a proceeding under this chapter.

**History:** Add. 1988, Act 92, Eff. June 1, 1988;—Am. 1994, Act 264, Eff. Jan. 1, 1995;—Am. 1997, Act 169, Eff. Mar. 31, 1998;—Am. 1998, Act 474, Eff. Mar. 1, 1999;—Am. 1998, Act 480, Eff. Mar. 1, 1999.

**Popular name:** Probate Code

**Popular name:** Juvenile Code