

2003

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

---

(As presented)

(Attorney-General)

## Parentage Bill 2003

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2003

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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(As presented)

(Attorney-General)

## Parentage Bill 2003

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### A Bill for

An Act relating to parentage, and for other purposes

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The Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory enacts as follows:

1 **Part 1 Preliminary**

2 **1 Name of Act**

3 This Act is the *Parentage Act 2003*.

4 **2 Commencement**

5 This Act commences on a day fixed by the Minister by written  
6 notice.

7 *Note 1* The naming and commencement provisions automatically commence on  
8 the notification day (see Legislation Act, s 75 (1)).

9 *Note 2* A single day or time may be fixed, or different days or times may be  
10 fixed, for the commencement of different provisions (see Legislation  
11 Act, s 77 (1)).

12 *Note 3* If a provision has not commenced within 6 months beginning on the  
13 notification day, it automatically commences on the first day after that  
14 period (see Legislation Act, s 79).

15 **3 Dictionary**

16 The dictionary at the end of this Act is part of this Act.

17 *Note 1* The dictionary at the end of this Act defines certain terms used in this  
18 Act, and includes references (*signpost definitions*) to other terms  
19 defined elsewhere in this Act.

20 For example, the signpost definition '*parentage order*, for division 2.5  
21 (Parentage orders)—see section 23.' means that the term 'parentage  
22 order' is defined in that section.

23 *Note 2* A definition in the dictionary (including a signpost definition) applies to  
24 the entire Act unless the definition, or another provision of the Act,  
25 provides otherwise or the contrary intention otherwise appears (see  
26 Legislation Act, s 155 and s 156 (1)).

1   **4   Notes**

2       A note included in this Act is explanatory and is not part of this Act.

3       *Note*     See Legislation Act, s 127 (1), (4) and (5) for the legal status of notes.

4   **5   Offences against Act—application of Criminal Code etc**

5       Other legislation applies in relation to offences against this Act.

6       *Note 1   Criminal Code*

7           The Criminal Code, ch 2 applies to all offences against this Act (see  
8           Code, pt 2.1).

9           The chapter sets out the general principles of criminal responsibility  
10          (including burdens of proof and general defences), and defines terms  
11          used for offences to which the Code applies (eg *conduct*, *intention*,  
12          *recklessness* and *strict liability*).

13       *Note 2   Penalty units*

14          The Legislation Act, s 133 deals with the meaning of offence penalties  
15          that are expressed in penalty units.

1        **Part 2                      Establishing parentage**

2        **Division 2.1              General**

3        **6              Purpose of pt 2**

4              This part sets out presumptions about parentage and provides for the  
5              Supreme Court to make a parentage declaration that establishes who  
6              is a parent of a child.

7              *Note*        **Parent** is defined in the Legislation Act, dict, pt 1 as follows:

8              **parent**, of a child, means—

- 9              (a) the child’s mother; or  
10             (b) the child’s father; or  
11             (c) someone else who is presumed under the Parentage Act 2003, part 2 to be a  
12             parent of the child.

13        **Division 2.2              Presumptions about parentage**

14        **7              Presumptions arising from marriage**

15             (1) A child born to a woman while she is married is presumed to be a  
16             child of the woman and her husband.

17             (2) A child born to a woman within 44 weeks after the death of her  
18             husband is presumed to be the child of the woman and her husband  
19             who died.

20             (3) A child born to a woman within 44 weeks after the annulment of her  
21             purported marriage is presumed to be the child of the woman and  
22             her purported husband.

23             (4) A child born to a woman after the dissolution of her marriage, but  
24             within 44 weeks after she last separated from her husband in that  
25             marriage, is presumed to be the child of the woman and her husband  
26             in that marriage.

1    **8    Presumption arising from domestic partnership**

2    (1) A person is presumed to be a parent of a child if the person was in a  
3    domestic partnership with the woman who gave birth to the child at  
4    any time during the period beginning not earlier than 44 weeks, and  
5    ending not later than 20 weeks, before the birth of the child.

6    (2) This presumption applies whether the child was born before or after  
7    the commencement of this Act.

8    (3) However, this section does not affect the vesting in possession or in  
9    interest of any property that happened before the commencement of  
10   this Act.

11   **9    Presumptions arising from registered information**

12   (1) A person whose name is entered in a register as the name of a parent  
13   of a child is presumed to be a parent of the child.

14   (2) This section applies to an entry in a register whether the entry was  
15   made before or after the commencement of this Act.

16   (3) In this section:

17    *register* means—

18    (a) the register under the *Births, Deaths and Marriages*  
19    *Registration Act 1997*; or

20    (b) a register in which births are recorded under the law of—

21       (i) the Commonwealth, a State or another Territory; or

22       (ii) a foreign jurisdiction prescribed under the regulations; or

23    (c) another register in which information about parentage is  
24    recorded under the law of—

25       (i) the Commonwealth, a State or another Territory; or

26       (ii) a foreign jurisdiction prescribed under the regulations.

1    **10    Presumptions arising from findings of courts**

- 2    (1) A person is conclusively presumed to be a parent of a child if—
- 3        (a) during the person's life, a court of the Territory, the  
4              Commonwealth, a State or another Territory has—
- 5                  (i) found expressly that the person is a parent of the child; or
- 6                  (ii) made a finding that it could not have made unless the  
7                      person was a parent of the child; and
- 8        (b) the finding has not been changed, set aside or reversed.
- 9    (2) A person is presumed to have been a parent of a child if—
- 10        (a) after the death of the person, a court of the Territory, the  
11              Commonwealth, a State or another Territory has—
- 12                  (i) found expressly that the person was a parent of the child;  
13                      or
- 14                  (ii) made a finding that it could not have made unless the  
15                      person was a parent of the child; and
- 16        (b) the finding has not been changed, set aside or reversed.
- 17    (3) In this section:
- 18        *finding*, of a court, includes an order or direction of the court.

19    **11    Presumptions arising from procedure**

- 20    (1) This section sets out presumptions that arise if a woman undergoes a  
21        procedure as a result of which she becomes pregnant.
- 22    (2) The woman is conclusively presumed to be the mother of any child  
23        born as a result of the pregnancy.
- 24    (3) If the ovum used in the procedure was produced by another woman,  
25        that other woman is conclusively presumed not to be the mother of  
26        any child born as a result of the pregnancy.

- 1 (4) If the woman undergoes the procedure with the consent of her  
2 domestic partner at the time of the procedure, the domestic partner  
3 is conclusively presumed to be a parent of any child born as a result  
4 of the pregnancy.
- 5 (5) If semen used in the procedure was produced by a man other than  
6 the woman's domestic partner at the time of the procedure, the man  
7 who produced the semen is conclusively presumed not to be the  
8 father of any child born as a result of the pregnancy.
- 9 (6) For subsection (4), a person is presumed to consent to the carrying  
10 out of a procedure in relation to the person's domestic partner, but  
11 the presumption is rebuttable.
- 12 (7) The presumptions set out in this section apply—
- 13 (a) whenever the pregnancy happened and whether or not it  
14 resulted from a procedure carried out in the ACT; and
- 15 (b) in relation to any child born as a result of the pregnancy,  
16 whether or not the child was born in the ACT.
- 17 (8) However, this section does not affect the vesting in possession or in  
18 interest of any property that happened before the commencement of  
19 this Act.
- 20 (9) In this section:
- 21 *procedure* means—
- 22 (a) artificial insemination; or
- 23 (b) the procedure of transferring into the uterus of a woman an  
24 embryo derived from an ovum fertilised outside her body; or
- 25 (c) any other way (whether medically assisted or not) by which a  
26 woman can become pregnant other than by having sexual  
27 intercourse with a man.

1        **Division 2.3**                      **Effect of presumptions**

2        **12**        **Whether presumptions conclusive or rebuttable**

3                      In a proceeding—

4                      (a) a conclusive presumption under division 2.2 is not rebuttable;  
5                                      and

6                      (b) a presumption that is not conclusive under that division is  
7                                      rebuttable by proof on the balance of probabilities.

8                      *Note*        The presumptions arising under s 10 (1) (Presumptions arising from  
9                                      findings of courts) and s 11 (Presumptions arising from procedure) are  
10                                      conclusive. The other presumptions arising under div 2.2 are not  
11                                      conclusive.

12        **13**        **Conflicting presumptions**

13                      (1) This section applies if—

14                                      (a) 2 or more presumptions about the parentage of a child are  
15    relevant in a proceeding; and

16                                      (b) the presumptions conflict with each other.

17                      (2) If 1 of the presumptions arises under section 10 (1) (Presumptions  
18                                      arising from findings of courts), that presumption prevails over any  
19                                      other presumption.

20                      (3) If 1 of the presumptions arises under section 11 (Presumptions  
21                                      arising from procedure), that presumption prevails over any  
22                                      presumption other than a presumption that arises under  
23                                      section 10 (1).

24                      (4) If no presumption arises under section 10 (1) or section 11, the court  
25                                      must decide which presumption prevails having regard to the  
26                                      interests of justice and the best interests of the child.

1 **14 Presumptions not to allow more than 2 parents**

2 Despite anything in this Act or in any other Territory law, a child  
3 cannot have more than 2 parents at any one time.

4 **Division 2.4 Parentage declarations**

5 **15 Application for parentage declaration**

- 6 (1) An application for a parentage declaration may be made to the  
7 Supreme Court by—
- 8 (a) a parent of a child who claims that another particular person is  
9 also a parent of the child; or
- 10 (b) a person who claims that he or she is a parent of a particular  
11 child; or
- 12 (c) a person who claims that a particular person is his or her  
13 parent; or
- 14 (d) the registrar-general, or someone else having a proper interest  
15 in the matter, if a decision is sought about whether a particular  
16 person is a parent of a particular child.

17 **16 Further application for parentage declaration**

- 18 (1) This section applies if—
- 19 (a) an application for a parentage declaration (or an appeal against  
20 an order dismissing an application) has been dismissed because  
21 the relationship claimed in the application has not been  
22 established; or
- 23 (b) a parentage declaration has been set aside on appeal because  
24 the relationship stated in the declaration has not been  
25 established.

- 1            (2) The applicant may make another application to the Supreme Court  
2            for the declaration sought in the original application if—
- 3            (a) facts or circumstances that existed when the original  
4            application was heard were not disclosed to the court; and
- 5            (b) the applicant—
- 6                      (i) did not know of those facts or circumstances at that time  
7                      or
- 8                      (ii) could not, by the exercise of reasonable diligence, have  
9                      discovered those facts or circumstances before that time.
- 10          (3) On an application under this section, the court must receive the  
11          evidence given at the hearing of the original application as well as  
12          any evidence relating to facts or circumstances mentioned in  
13          subsection (2) (a).
- 14          (4) The court must dismiss an application under this section if, at the  
15          end of the evidence presented by the applicant, the court finds that  
16          the evidence relating to the facts and circumstances mentioned in  
17          subsection (2) (a) is not material to establishing the existence of the  
18          relationship that the applicant claims to exist or wishes to be  
19          decided.

20          **17      Refusal to hear application**

21          The Supreme Court may refuse to hear an application under  
22          section 15 or section 16 in relation to a child if the court considers it  
23          would not be in the best interests of the child to hear the application.

1 **18 Adjourment of hearing**

- 2 (1) This section applies if—
- 3 (a) a person whose interests would, in the Supreme Court’s  
4 opinion, be affected by making a parentage declaration—
- 5 (i) is not present or represented at the hearing of the  
6 application; and
- 7 (ii) has not been given an opportunity to be present or  
8 represented; and
- 9 (b) the court considers the person ought to be given the  
10 opportunity to be present or represented.
- 11 (2) The Supreme Court may adjourn the hearing so the person can be  
12 given the opportunity.

13 **19 Parentage declaration**

- 14 (1) On an application under section 15 or section 16, the Supreme Court  
15 may declare that a particular person is a parent of a particular child.
- 16 (2) A parentage declaration may be made about a child whether or  
17 not—
- 18 (a) the child is born; or
- 19 (b) the parent or child is alive.

20 **20 Application for annulment of parentage declaration**

- 21 An application for an order annulling a parentage declaration may  
22 be made to the Supreme Court by—
- 23 (a) the applicant for the declaration; or
- 24 (b) a person named in the declaration; or

- 1            (c) a person who would, before the declaration was made, have  
2            been entitled to apply for a parentage declaration about a  
3            person named in the declaration.

4            **21      Adjourment of hearing**

- 5            (1) This section applies if—

- 6            (a) a person whose interests would, in the Supreme Court’s  
7            opinion, be affected by making an order annulling a parentage  
8            declaration—

- 9                      (i) is not present or represented at the hearing of the  
10                     application for the order; and

- 11                    (ii) has not been given an opportunity to be present or  
12                    represented; and

- 13            (b) the court considers the person ought to be given the  
14            opportunity to be present or represented.

- 15            (2) The Supreme Court may adjourn the hearing so the person can be  
16            given the opportunity.

17            **22      Annulment of parentage declaration**

- 18            (1) The Supreme Court may, by order, annul a parentage declaration  
19            if—

- 20            (a) the court considers that facts exist, or circumstances have  
21            arisen, that—

- 22                      (i) were not disclosed to the court before the declaration was  
23                     made; and

- 24                      (ii) could not, by the exercise of reasonable diligence, have  
25                     been disclosed to the court by the applicant when the  
26                     application for the declaration was heard; and

- 27                      (iii) are material to the question whether the relationship  
28                     stated in the declaration exists; and

- 1 (b) after considering those facts or circumstances the court is not  
2 satisfied that the relationship is established.
- 3 (2) However, subsection (1) (a) (ii) does not apply if the applicant for  
4 the order is—
- 5 (a) a person who was a child when the declaration was made; or  
6 (b) the registrar-general.
- 7 (3) If the Supreme Court makes an order annulling a declaration—
- 8 (a) the declaration ceases to have effect; and  
9 (b) the annulment does not affect anything done relying on the  
10 declaration before the order was made.
- 11 (4) If the Supreme Court makes an order annulling a declaration, it may  
12 make the ancillary orders (including orders varying property rights)  
13 that it considers just and equitable to place everyone affected by the  
14 annulment as far as practicable in the position he or she would have  
15 been in if the declaration had not been made.

## 16 **Division 2.5 Parentage orders**

### 17 **23 Definitions for div 2.5**

18 In this division:

19 ***birth parent***, of a child, means—

- 20 (a) the woman who gave birth to the child; or  
21 (b) the other person (if any) presumed under division 2.2 to be a  
22 parent of the child.

23 ***birth sibling***, of a child, means a brother or sister of the child who is  
24 born as a result of the same pregnancy as the child.

25 ***commercial substitute parent agreement***—see section 40.

26 ***parentage order*** means an order under section 26.

1            *procedure* means the procedure of transferring into the uterus of a  
2            woman an embryo derived from an ovum fertilised outside her  
3            body.

4            *substitute parent*, of a child—see section 24 (1) (c).

5            *substitute parent agreement* means a contract, agreement,  
6            arrangement or understanding under which—

7            (a) a woman agrees—

8                    (i) that the woman will become, or attempt to become,  
9                    pregnant; and

10                    (ii) that a child born as a result of the pregnancy will be taken  
11                    to be (whether by adoption, agreement or otherwise) the  
12                    child of someone else; or

13            (b) a woman who is pregnant agrees that a child born as a result of  
14            the pregnancy will be taken to be (whether by adoption,  
15            agreement or otherwise) the child of someone else.

## 16    **24    Application of div 2.5**

17    (1) This division applies to a child if—

18            (a) the child was conceived as a result of a procedure carried out in  
19            the ACT; and

20            (b) neither birth parent of the child is a genetic parent of the child;  
21            and

22            (c) there is a substitute parent agreement, other than a commercial  
23            substitute parent agreement, under which 2 people (the  
24            *substitute parents*) have indicated their intention to apply for a  
25            parentage order about the child; and

26            (d) at least 1 of the substitute parents is a genetic parent of the  
27            child; and

28            (e) the substitute parents live in the ACT.

1 (2) For subsection (1) (a), it does not matter whether the procedure was  
2 carried out before or after the commencement of this Act.

3 (3) Subsection (2) and this subsection expire 2 years after the day this  
4 section commences.

5 **25 Application for parentage order**

6 (1) An application may be made to the Supreme Court for a parentage  
7 order about the child.

8 (2) The application may be made by either or both of the substitute  
9 parents.

10 (3) The application may only be made when the child is between the  
11 ages of 6 weeks and 6 months.

12 **26 Parentage order**

13 (1) The Supreme Court must make a parentage order about the child if  
14 satisfied that—

15 (a) the making of the order is in the best interests of the child; and

16 (b) both birth parents freely, and with a full understanding of what  
17 is involved, agree to the making of the order.

18 (2) However, the Supreme Court may dispense with the requirement  
19 under subsection (1) (b) in relation to a birth parent if satisfied  
20 that—

21 (a) the birth parent is dead or incapacitated; or

22 (b) the applicants cannot contact the birth parent after making  
23 reasonable inquiries.

24 (3) In deciding whether to make a parentage order, the Supreme Court  
25 must take the following into consideration, if relevant:

26 (a) whether the child's home is, and was at the time of the  
27 application, with both substitute parents;

- 1            (b) whether both substitute parents are at least 18 years old;
- 2            (c) if only 1 of the child's substitute parents has applied for the  
3            order, and the other substitute parent is alive at the time of the  
4            application, whether—
- 5                      (i) the other substitute parent freely, and with a full  
6                      understanding of what is involved, agrees to the making  
7                      of the order in favour of the applicant substitute parent;  
8                      or
- 9                      (ii) the applicant substitute parent cannot contact the other  
10                     substitute parent to obtain his or her agreement under  
11                     subparagraph (i);
- 12            (d) whether payment or reward (other than for expenses  
13            reasonably incurred) has been given or received by either of  
14            the child's substitute parents, or either of the child's birth  
15            parents, for or in consideration of—
- 16                      (i) the making of the order; or
- 17                      (ii) the agreement mentioned in subsection (1) (b); or
- 18                      (iii) the handing over of the child to the substitute parents; or
- 19                      (iv) the making of any arrangements with a view to the  
20                      making of the order;
- 21            (e) whether both birth parents and both substitute parents have  
22            received appropriate counselling and assessment from an  
23            independent counselling service;
- 24            (f) if a birth parent is dead or incapacitated or cannot be  
25            contacted—any evidence before the court that the birth parent  
26            no longer intended or intends the substitute parents to obtain a  
27            parentage order about the child.
- 28            (4) The Supreme Court may take into consideration anything else it  
29            considers relevant.

- 1 (5) For subsection (3) (e), a counselling service is not *independent* if it  
2 is connected with—
- 3 (a) the doctor who carried out the procedure that resulted in the  
4 birth of the relevant child; or
- 5 (b) the institution where the procedure was carried out; or
- 6 (c) another entity involved in carrying out the procedure.
- 7 (6) The Supreme Court must make a parentage order under  
8 subsection (1)—
- 9 (a) if both substitute parents apply for the order—in favour of both  
10 substitute parents; or
- 11 (b) if only 1 substitute parent applies for the order, and the other  
12 substitute parent is dead or incapacitated at the time of the  
13 application (unless the court is satisfied that, at the time of  
14 death or incapacitation, the deceased or incapacitated substitute  
15 parent no longer intended or intends to apply for a parentage  
16 order about the child)—in favour of both substitute parents; or
- 17 (c) if, in any other case, only 1 substitute parent applies for the  
18 order—in favour of the applicant substitute parent.

19 **27 Multiple births**

- 20 (1) This section applies if a child about whom an application for a  
21 parentage order has been made has a living birth sibling.
- 22 (2) Despite section 26 (1), the Supreme Court may make a parentage  
23 order about the child only if it also makes a parentage order about  
24 each living birth sibling of the child.

1    **28    Name of child**

- 2        (1) On the making of a parentage order about a child, the child has as  
3        his or her surname—
- 4            (a) if the order is made in favour of both substitute parents and  
5            they are both known by the same surname—that surname; or
- 6            (b) in any other case—a name the Supreme Court, on the  
7            application of either or both of the substitute parents, approves  
8            in the parentage order.
- 9        (2) On the making of a parentage order about a child, the child has as  
10        his or her given name or names a name or names the Supreme  
11        Court, on the application of either or both of the substitute parents,  
12        approves in the parentage order.
- 13        (3) Despite subsection (2), if the child has been generally known by a  
14        particular name or names, the Supreme Court may, in the parentage  
15        order, order that the child will have that name or those names as his  
16        or her given name or names.
- 17        (4) This section does not prevent a name of a child being later changed  
18        in accordance with Territory law.

19    **29    Effect of parentage order and access to information**

- 20        (1) If a parentage order is made about a child, the provisions of the  
21        *Adoption Act 1993* mentioned in subsection (3) (the ***applied***  
22        ***provisions***) apply in relation to the parentage order as if the  
23        parentage order were an order made under that Act for the adoption  
24        of the child and the child were an adopted child.
- 25        (2) For that application—
- 26            (a) a reference in an applied provision to the adoptive parent or  
27            adoptive parents is a reference to the substitute parent or  
28            substitute parents in whose favour the parentage order was  
29            made; and

- 1 (b) a reference in an applied provision to the adopted child or  
2 adopted person is a reference to the child about whom the  
3 parentage order was made; and
- 4 (c) a reference in an applied provision to the commencement of  
5 the *Adoption Act 1993* were a reference to the commencement  
6 of this Act; and
- 7 (d) a reference in section 48 to the chief executive were a  
8 reference to the registrar-general; and
- 9 (e) any other necessary changes were made.
- 10 (3) The applied provisions of the *Adoption Act 1993* are as follows:
- 11 • section 43 (General effect) other than subsections (1) (c)  
12 and (2)
  - 13 • section 44 (Disposition of property)
  - 14 • section 47 (Distribution of property by trustee or personal  
15 representative)
  - 16 • section 48 (Bequest by will to unascertained adopted person)
  - 17 • section 49 (Gifts inter vivos)
  - 18 • section 60 (Confidentiality of records) other than  
19 subsection (1) (a)
  - 20 • section 62 (3) (Provision of information)
  - 21 • division 5.3 (Identifying information) other than section 77,  
22 section 78 and section 79.

### 23 **30 Medical information**

- 24 (1) This section applies if—
- 25 (a) information about the medical or psychiatric condition of a  
26 relevant person may be disclosed by a medical record holder  
27 under a law in force in the Territory; and
- 28 (b) the relevant person applies to the medical record holder for the  
29 information; and

- 1            (c) the medical record holder considers that the disclosure might  
2            be prejudicial to the physical or mental health or wellbeing of  
3            the relevant person.
- 4            (2) The medical record holder may—
- 5            (a) refuse to disclose the information to the relevant person  
6            personally; and
- 7            (b) instead disclose it (without identifying anyone other than the  
8            relevant person) to a doctor nominated by the relevant person.
- 9            (3) In this section:
- 10           *relevant person* means—
- 11           (a) the child about whom a parentage order is made; or
- 12           (b) a birth parent of the child; or
- 13           (c) a person who was a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt  
14           of the child before the parentage order was made; or
- 15           (d) a person who is a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt of  
16           the child because of the parentage order; or
- 17           (e) a descendent of the child (including his or her own child).

18           **31      Effect of substitute parent agreements**

19           A substitute parent agreement has no legal effect other than under  
20           this division.

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1 **Division 2.6**                      **Use of medical tests in**  
2    **establishing parentage**

3 **32**      **Definition for div 2.6**

4            In this division:

5            *parentage testing order*—see section 34.

6 **33**      **Application of div 2.6**

7            This division applies if the parentage of a child is in issue in a civil  
8            proceeding in a court.

9 **34**      **Order to carry out medical tests**

- 10          (1) The court may make an order (a *parentage testing order*) requiring  
11          stated medical tests that are relevant to establishing the parentage of  
12          the child to be carried out on a stated person within a stated time and  
13          in accordance with any stated conditions.
- 14          (2) The court may make the parentage testing order—  
15              (a) on its own initiative; or  
16              (b) on the application of a party to the proceeding; or  
17              (c) if the child is not a party—on the application of the child.
- 18          (3) If the child makes an application, the child must be joined as a party  
19          to the proceeding.
- 20          (4) When deciding whether to make the parentage testing order, the  
21          court must take into account any objection made on medical,  
22          religious or other grounds by the person to whom a copy of the  
23          order must be given.

- 1            (5) A copy of the parentage testing order must be given—  
2                      (a) if the stated person is under 18 years old—to the person who  
3                              has custody of the stated person; or  
4                      (b) if the stated person is of unsound mind or for any other reason  
5                              incapable of consenting to having the medical tests carried  
6                              out—to the person who has the care and control of the stated  
7                              person; or  
8                      (c) in any other case—to the stated person.  
9            (6) The court may at any time revoke or vary the parentage testing  
10                      order.

11            **35      Effect of failure to comply with parentage testing order**

- 12            (1) If, without reasonable excuse, a parentage testing order is not  
13                      complied with the court may draw the inferences from the failure to  
14                              comply that it considers appropriate.  
15            (2) In particular, the court may treat the failure—  
16                      (a) as evidence corroborating the evidence of a party to the  
17                              proceeding; or  
18                      (b) if the stated person is a party to the proceeding and is relying in  
19                              the proceeding on a rebuttable presumption arising under  
20                              division 2.2—as evidence rebutting the presumption.  
21            (3) An objection mentioned in section 34 (4) that has been taken into  
22                      account is not a reasonable excuse for subsection (1).  
23            (4) Without limiting subsection (1) or (2), if a parentage testing order is  
24                      not complied with the court may—  
25                              (a) dismiss the proceeding; or  
26                              (b) allow the proceeding to continue on the conditions it considers  
27                              appropriate.

- 1 **36 Reports of medical tests**
- 2 (1) This section applies if—
- 3 (a) the court makes a parentage testing order in a proceeding; and
- 4 (b) a medical test required under the order is carried out in
- 5 accordance with the regulations.
- 6 (2) A report prepared in accordance with the regulations by the person
- 7 who carried out the test, and stating the result of the test, is
- 8 admissible in the proceeding as evidence of matters stated in the
- 9 report.
- 10 (3) The court may call as a witness—
- 11 (a) the person who prepared the report; or
- 12 (b) anyone who assisted in carrying out the medical tests
- 13 mentioned in the report.
- 14 (4) The court may act under subsection (3)—
- 15 (a) on its own initiative; or
- 16 (b) on the application of a party to the proceeding; or
- 17 (c) if the child whose parentage is in issue is not a party—on the
- 18 application of the child.
- 19 (5) If the child makes an application, the child must be joined as a party
- 20 to the proceeding.
- 21 (6) A person called as a witness under subsection (3) may be
- 22 cross-examined by any party to the proceeding, including a party
- 23 who called the person.
- 24 (7) The cost of carrying out a medical test under the parentage testing
- 25 order (including any expenses reasonably incurred in taking any
- 26 steps required for the purpose) and preparing a report in relation to
- 27 the test must be regarded as costs of the proceeding.

- 1    **37    Offences related to medical tests**
- 2    (1) A person must not impersonate someone else in undergoing a  
3    medical test under a parentage testing order.
- 4           Maximum penalty: 50 penalty units, imprisonment for 6 months or  
5           both.
- 6    (2) A person commits an offence if the person—
- 7           (a) puts forward a child or someone who is of unsound mind to  
8           undergo a medical test under a parentage testing order; and
- 9           (b) knows that the person put forward is not the person stated in  
10          the order.
- 11        Maximum penalty: 50 penalty units, imprisonment for 6 months or  
12        both.
- 13    (3) A person who is not a doctor, a nurse or a person prescribed under  
14    the regulations must not take a sample of a person's blood or other  
15    body tissue for the purpose of carrying out a medical test under a  
16    parentage testing order.
- 17        Maximum penalty: 30 penalty units.

## 1      **Part 3**                                      **Status of children**

### 2      **38**      **Children all of equal status**

3      (1) This section applies if the relationship of a person with his or her  
4          parents, or with either of them, is to be decided under a Territory  
5          law, whether in a proceeding before a court or otherwise.

6      (2) The relationship must be decided without regard to whether the  
7          parents of the person are or have ever been married to each other.

8      (3) All other relationships of or to the person, whether of consanguinity  
9          or affinity, must be decided in the same way.

10     (4) This section is subject to section 39.

11     (5) In this section:

12             *affinity* means affinity derived through marriage or any other  
13             domestic partnership.

### 14     **39**      **Construction of instruments**

15     (1) Subsections (2) and (3) apply to—

16             (a) an instrument other than a will or codicil that was signed after  
17             24 March 1989; or

18             (b) an instrument other than a will or codicil that—

19                     (i) was signed before that date; and

20                     (ii) under the law of the place where the instrument was  
21                     signed, would be interpreted without regard to the  
22                     illegitimacy of people mentioned in, or taking under, the  
23                     instrument.

Section 39

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- 1 (2) Any rule of law that a disposition in favour of an exnuptial child not  
2 conceived or born when an instrument takes effect is void for being  
3 contrary to public policy is abolished.
- 4 (3) In an instrument other than a will or codicil—
- 5 (a) a reference (however expressed) to a child of a person includes  
6 a reference to an exnuptial child of the person; and
- 7 (b) a reference (however expressed) to a person related to someone  
8 else in another way includes a reference to anyone who is  
9 related in that way regardless of whether he or she or another  
10 person through whom the relationship is traced is or was an  
11 exnuptial child.
- 12 (4) An instrument (other than an instrument mentioned in subsection (1)  
13 or a will or codicil) that was executed before 24 March 1989 must  
14 be interpreted as if the *Birth (Equality of Status) Act 1988* or this  
15 Act had not been made.
- 16 (5) The *Birth (Equality of Status) Act 1988*, part 3 and part 4 apply in  
17 relation to the interpretation of a will or codicil if the testator died  
18 on or after 24 March 1989 and before the commencement of this  
19 Act, but a will or codicil must otherwise be interpreted as if that Act  
20 had not been made.
- 21 (6) This Act applies to the interpretation of a will or codicil if the  
22 testator died on or after the commencement of this Act, but a will or  
23 codicil must otherwise be interpreted as if this Act had not been  
24 made.
- 25 (7) If an instrument contains a special power of appointment in favour  
26 of a class of people, nothing in the *Birth (Equality of Status) Act*  
27 *1988* or this Act extends the class of people in whose favour the  
28 appointment may be made or causes the exercise of the power to be  
29 interpreted to include anyone who is not a member of that class.

1 (8) In this section:

2 *exnuptial child* means a child whose father and mother were not  
3 married to each other when the child was conceived and have not  
4 later married each other (other than a child who is a legitimate child,  
5 or is taken to be a legitimate child, under the *Marriage Act 1961*  
6 (Cwlth), part 6).

1 **Part 4** **Offences relating to substitute**  
2 **parent agreements**

3 **40** **Meaning of *commercial substitute parent agreement***

4 In this Act:

5 *commercial substitute parent agreement* means a substitute parent  
6 agreement under which a person agrees to make or give to someone  
7 else a payment or reward, other than for expenses connected with—

- 8 (a) a pregnancy (including any attempt to become pregnant) that is  
9 the subject of the agreement; or  
10 (b) the birth or care of a child born as a result of that pregnancy.

11 *Note* For the meaning of *substitute parent agreement*, see s 23.

12 **41** **Commercial substitute parent agreements prohibited**

13 A person commits an offence if the person intentionally enters into a  
14 commercial substitute parent agreement.

15 Maximum penalty: 100 penalty units, imprisonment for 1 year or  
16 both.

17 **42** **Procurement of substitute parent agreements**

- 18 (1) A person commits an offence if the person procures someone to  
19 enter into a substitute parent agreement with a third person.

20 Maximum penalty: 100 penalty units, imprisonment for 1 year or  
21 both.

- 22 (2) However, a person does not commit an offence under subsection (1)  
23 if the person intends to be a party to the agreement.

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**43 Advertising in relation to substitute parent agreements**

(1) A person commits an offence if the person—

- (a) publishes an advertisement, notice or anything else with the intention of inducing someone to enter into a substitute parent agreement; or
- (b) publishes an advertisement, notice or anything else that—
  - (i) is likely to induce someone to enter into a substitute parent agreement; or
  - (ii) seeks or purports to seek someone who is willing to enter into a substitute parent agreement; or
  - (iii) states or implies that someone is willing to enter into a substitute parent agreement.

Maximum penalty:

- (a) if the offence relates to a commercial substitute parent agreement—50 penalty units, imprisonment for 6 months or both; or
- (b) in any other case—50 penalty units.

(2) In this section:

***publish***—something is ***published*** if it is—

- (a) included in a newspaper, periodical publication or other publication; or
  - (b) publicly exhibited in, on, over or under a building, vehicle or place (whether or not a public place and whether on land or water), or in the air in view of people on a street or in a public place; or
  - (c) contained in a document given to someone or left on premises where someone lives or works; or
  - (d) broadcast by radio or television; or
-

- 1 (e) electronically disseminated in another way (for example, by  
2 inclusion on a web site).

3 *Note* An example is part of the Act, is not exhaustive and may extend, but  
4 does not limit, the meaning of the provision in which it appears (see  
5 Legislation Act, s 126 and s 132).

6 **44 Facilitating pregnancy**

7 A person commits an offence if—

- 8 (a) the person intentionally provides a professional or technical  
9 service to someone else; and  
10 (b) the person knows the other person is, or intends to be, a party  
11 to a commercial substitute parent agreement; and  
12 (c) the person provides the service with the intention of assisting  
13 the other person to become pregnant for the purpose of the  
14 agreement.

15 Maximum penalty: 100 penalty units, imprisonment for 1 year or  
16 both.

17 **45 Geographical nexus for offences**

- 18 (1) A geographical nexus exists between the ACT and an offence  
19 against this part if, when the offence is committed, the person who  
20 commits the offence is ordinarily resident in the ACT.  
21 (2) This section is additional to, and does not limit, the Criminal Code,  
22 section 64 (2) (Extension of offences if required geographical nexus  
23 exists).

1 **Part 5** **Miscellaneous**

2 **46 Joinder of parties**

3 (1) This section applies to a proceeding under this Act in relation to a  
4 child if a party to the proceeding who is claimed to be a parent of  
5 the child claims that someone else is, or may be, a parent of the  
6 child.

7 (2) The other person must be joined as a party to the proceeding.

8 **47 Notification of court orders to registrar-general**

9 If the Supreme Court makes a parentage declaration, an order  
10 annulling a parentage declaration, or a parentage order, the registrar  
11 of the court must give a sealed copy of the declaration or order to  
12 the registrar-general within 28 days after the day on which the  
13 declaration or order is made.

14 **48 Proof of orders about parentage**

15 In any proceeding in a Territory court, a document purporting to be  
16 any of the following is evidence of the facts stated in it and the  
17 matters appearing from it:

- 18 (a) the original, or a certified copy or certified extract, of an order  
19 or declaration made under this Act;
- 20 (b) an official certificate, entry or record of the making of the  
21 order or declaration.

1    **49    Approved forms**

2       (1) The Minister may, in writing, approve forms for this Act.

3       (2) If the Minister approves a form for a particular purpose, the form  
4       must be used for that purpose.

5       *Note*     For other provisions about forms, see Legislation Act, s 255.

6       (3) An approved form is a notifiable instrument.

7       *Note*     A notifiable instrument must be notified under the Legislation Act.

8    **50    Regulation-making power**

9       (1) The Executive may make regulations for this Act.

10       *Note*     Regulations must be notified, and presented to the Legislative  
11       Assembly, under the Legislation Act.

12       (2) Without limiting subsection (1), the regulations may make provision  
13       in relation to—

14           (a) the carrying out of medical tests for division 2.6 (Use of  
15           medical tests in establishing parentage); and

16           (b) the preparation of reports in relation to the information  
17           obtained because of the carrying out of the medical tests.

1 **Part 6** **Repeals and consequential**  
2 **amendments**

3 **51** **Legislation repealed**

4 The following legislation is repealed:

- 5 • *Artificial Conception Act 1985* A1985-57  
6 • *Birth (Equality of Status) Act 1988* A1988-93  
7 • *Substitute Parent Agreements Act 1994* A1994-69.

8 **52** **Legislation amended—sch 1**

9 This Act amends the legislation mentioned in schedule 1.

1      **Schedule 1      Consequential amendments**  
2      (see s 52)

3      **Part 1.1      Administration and Probate**  
4      **Act 1929**

5      **[1.1] Section 49E**

6      *omit*

7      the *Birth (Equality of Status) Act 1988*, section 8

8      *substitute*

9      the *Parentage Act 2003*, section 9

10     **Part 1.2      Adoption Act 1993**

11     **[1.2] Section 9 (b)**

12     *omit*

13     spouse

14     *substitute*

15     domestic partner

16     **[1.3] Section 9, new note**

17     *insert*

18     *Note*      For the meaning of *domestic partner*, see Legislation Act, s 169.

1 **[1.4] Section 18 (1)**

2 *omit*

3 a man and woman

4 *substitute*

5 2 people

6 **[1.5] Section 18 (1) (b)**

7 *omit*

8 heterosexual relationship

9 *substitute*

10 domestic partnership

11 **[1.6] Section 18 (4)**

12 *substitute*

13 (4) Except in circumstances described in subsection (2), an adoption  
14 order must not be made in favour of 1 person if that person is—

15 (a) married and not living separately and apart from his or her  
16 spouse; or

17 (b) in a domestic partnership.

18 **[1.7] Section 27 (3)**

19 *omit*

20 **[1.8] Section 45 (1) (b) (iii)**

21 *substitute*

22 (iii) the surname or former surname of any other parent of the  
23 child; or

24 (iv) a surname formed by combining the parents' surnames or  
25 former surnames;

1 **[1.9] Section 48 (1) (a)**

2 *omit*

3 spouse

4 *substitute*

5 domestic partner

6 **[1.10] Section 48 (1), new note**

7 *insert*

8 *Note* For the meaning of *domestic partner*, see Legislation Act, s 169.

9 **[1.11] Section 49 (1)**

10 *omit*

11 spouse

12 *substitute*

13 domestic partner

14 **[1.12] Section 49 (1), new note**

15 *insert*

16 *Note* For the meaning of *domestic partner*, see Legislation Act, s 169.

17 **[1.13] Section 58, definition of *birth parent***

18 *substitute*

19 *birth parent*, of an adopted child, includes anyone who was a  
20 guardian of the child before the child was adopted.

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## 1 Part 1.3 Adoption Regulations 1993

### 2 [1.14] New regulation 11 (a) (via)

3 *substitute*

4 (via) full name of any other parent;

### 5 [1.15] Regulation 11 (a)

6 *renumber subparagraphs when regulations next republished under*  
7 *Legislation Act*

## 8 Part 1.4 Births, Deaths and Marriages 9 Registration Act 1997

### 10 [1.16] Section 16A (1)

11 *substitute*

12 (1) If the registrar-general receives a sealed copy of a parentage order  
13 made under the *Parentage Act 2003*, section 26, the registrar-  
14 general must register the order.

### 15 [1.17] Section 16B (1) (a) (iii)

16 *substitute*

17 (iii) the substitute parent or substitute parents of the child in  
18 whose favour the order was made; and

### 19 [1.18] Section 70 (4)

20 *substitute*

21 (4) In this section:

22 *relevant children*—a child is a *relevant child* if a parentage order  
23 has been made about the child under the *Parentage Act 2003*,  
24 section 26.

1 **Part 1.5 Births, Deaths and Marriages**  
2 **Registration Regulations 1998**

3 **[1.19] Regulations 5 (h), 5 (i) and 9 (j)**

4 *after*  
5 father  
6 *insert*  
7 or other parent

8 **Part 1.6 Domestic Relationships**  
9 **Act 1994**

10 **[1.20] Section 3 (4) (b) and (c)**

11 *omit*

12 **[1.21] Section 3 (4)**

13 *renumber paragraphs when Act next republished under Legislation*  
14 *Act*

15 **Part 1.7 Legislation Act 2001**

16 **[1.22] Dictionary, part 1, new definition**

17 *insert*  
18 *parent*, of a child, means—  
19 (a) the child's mother; or  
20 (b) the child's father; or

1 (c) someone else who is presumed under the *Parentage Act 2003*,  
2 part 2 to be a parent of the child.

3 *Note* A child cannot have more than 2 parents at any one time (see *Parentage*  
4 *Act 2003*, s 14).

## 1 Dictionary

2 (see s 3)

3 *Note 1* The Legislation Act contains definitions and other provisions relevant to  
4 this Act.

5 *Note 2* For example, the Legislation Act, dict, pt 1, defines the following terms:

- 6 • doctor
- 7 • domestic partner (see s 169 (1))
- 8 • domestic partnership (see s 169 (2))
- 9 • foreign country
- 10 • nurse
- 11 • parent
- 12 • registrar-general.

13 *birth parent*, of a child, for division 2.5 (Parentage orders)—see  
14 section 23.

15 *birth sibling*, of a child, for division 2.5 (Parentage orders)—see  
16 section 23.

17 *commercial substitute parent agreement*—see section 40.

18 *foreign jurisdiction* means a foreign country or part of a foreign  
19 country.

20 *genetic parent*, of a child, means a person whose gametes were used  
21 to create the embryo.

22 *parentage declaration* means a declaration under section 19.

23 *parentage order*—see section 23.

24 *parentage testing order*, for division 2.6 (Use of medical tests in  
25 establishing parentage)—see section 34.

26 *procedure*, for division 2.5 (Parentage orders)—see section 23.

1        **register of births** means the register maintained under the *Births,*  
2        *Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1997* in which births are  
3        registered.

4        **substitute parent**, of a child, for division 2.5 (Parentage orders)—  
5        see section 24 (1) (c).

6        **substitute parent agreement**—see section 23.

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## Endnote

### Republications of amended laws

For the latest republication of amended laws, see [www.legislation.act.gov.au](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au).