

Assembly Bill No. 1337

CHAPTER 155

An act to amend Section 7630 of the Family Code, relating to family law.

[Approved by Governor July 23, 2012. Filed with
Secretary of State July 23, 2012.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1337, Alejo. Parent and child relationship.

Existing law authorizes any interested party to bring an action at any time for the purpose of determining the existence or nonexistence of the father and child relationship that is presumed under certain circumstances.

This bill would require notice of the proceeding to be given, as specified, to the child's relatives within the 2nd degree and to the person having physical custody of the child, if the child's other parent has died and there are no existing court orders or pending court actions involving custody or guardianship of the child.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 7630 of the Family Code is amended to read:

7630. (a) A child, the child's natural mother, a man presumed to be the child's father under subdivision (a), (b), or (c) of Section 7611, an adoption agency to whom the child has been relinquished, or a prospective adoptive parent of the child may bring an action as follows:

(1) At any time for the purpose of declaring the existence of the father and child relationship presumed under subdivision (a), (b), or (c) of Section 7611.

(2) For the purpose of declaring the nonexistence of the father and child relationship presumed under subdivision (a), (b), or (c) of Section 7611 only if the action is brought within a reasonable time after obtaining knowledge of relevant facts. After the presumption has been rebutted, paternity of the child by another man may be determined in the same action, if he has been made a party.

(b) Any interested party may bring an action at any time for the purpose of determining the existence or nonexistence of the father and child relationship presumed under subdivision (d) or (f) of Section 7611.

(c) Except as to cases coming within Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 7540) of Part 2, an action to determine the existence of the father and child relationship may be brought by the child or personal representative of the child, the Department of Child Support Services, the mother or the personal representative or a parent of the mother if the mother has died or is a minor,

a man alleged or alleging himself to be the father, or the personal representative or a parent of the alleged father if the alleged father has died or is a minor.

(d) (1) If a proceeding has been filed under Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 7820) of Part 4, an action under subdivision (a) or (b) shall be consolidated with that proceeding. The parental rights of the presumed father shall be determined as set forth in Sections 7820 to 7829, inclusive.

(2) If a proceeding pursuant to Section 7662 has been filed under Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 7660), an action under subdivision (c) shall be consolidated with that proceeding. The parental rights of the alleged natural father shall be determined as set forth in Section 7664.

(3) The consolidated action under paragraph (1) or (2) shall be heard in the court in which the proceeding under Section 7662 or Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 7820) of Part 4 is filed, unless the court finds, by clear and convincing evidence, that transferring the action to the other court poses a substantial hardship to the petitioner. Mere inconvenience does not constitute a sufficient basis for a finding of substantial hardship. If the court determines there is a substantial hardship, the consolidated action shall be heard in the court in which the paternity action is filed.

(e) (1) If any prospective adoptive parent who has physical custody of the child, or any licensed California adoption agency that has legal custody of the child, has not been joined as a party to an action to determine the existence of a father and child relationship under subdivision (a), (b), or (c), or an action for custody by the alleged natural father, the court shall join the prospective adoptive parent or licensed California adoption agency as a party upon application or on its own motion, without the necessity of a motion for joinder. A joined party shall not be required to pay a fee in connection with this action.

(2) If a man brings an action to determine paternity and custody of a child who he has reason to believe is in the physical or legal custody of an adoption agency, or of one or more persons other than the child's mother who are prospective adoptive parents, he shall serve his entire pleading on, and give notice of all proceedings to, the adoption agency or the prospective adoptive parents, or both.

(f) A party to an assisted reproduction agreement may bring an action at any time to establish a parent and child relationship consistent with the intent expressed in that assisted reproduction agreement.

(g) (1) In an action to determine the existence of the father and child relationship brought pursuant to subdivision (b), if the child's other parent has died and there are no existing court orders or pending court actions involving custody or guardianship of the child, then the persons having physical custody of the child shall be served with notice of the proceeding at least 15 days prior to the hearing, either by mail or in any manner authorized by the court. If any person identified as having physical custody of the child cannot be located, the court shall prescribe the manner of giving notice.

(2) If known to the person bringing the parentage action, relatives within the second degree of the child shall be given notice of the proceeding at least 15 days prior to the hearing, either by mail or in any manner authorized by the court. If a person identified as a relative of the second degree of the child cannot be located, or his or her whereabouts are unknown or cannot be ascertained, the court shall prescribe the manner of giving notice, or shall dispense with giving notice to that person.

(3) Proof of notice pursuant to this subdivision shall be filed with the court before the proceeding to determine the existence of the father and child relationship is heard.