

Queensland



CHILDRENS COURT ACT 1992

**Reprinted as in force on 8 December 1995
(includes amendments up to Act No. 57 of 1995)**

Reprint No. 2

**This reprint is prepared by
the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel
Warning—This reprint is not an authorised copy**

Information about this reprint

This Act is reprinted as at 8 December 1995. The reprint shows the law as amended by all amendments that commenced on or before that day (Reprints Act 1992 s 5(c)).

The reprint includes a reference to the law by which each amendment was made—see List of legislation and List of annotations in endnotes.

Minor editorial changes allowed under the provisions of the Reprints Act 1992 mentioned in the following list have also been made to—

- use standard punctuation consistent with current drafting practice (s 27)
- use expressions consistent with current drafting practice (s 29)
- use aspects of format and printing style consistent with current drafting practice (s 35)
- omit provisions that are no longer required (s 37).

This page is specific to this reprint. See previous reprint for information about earlier changes made under the Reprints Act 1992. A table of earlier reprints is included in the endnotes.

Also see endnotes for information about when provisions commenced.

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CHILDRENS COURT ACT 1992

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CHILDRENS COURT ACT 1992

[as amended by all amendments that commenced on or before 8 December 1995]

An Act to establish the Childrens Court of Queensland and for related purposes

PART 1—PRELIMINARY

Short title

1. This Act may be cited as the *Childrens Court Act 1992*.

Definitions

3. In this Act—

“**Childrens Court judge**” means a District Court judge appointed to the Childrens Court.

“**Childrens Court magistrate**” means a magistrate appointed to the Childrens Court.

“**court**” means the Childrens Court.

“**judge**” means a Childrens Court judge.

“**president**” means the president of the Childrens Court.

“**procedure**” includes practice.

“**rules**” means the Childrens Court Rules.

PART 2—THE CHILDRENS COURT OF QUEENSLAND

Childrens Court established etc.

- 4.(1) The Childrens Court of Queensland is established.
- (2) The court is a court of record.
- (3) The court is to have a seal, which must be judicially noticed.

Members and constitution of the Childrens Court

5.(1) The members of the Childrens Court are the judicial officers mentioned in subsections (2) and (3).

(2) The Childrens Court must be constituted by a Childrens Court judge if that is expressly required by an Act.

(3) If the Childrens Court is not required to be constituted by a Childrens Court judge, it may be constituted by—

- (a) a Childrens Court magistrate; or
- (b) if a Childrens Court magistrate is not available—any stipendiary magistrate; or
- (c) if neither a Childrens Court magistrate nor other stipendiary magistrate is available—2 justices of the peace.

(4) Subsection (3)(c) does not affect the limitations placed on justices of the peace under the *Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations Act 1991* or another Act.

Jurisdiction

6. The Childrens Court has the jurisdiction conferred on it by any Act.

Rules of court

7.(1) The procedure of the Childrens Court is governed by the Childrens Court Rules.

(2) The Governor in Council may, with the president's agreement, make rules of court (the "**Childrens Court Rules**") under this Act.

(3) A rule may make provision about any matter—

- (a) that is required or permitted to be prescribed under a law giving jurisdiction to the Childrens Court; or
- (b) that is necessary or convenient to be prescribed for carrying out or giving effect to a law giving jurisdiction to the Childrens Court.

(4) In particular, a rule may make provision about the procedure of the Childrens Court, including the matters that may be dealt with in chambers or by a court official.

Directions

8.(1) To the extent that any matter relating to Childrens Court procedure is not provided for by the rules, the matter may be dealt with by directions under this section.

(2) The president may issue directions of general application with respect to the procedure of the court.

(3) A Childrens Court judge may issue directions in relation to a particular case before the court when constituted by the judge.

(4) A Childrens Court magistrate, stipendiary magistrate or justices may issue directions in relation to a particular case before the court when constituted by the Childrens Court magistrate, stipendiary magistrate or justices, as the case may be.

PART 3—APPOINTMENT OF JUDICIAL OFFICERS

Division 1—The president

Childrens Court president

9.(1) There is to be a president of the court.

(2) The Governor in Council may appoint a Childrens Court judge to be the president of the court.

(3) The president may resign office by written resignation given to the Governor.

(4) The resignation does not affect the appointment or powers of the president as a Childrens Court judge.

(5) If—

- (a) the office of president is vacant; or
- (b) the president is on leave or otherwise absent or is, for another reason, unable to perform all the ordinary functions of the president's office;

the Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the Attorney-General, appoint a Childrens Court judge to be the acting president.

Functions of president

10. The president's functions are—

- (a) to ensure the orderly and expeditious exercise of the jurisdiction of the court when constituted by a Childrens Court judge; and
- (b) to discharge other functions conferred on the president by this Act or any other Act.

Division 2—Childrens Court judges

Childrens Court judge

11.(1) The Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the Attorney-General, appoint 1 or more District Court judges as Childrens Court judges.

(2) In choosing a District Court judge to be recommended as a Childrens Court judge, the Attorney-General must have regard to the appointee's particular interest and expertise in jurisdiction over matters relating to children.

(3) The appointment of a person as a Childrens Court judge does not affect the person's appointment as a District Court judge or the person's powers as a District Court judge.

Acting judge

12. The Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the Attorney-General, appoint a District Court judge to act as a Childrens Court judge if, in the Governor in Council's opinion, the conduct of the business of the court requires it.

Termination of office

13.(1) A Childrens Court judge ceases to hold the office if the judge ceases to hold office as a District Court judge.

(2) A Childrens Court judge may resign office by written resignation given to the Governor.

(3) The resignation does not affect the appointment or powers of the judge as a District Court judge.

Division 3—Childrens Court magistrates

Childrens Court magistrates

14.(1) The Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the Attorney-General, appoint 1 or more stipendiary magistrates as Childrens Court magistrates.

(2) The appointment of a person as a Childrens Court magistrate does not affect the person's appointment as a stipendiary magistrate or powers as a stipendiary magistrate.

(3) For the purpose of the *Stipendiary Magistrates Act 1991*, the duties of a stipendiary magistrate include those performed as a Childrens Court magistrate if the stipendiary magistrate is a Childrens Court magistrate.

Termination of office

15.(1) A Childrens Court magistrate ceases to hold the office if the person ceases to hold office as a stipendiary magistrate.

(2) A Childrens Court magistrate may resign office by written resignation given to the Attorney-General.

(3) The resignation does not affect the appointment or powers of the magistrate as a stipendiary magistrate.

Acting magistrate

16. The Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the Attorney-General, appoint a stipendiary magistrate to act in the office of a Childrens Court magistrate if, in the Governor in Council's opinion, the business of the Court requires it.

Division 4—Miscellaneous**Jurisdiction not affected by vacancies**

17. The jurisdiction of the court is not affected by a vacancy in any office in the court.

PART 4—SITTINGS OF THE COURT**Where court may be constituted**

18.(1) The court may be constituted—

- (a) if it is constituted by a judge—at a place where a Magistrates Court or a District Court may be held; or
- (b) if it is constituted by a Childrens Court magistrate, stipendiary magistrate or justices—at a place where a Magistrates Court may be held.

(2) Subject to subsection (1), the court as constituted by any of its

members—

- (a) may exercise jurisdiction throughout Queensland; and
- (b) may sit in more than 1 place at the same time.

Separation of court's proceedings

19. The hearing of a matter before the court must be held at a time when the business of another court is not being conducted in the same room.

Who may be present at a proceeding

20.(1) In a proceeding before the court in relation to a child, the court must exclude from the room in which the court is sitting a person who is not—

- (a) the child; or
- (b) a parent or other adult member of the child's family; or
- (c) a witness giving evidence; or
- (d) if a witness is a complainant within the meaning of the *Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978*—a person whose presence will provide emotional support to the witness; or
- (e) a party or person representing a party to the proceeding, including for example a police officer or other person in charge of a case against a child in relation to an offence; or
- (f) a representative of the chief executive of the department; or
- (g) if the child is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person—a representative of an organisation whose principal purpose is the provision of welfare services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families; or
- (h) a person mentioned in subsection (2) whom the court permits to be present.

(2) The court may permit to be present—

- (a) a person who is engaged in—
 - (i) a course of professional study relevant to the operation of the

court; or

(ii) research approved by the chief executive of the department;
or

(b) a person who, in the court's opinion, will assist the court.

(3) Subsection (1) applies subject to any order made by the court under the *Evidence Act 1977*, section 21A—

(a) excluding any person (including a defendant) from the place in which the court is sitting; or

(b) permitting any person to be present while a special witness within the meaning of that section is giving evidence.

(4) Subsection (1) applies even though the court's jurisdiction is being exercised conjointly with other jurisdiction.

(5) Subsection (1) does not apply to the court when constituted by a judge exercising jurisdiction to hear and determine a charge on indictment.

(6) Subsection (1) does not prevent an infant or young child in the care of an adult being present in court with the adult.

Court sitting times

21. Subject to the rules and the president's directions, proceedings before the court—

(a) when constituted by a judge—may be held at any time; or

(b) when constituted by a Childrens Court magistrate, magistrate or justices—must be held at special times fixed in advance by the proper officer of the court.

PART 5—GENERAL

Annual report

22.(1) As soon as practicable after the end of each financial year, but no later than 3 months after the end of the financial year, the president must

give to the Attorney-General a report of the administration and operation of the Childrens Court during the year.

(2) The Attorney-General must cause a copy of the report to be laid before the Legislative Assembly within 14 days of receiving it.

(3) If, at the time the Attorney-General would otherwise be required to lay the report before the Legislative Assembly, the Legislative Assembly is not sitting, the Attorney-General must give a copy of the report to the Clerk of the Parliament.

(4) The clerk must cause a copy of the report to be laid before the Legislative Assembly on its next sitting day.

(5) For the purposes of its printing and publication, the report is taken to be laid before the Legislative Assembly, and to have been ordered printed by the Legislative Assembly, when it is given to the clerk.

(6) The first report must cover the period from the commencement of section 4 until the end of the first full financial year of the court's operation.

Ordinary privileges, protection and immunity allowed

23.(1) In this section—

“court of concurrent jurisdiction” means—

- (a) in relation to the Childrens Court when constituted by a judge—a District Court; or
- (b) in relation to the Childrens Court when constituted by a Childrens Court magistrate, stipendiary magistrate or justices—a Magistrates Court.

“proceeding” means a proceeding in the Childrens Court.

(2) A person who is—

- (a) a judicial officer presiding over a proceeding; or
- (b) a legal practitioner appearing in a proceeding; or
- (c) a witness attending in a proceeding;

has the same privileges, protection or immunity as the person would have if the proceeding were in the court of concurrent jurisdiction.

Contempt

24.(1) A judge has the same power to punish a person for contempt of the court as the judge has to punish a person for contempt of a District Court.

(2) The *District Courts Act 1967*, section 105 applies in relation to the Childrens Court when constituted by a judge in the same way as it applies in relation to a District Court.

(3) In the performance of duties in relation to the Childrens Court, a Childrens Court magistrate, stipendiary magistrate or justices have the same power to punish for contempt as a stipendiary magistrate has or justices have, as the case may be, to punish for contempt of a Magistrates Court.

(4) The *Justices Act 1886*, section 40 applies in relation to the court when constituted by a Childrens Court magistrate, stipendiary magistrate or justices in the same way as it applies in relation to a Magistrates Court.

Court officials

25.(1) Every person holding office as the clerk, registrar or other court official of a Magistrates Court held at a place is taken to hold the same office in relation to the Childrens Court constituted by a Childrens Court magistrate, stipendiary magistrate or justices held at the place.

(2) Every person holding office as a registrar, deputy registrar, sheriff or other court official of a District Court held at a place is taken to hold the same office in relation to the Childrens Court constituted by a judge held at the place.

Court records

26. The records of the court held at a place must be kept in the custody of the registrar or clerk of the court at the place.

Judicial notice

27. All courts and persons acting judicially must take judicial notice of the appointment and signature of every person holding office under this Act.

References to Childrens Court

28.(1) A reference in another Act to the Childrens Court or a Childrens Court (whether the expression ‘the Childrens Court’, ‘a Children’s Court’ or ‘a Childrens Court’ or another expression is used) is, in relation to anything done, or proposed to be done, after the commencement of section 4, taken to be a reference to the Childrens Court established under this Act.

(2) Subsection (1) applies to a reference in an Act passed before the commencement of section 4 despite the reference being expressly to the Childrens Court or a Childrens Court constituted under an Act other than this Act.

Regulation making power

29. The Governor in Council may make regulations under this Act.

Transitional provision for rules of court

30.(1) In this section—

“**former rules**” means the *Children’s Court Rules 1966* as in force under this Act immediately before their expiry.

(2) The former rules are taken to be the rules.

(3) This section expires 1 year after its commencement.

ENDNOTES

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2 Date to which amendments incorporated

This is the reprint date mentioned in the Reprints Act 1992, section 5(c). Accordingly, this reprint includes all amendments that commenced operation on or before 8 December 1995. Future amendments of the Childrens Court Act 1992 may be made under this reprint under the Reprints Act 1992, section 49.

3 Key

Key to abbreviations in list of legislation and annotations

AIA	=	Acts Interpretation Act 1954	(prev)	=	previously
amd	=	amended	proc	=	proclamation
ch	=	chapter	prov	=	provision
def	=	definition	pt	=	part
div	=	division	pubd	=	published
exp	=	expires/expired	R[X]	=	Reprint No.[X]
gaz	=	gazette	RA	=	Reprints Act 1992
hdg	=	heading	reloc	=	relocated
ins	=	inserted	renum	=	renumbered
lap	=	lapsed	rep	=	repealed
notfd	=	notified	s	=	section
om	=	omitted	sch	=	schedule
o in c	=	order in council	sdiv	=	subdivision
p	=	page	SIA	=	Statutory Instruments Act 1992
para	=	paragraph	SL	=	subordinate legislation
prec	=	preceding	sub	=	substituted
pres	=	present	unnum	=	unnumbered
prev	=	previous			

4 Table of earlier reprints

TABLE OF EARLIER REPRINTS

Reprint No.	Amendments included	Reprint date
1	to Act No. 68 of 1992	24 August 1993

5 List of legislation

Childrens Court Act 1992 No. 41

date of assent 19 August 1992

ss 1–2 commenced on date of assent

remaining provisions commenced 1 September 1993 (1993 SL No. 312)

as amended by—

Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (No. 2) 1992 No. 68 ss 1–3 sch 1

date of assent 7 December 1992

commenced on date of assent

Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (No. 2) 1993 No. 76 ss 1–3 sch 1

date of assent 14 December 1993

commenced on date of assent

Statute Law (Minor Amendments) Act 1995 No. 50 ss 1, 3 sch

date of assent 22 November 1995

commenced on date of assent

Statute Law Revision Act 1995 No. 57 ss 1–2, 4 sch 1

date of assent 28 November 1995

commenced on date of assent

6 List of annotations

Commencement

s 2 om R2 (see RA s 37)

Rules of court

s 7 amd 1995 No. 57 s 4 sch 1

Separation of court's proceedings

s 19 amd 1993 No. 76 s 3 sch 1

Court sitting times

s 21 sub 1993 No. 76 s 3 sch 1

References to Childrens Court

s 28 prev s 28 renum s 29 1992 No. 68 s 3 sch 1

pres s 28 ins 1992 No. 68 s 3 sch 1

Regulation making power

s 29 (prev s 28) renum 1992 No. 68 s 3 sch 1
sub 1995 No. 57 s 4 sch 1

Transitional provision for rules of court

s 30 ins 1995 No. 50 s 3 sch
exp 22 November 1996 (see s 30(3))

SCHEDULE—TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

om 1995 No. 57 s 4 sch 1