

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 757 Session of 2015

INTRODUCED BY WOZNIAK, ALLOWAY, VANCE AND HUGHES, APRIL 23, 2015

REFERRED TO JUDICIARY, APRIL 23, 2015

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in children and minors, further
3 providing for determination of paternity.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Section 5104 heading, (a), (b), (c), (d) and (g)
7 of Title 23 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes are
8 amended to read:

9 § 5104. [Blood tests] Tests to determine paternity.

10 (a) [Short title of section.--This section shall be known
11 and may be cited as the Uniform Act on Blood Tests to Determine
12 Paternity.] Testing.--A test to determine paternity shall be
13 conducted in accordance with this section. The test shall be
14 conducted upon blood, deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) or both.

15 (b) Scope of section.--

16 (1) Civil matters.--This section shall apply to all
17 civil matters.

18 (2) Criminal proceedings.--This section shall apply to
19 all criminal proceedings subject to the following limitations

1 and provisions:

2 (i) An order for the tests shall be made only upon
3 application of a party or on the initiative of the court.

4 (ii) The compensation of the experts shall be paid
5 by the party requesting the [blood test] tests or by the
6 county, as the court shall direct.

7 (iii) The court may direct a verdict of acquittal
8 upon the conclusions of all the experts under subsection
9 (f). Otherwise, the case shall be submitted for
10 determination upon all the evidence.

11 (iv) The refusal of a defendant to submit to the
12 tests may not be used in evidence against the defendant.

13 (c) Authority for test.--In any matter subject to this
14 section in which paternity, parentage or identity of a child is
15 a relevant fact, the court, upon its own initiative or upon
16 suggestion made by or on behalf of any person whose blood or DNA
17 is involved, may or, upon motion of any party to the action made
18 at a time so as not to delay the proceedings unduly, shall order
19 the mother, child and alleged father to submit to blood tests,
20 DNA tests or both. If any party refuses to submit to the tests,
21 the court may resolve the question of paternity, parentage or
22 identity of a child against the party or enforce its order if
23 the rights of others and the interests of justice so require.

24 (d) Selection of experts.--The tests shall be made by
25 experts qualified as examiners of blood types or DNA
26 identification, who shall be appointed by the court. The experts
27 shall be called by the court as witnesses to testify to their
28 findings and shall be subject to cross-examination by the
29 parties. Any party or person at whose suggestion the tests have
30 been ordered may demand that other experts qualified as

examiners of blood types or DNA identification perform independent tests under order of court, the results of which may be offered in evidence. The number and qualifications of experts shall be determined by the court.

* * *

(g) Effect on presumption of [legitimacy] paternity.--The presumption of [legitimacy] paternity of a child born during wedlock as heretofore recognized in this Commonwealth is reaffirmed and made subject to the following provisions:

(1) Upon petition for testing in an action in which paternity of the child is an issue filed not later than five years after the child's birth, the court shall permit testing to rebut the presumption of paternity, provided that the overall interests of justice, including the best interests of the child, would not be unreasonably harmed and:

(i) the parties subject to the presumption are divorced or irreconcilably separated, and one or both assert reasonable grounds to believe that application of the presumption is likely to result in an incorrect paternity determination; or

(ii) the parties subject to the presumption mutually agree to submit to and be bound by the testing.

(2) The presumption of paternity is overcome if the court finds that the conclusions of all the experts as disclosed by the evidence based upon the tests show that the husband is not the father of the child.

Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.