

CHAPTER 318

[Substitute Senate Bill No. 6009]

PARENTING PLANS—RESIDENTIAL PROVISIONS—CONTEMPT PROCEEDINGS
TO FORCE COMPLIANCE

AN ACT Relating to parents' compliance with residential provisions for a child; amending RCW 26.09.160, 9A.40.070, 26.09.260, and 9A.40.080; adding a new section to chapter 26.09 RCW; and prescribing penalties.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

Sec. 1. Section 16, chapter 157, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. as amended by section 12, chapter 460, Laws of 1987 and RCW 26.09.160 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The performance of parental functions and the duty to provide child support are distinct responsibilities in the care of a child. If a party fails to comply with a provision of a decree or temporary order of injunction, the obligation of the other party to make payments for support or maintenance or to permit contact with children is not suspended. An attempt by a parent, in either the negotiation or the performance of a parenting plan, to condition one aspect of the parenting plan upon another (~~((may be deemed to be in bad faith. If the court finds that a parent acted in bad faith in an attempt to condition parental functions, in a refusal)),~~ to refuse to perform the duties provided in the parenting plan, or ((in the hindrance of)) to hinder the performance by the other parent((the court has broad discretion to punish the conduct by a punitive award or other remedies, including civil or criminal contempt, and may consider the conduct in awarding attorneys' fees)) of duties provided in the parenting plan, may be punished by the court by holding the party in contempt of court and by awarding to the aggrieved party reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incidental in bringing a motion for contempt of court.

(2)(a) A motion may be filed to initiate a contempt action to coerce a parent to comply with an order establishing residential provisions for a child. If the court finds there is reasonable cause to believe the parent has not complied with the order, the court may issue an order to show cause why the relief requested should not be granted.

(b) If, based on all the facts and circumstances, the court finds after hearing that the parent has not complied with the order establishing residential provisions for the child, the court may find the parent in contempt of court. Upon a finding of contempt, the court shall order:

(i) The noncomplying parent to provide the moving party additional time with the child. The additional time shall be equal to the time missed with the child, due to the parent's noncompliance;

(ii) The parent to pay, to the moving party, all court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees incurred as a result of the noncompliance, and any reasonable expenses incurred in locating or returning a child; and

(iii) The parent to pay, to the moving party, a civil penalty, not less than the sum of one hundred dollars.

The court may also order the parent to be imprisoned in the county jail, if the parent is presently able to comply with the provisions of the court-ordered parenting plan and is presently unwilling to comply. The parent may be imprisoned until he or she agrees to comply with the order, but in no event for more than one hundred eighty days.

(3) On a second failure within three years to comply with a residential provision of a court-ordered parenting plan, a motion may be filed to initiate contempt of court proceedings according to the procedure set forth in subsection (2) (a) and (b) of this section. On a finding of contempt under this subsection, the court shall order:

(a) The noncomplying parent to provide the other parent or party additional time with the child. The additional time shall be twice the amount of the time missed with the child, due to the parent's noncompliance;

(b) The noncomplying parent to pay, to the other parent or party, all court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees incurred as a result of the noncompliance, and any reasonable expenses incurred in locating or returning a child; and

(c) The noncomplying parent to pay, to the moving party, a civil penalty of not less than two hundred fifty dollars.

The court may also order the parent to be imprisoned in the county jail, if the parent is presently able to comply with the provisions of the court-ordered parenting plan and is presently unwilling to comply. The parent may be imprisoned until he or she agrees to comply with the order but in no event for more than one hundred eighty days.

(4) For purposes of subsections (1), (2), and (3) of this section, the parent shall be deemed to have the present ability to comply with the order establishing residential provisions unless he or she establishes otherwise by a preponderance of the evidence. The parent shall establish a reasonable excuse for failure to comply with the residential provision of a court-ordered parenting plan by a preponderance of the evidence.

(5) Any monetary award ordered under subsections (1), (2), and (3) of this section may be enforced, by the party to whom it is awarded, in the same manner as a civil judgment.

(6) Subsections (1), (2), and (3) of this section authorize the exercise of the court's power to impose remedial sanctions for contempt of court and is in addition to any other contempt power the court may possess.

(7) Upon motion for contempt of court under subsections (1) through (3) of this section, if the court finds the motion was brought without reasonable basis, the court shall order the moving party to pay to the nonmoving party, all costs, reasonable attorneys' fees, and a civil penalty of not less than one hundred dollars.

Sec. 2. Section 2, chapter 95, Laws of 1984 and RCW 9A.40.070 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) A relative of a person is guilty of custodial interference in the second degree if, with the intent to deny access to such person by a parent, guardian, institution, agency, or other person having a lawful right to physical custody of such person, the relative takes, entices, retains, detains, or conceals the person from a parent, guardian, institution, agency, or other person having a lawful right to physical custody of such person. This subsection shall not apply to a parent's noncompliance with a court-ordered parenting plan.

(2) A parent of a child is guilty of custodial interference in the second degree if: (a) The parent takes, entices, retains, detains, or conceals the child, with the intent to deny access, from the other parent having the lawful right to time with the child pursuant to a court-ordered parenting plan; or (b) the parent has not complied with the residential provisions of a court-ordered parenting plan after a finding of contempt under section 1(3) of this act; or (c) if the court finds that the parent has engaged in a pattern of willful violations of the court-ordered residential provisions.

(3) Nothing in (b) of this subsection prohibits conviction of custodial interference in the second degree under (a) or (c) of this subsection in absence of findings of contempt.

(4) The first conviction of custodial interference in the second degree is a gross misdemeanor. The second or subsequent conviction of custodial interference in the second degree is a class C felony.

Sec. 3. Section 26, chapter 157, Laws of 1973 1st ex. sess. as amended by section 19, chapter 460, Laws of 1987 and RCW 26.09.260 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The court shall not modify a prior custody decree or a parenting plan unless it finds, upon the basis of facts that have arisen since the prior decree or plan or that were unknown to the court at the time of the prior decree or plan, that a substantial change has occurred in the circumstances of the child or the parents and that the modification is necessary to serve the best interests of the child. In applying these standards, the court shall retain the residential schedule established by the decree or parenting plan unless:

(a) The parents agree to the modification;

(b) The child has been integrated into the family of the petitioner with the consent of the other parent in substantial deviation from the parenting plan; ((or))

(c) The child's present environment is detrimental to the child's physical, mental, or emotional health and the harm likely to be caused by a change of environment is outweighed by the advantage of a change to the child; or

(d) The court has found the nonmoving parent in contempt of court at least twice within three years because the parent failed to comply with the residential time provisions in the court-ordered parenting plan, or the parent has been convicted of custodial interference in the first or second degree under RCW 9A.40.060 or 9A.40.070.

(2) A conviction of custodial interference in the first or second degree under RCW 9A.40.060 or 9A.40.070 shall constitute a substantial change of circumstances for the purposes of this section.

~~((2))~~ (3) If the court finds that a motion to modify a prior decree or parenting plan has been brought in bad faith, the court shall assess the attorney's fees and court costs of the nonmoving parent against the moving party.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. A new section is added to chapter 26.09 RCW to read as follows:

All court orders containing parenting plan provisions or orders of contempt, entered pursuant to section 1 of this act, shall include the following language:

WARNING: VIOLATION OF THE RESIDENTIAL PROVISIONS OF THIS ORDER WITH ACTUAL KNOWLEDGE OF ITS TERMS IS PUNISHABLE BY CONTEMPT OF COURT, AND MAY BE A CRIMINAL OFFENSE UNDER RCW 9A.40.070(2). VIOLATION OF THIS ORDER MAY SUBJECT A VIOLATOR TO ARREST.

Sec. 5. Section 3, chapter 95, Laws of 1984 and RCW 9A.40.080 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Any reasonable expenses incurred in locating or returning a child or incompetent person shall be assessed against a defendant convicted under RCW 9A.40.060 or 9A.40.070.

(2) In any prosecution of custodial interference in the first or second degree, it is a complete defense, if established by the defendant by a preponderance of the evidence, that:

(a) The defendant's purpose was to protect the child, incompetent person, or himself or herself from imminent physical harm, ((and)) that the belief in the existence of the imminent physical harm was reasonable, and that the defendant sought the assistance of the police, sheriff's office, protective agencies, or the court of any state before committing the acts giving rise to the charges or within a reasonable time thereafter;

(b) The complainant had, prior to the defendant committing the acts giving rise to the crime, for a protracted period of time, failed to exercise his or her rights to physical custody or access to the child under a court-

ordered parenting plan or order granting visitation rights, provided that such failure was not the direct result of the defendant's denial of access to such person;

(c) The acts giving rise to the charges were consented to by the complainant; or

(d) The offender, after providing or making a good faith effort to provide notice to the person entitled to access to the child, failed to provide access to the child due to reasons that a reasonable person would believe were directly related to the welfare of the child, and allowed access to the child in accordance with the court order within a reasonable period of time. The burden of proof that the denial of access was reasonable is upon the person denying access to the child.

(3) Consent of a child less than sixteen years of age or of an incompetent person does not constitute a defense to an action under RCW 9A.40.060 or 9A.40.070.

NEW SECTION, Sec. 6. If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

Passed the Senate April 20, 1989.

Passed the House April 13, 1989.

Approved by the Governor May 11, 1989.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State May 11, 1989.

CHAPTER 319

[Substitute House Bill No. 2036]

METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICTS—REVENUE BONDS—ISSUANCE AND SALE

AN ACT Relating to metropolitan park districts; amending RCW 35.61.100, 35.61.110, and 35.61.132; and adding new sections to chapter 35.61 RCW.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

NEW SECTION, Sec. 1. A new section is added to chapter 35.61 RCW to read as follows:

A metropolitan park district may issue and sell revenue bonds as provided in chapter 39.46 RCW to be made payable from the operating revenues of the metropolitan park district.

Sec. 2. Section 35.61.100, chapter 7, Laws of 1965 as last amended by section 21, chapter 186, Laws of 1984 and RCW 35.61.100 are each amended to read as follows:

Every metropolitan park district through its board of commissioners may contract indebtedness and evidence such indebtedness by the issuance and sale of warrants, short-term obligations as provided by chapter 39.50 RCW, or general obligation bonds, for park, boulevard, aviation landings,