

AN ACT concerning civil law.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Adoption Act is amended by changing Section 1 as follows:

(750 ILCS 50/1) (from Ch. 40, par. 1501)

Sec. 1. Definitions. When used in this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

A. "Child" means a person under legal age subject to adoption under this Act.

B. "Related child" means a child subject to adoption where either or both of the adopting parents stands in any of the following relationships to the child by blood or marriage: parent, grand-parent, brother, sister, step-parent, step-grandparent, step-brother, step-sister, uncle, aunt, great-uncle, great-aunt, or cousin of first degree. A child whose parent has executed a final irrevocable consent to adoption or a final irrevocable surrender for purposes of adoption, or whose parent has had his or her parental rights terminated, is not a related child to that person, unless the consent is determined to be void or is void pursuant to subsection O of Section 10.

C. "Agency" for the purpose of this Act means a public child welfare agency or a licensed child welfare agency.

D. "Unfit person" means any person whom the court shall find to be unfit to have a child, without regard to the likelihood that the child will be placed for adoption. The grounds of unfitness are any one or more of the following, except that a person shall not be considered an unfit person for the sole reason that the person has relinquished a child in accordance with the Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act:

(a) Abandonment of the child.

(a-1) Abandonment of a newborn infant in a hospital.

(a-2) Abandonment of a newborn infant in any setting where the evidence suggests that the parent intended to relinquish his or her parental rights.

(b) Failure to maintain a reasonable degree of interest, concern or responsibility as to the child's welfare.

(c) Desertion of the child for more than 3 months next preceding the commencement of the Adoption proceeding.

(d) Substantial neglect of the child if continuous or repeated.

(d-1) Substantial neglect, if continuous or repeated, of any child residing in the household which resulted in the death of that child.

(e) Extreme or repeated cruelty to the child.

(f) Two or more findings of physical abuse to any children under Section 4-8 of the Juvenile Court Act or Section 2-21 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987, the most recent of which was determined by the juvenile court hearing the matter to be supported by clear and convincing evidence; a criminal conviction or a finding of not guilty by reason of insanity resulting from the death of any child by physical child abuse; or a finding of physical child abuse resulting from the death of any child under Section 4-8 of the Juvenile Court Act or Section 2-21 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

(g) Failure to protect the child from conditions within his environment injurious to the child's welfare.

(h) Other neglect of, or misconduct toward the child; provided that in making a finding of unfitness the court hearing the adoption proceeding shall not be bound by any previous finding, order or judgment affecting or determining the rights of the parents toward the child sought to be adopted in any other proceeding except such proceedings terminating parental rights as shall be had under either this Act, the Juvenile Court Act or the

Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

(i) Depravity. Conviction of any one of the following crimes shall create a presumption that a parent is deprived which can be overcome only by clear and convincing evidence: (1) first degree murder in violation of paragraph 1 or 2 of subsection (a) of Section 9-1 of the Criminal Code of 1961 or conviction of second degree murder in violation of subsection (a) of Section 9-2 of the Criminal Code of 1961 of a parent of the child to be adopted; (2) first degree murder or second degree murder of any child in violation of the Criminal Code of 1961; (3) attempt or conspiracy to commit first degree murder or second degree murder of any child in violation of the Criminal Code of 1961; (4) solicitation to commit murder of any child, solicitation to commit murder of any child for hire, or solicitation to commit second degree murder of any child in violation of the Criminal Code of 1961; or (5) aggravated criminal sexual assault in violation of Section 12-14(b) (1) of the Criminal Code of 1961.

There is a rebuttable presumption that a parent is deprived if the parent has been criminally convicted of at least 3 felonies under the laws of this State or any other state, or under federal law, or the criminal laws of any United States territory; and at least one of these convictions took place within 5 years of the filing of the petition or motion seeking termination of parental rights.

There is a rebuttable presumption that a parent is deprived if that parent has been criminally convicted of either first or second degree murder of any person as defined in the Criminal Code of 1961 within 10 years of the filing date of the petition or motion to terminate parental rights.

(j) Open and notorious adultery or fornication.

(j-1) (Blank).

(k) Habitual drunkenness or addiction to drugs, other than those prescribed by a physician, for at least one year

immediately prior to the commencement of the unfitness proceeding.

There is a rebuttable presumption that a parent is unfit under this subsection with respect to any child to which that parent gives birth where there is a confirmed test result that at birth the child's blood, urine, or meconium contained any amount of a controlled substance as defined in subsection (f) of Section 102 of the Illinois Controlled Substances Act or metabolites of such substances, the presence of which in the newborn infant was not the result of medical treatment administered to the mother or the newborn infant; and the biological mother of this child is the biological mother of at least one other child who was adjudicated a neglected minor under subsection (c) of Section 2-3 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

(l) Failure to demonstrate a reasonable degree of interest, concern or responsibility as to the welfare of a new born child during the first 30 days after its birth.

(m) Failure by a parent (i) to make reasonable efforts to correct the conditions that were the basis for the removal of the child from the parent, or (ii) to make reasonable progress toward the return of the child to the parent within 9 months after an adjudication of neglected or abused minor under Section 2-3 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 or dependent minor under Section 2-4 of that Act, or (iii) to make reasonable progress toward the return of the child to the parent during any 9-month period after the end of the initial 9-month period following the adjudication of neglected or abused minor under Section 2-3 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 or dependent minor under Section 2-4 of that Act. If a service plan has been established as required under Section 8.2 of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act to correct the conditions that were the basis for the removal of the child from the parent and if those services were available, then, for

purposes of this Act, "failure to make reasonable progress toward the return of the child to the parent" includes (I) the parent's failure to substantially fulfill his or her obligations under the service plan and correct the conditions that brought the child into care within 9 months after the adjudication under Section 2-3 or 2-4 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 and (II) the parent's failure to substantially fulfill his or her obligations under the service plan and correct the conditions that brought the child into care during any 9-month period after the end of the initial 9-month period following the adjudication under Section 2-3 or 2-4 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987. Notwithstanding any other provision, when a petition or motion seeks to terminate parental rights on the basis of item (iii) of this subsection (m), the petitioner shall file with the court and serve on the parties a pleading that specifies the 9-month period or periods relied on. The pleading shall be filed and served on the parties no later than 3 weeks before the date set by the court for closure of discovery, and the allegations in the pleading shall be treated as incorporated into the petition or motion. Failure of a respondent to file a written denial of the allegations in the pleading shall not be treated as an admission that the allegations are true.

(m-1) Pursuant to the Juvenile Court Act of 1987, a child has been in foster care for 15 months out of any 22 month period which begins on or after the effective date of this amendatory Act of 1998 unless the child's parent can prove by a preponderance of the evidence that it is more likely than not that it will be in the best interests of the child to be returned to the parent within 6 months of the date on which a petition for termination of parental rights is filed under the Juvenile Court Act of 1987. The 15 month time limit is tolled during any period for which there is a court finding that the appointed custodian or guardian failed to make reasonable efforts to reunify the

child with his or her family, provided that (i) the finding of no reasonable efforts is made within 60 days of the period when reasonable efforts were not made or (ii) the parent filed a motion requesting a finding of no reasonable efforts within 60 days of the period when reasonable efforts were not made. For purposes of this subdivision (m-1), the date of entering foster care is the earlier of: (i) the date of a judicial finding at an adjudicatory hearing that the child is an abused, neglected, or dependent minor; or (ii) 60 days after the date on which the child is removed from his or her parent, guardian, or legal custodian.

(n) Evidence of intent to forgo his or her parental rights, whether or not the child is a ward of the court, (1) as manifested by his or her failure for a period of 12 months: (i) to visit the child, (ii) to communicate with the child or agency, although able to do so and not prevented from doing so by an agency or by court order, or (iii) to maintain contact with or plan for the future of the child, although physically able to do so, or (2) as manifested by the father's failure, where he and the mother of the child were unmarried to each other at the time of the child's birth, (i) to commence legal proceedings to establish his paternity under the Illinois Parentage Act of 1984 or the law of the jurisdiction of the child's birth within 30 days of being informed, pursuant to Section 12a of this Act, that he is the father or the likely father of the child or, after being so informed where the child is not yet born, within 30 days of the child's birth, or (ii) to make a good faith effort to pay a reasonable amount of the expenses related to the birth of the child and to provide a reasonable amount for the financial support of the child, the court to consider in its determination all relevant circumstances, including the financial condition of both parents; provided that the ground for termination provided in this subparagraph (n)(2)(ii) shall only be

available where the petition is brought by the mother or the husband of the mother.

Contact or communication by a parent with his or her child that does not demonstrate affection and concern does not constitute reasonable contact and planning under subdivision (n). In the absence of evidence to the contrary, the ability to visit, communicate, maintain contact, pay expenses and plan for the future shall be presumed. The subjective intent of the parent, whether expressed or otherwise, unsupported by evidence of the foregoing parental acts manifesting that intent, shall not preclude a determination that the parent has intended to forgo his or her parental rights. In making this determination, the court may consider but shall not require a showing of diligent efforts by an authorized agency to encourage the parent to perform the acts specified in subdivision (n).

It shall be an affirmative defense to any allegation under paragraph (2) of this subsection that the father's failure was due to circumstances beyond his control or to impediments created by the mother or any other person having legal custody. Proof of that fact need only be by a preponderance of the evidence.

(o) Repeated or continuous failure by the parents, although physically and financially able, to provide the child with adequate food, clothing, or shelter.

(p) Inability to discharge parental responsibilities supported by competent evidence from a psychiatrist, licensed clinical social worker, or clinical psychologist of mental impairment, mental illness or mental retardation as defined in Section 1-116 of the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code, or developmental disability as defined in Section 1-106 of that Code, and there is sufficient justification to believe that the inability to discharge parental responsibilities shall extend beyond a reasonable time period. However, this

subdivision (p) shall not be construed so as to permit a licensed clinical social worker to conduct any medical diagnosis to determine mental illness or mental impairment.

(q) The parent has been criminally convicted of aggravated battery, heinous battery, or attempted murder of any child.

(r) The child is in the temporary custody or guardianship of the Department of Children and Family Services, the parent is incarcerated as a result of criminal conviction at the time the petition or motion for termination of parental rights is filed, prior to incarceration the parent had little or no contact with the child or provided little or no support for the child, and the parent's incarceration will prevent the parent from discharging his or her parental responsibilities for the child for a period in excess of 2 years after the filing of the petition or motion for termination of parental rights.

(s) The child is in the temporary custody or guardianship of the Department of Children and Family Services, the parent is incarcerated at the time the petition or motion for termination of parental rights is filed, the parent has been repeatedly incarcerated as a result of criminal convictions, and the parent's repeated incarceration has prevented the parent from discharging his or her parental responsibilities for the child.

(t) A finding that at birth the child's blood, urine, or meconium contained any amount of a controlled substance as defined in subsection (f) of Section 102 of the Illinois Controlled Substances Act, or a metabolite of a controlled substance, with the exception of controlled substances or metabolites of such substances, the presence of which in the newborn infant was the result of medical treatment administered to the mother or the newborn infant, and that the biological mother of this child is the biological mother of at least one other child who was adjudicated a

neglected minor under subsection (c) of Section 2-3 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987, after which the biological mother had the opportunity to enroll in and participate in a clinically appropriate substance abuse counseling, treatment, and rehabilitation program.

E. "Parent" means the father or mother of a legitimate or illegitimate child. For the purpose of this Act, a person who has executed a final and irrevocable consent to adoption or a final and irrevocable surrender for purposes of adoption, or whose parental rights have been terminated by a court, is not a parent of the child who was the subject of the consent or surrender, unless the consent is void pursuant to subsection 0 of Section 10.

F. A person is available for adoption when the person is:

(a) a child who has been surrendered for adoption to an agency and to whose adoption the agency has thereafter consented;

(b) a child to whose adoption a person authorized by law, other than his parents, has consented, or to whose adoption no consent is required pursuant to Section 8 of this Act;

(c) a child who is in the custody of persons who intend to adopt him through placement made by his parents;

(c-1) a child for whom a parent has signed a specific consent pursuant to subsection 0 of Section 10;

(d) an adult who meets the conditions set forth in Section 3 of this Act; or

(e) a child who has been relinquished as defined in Section 10 of the Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act.

A person who would otherwise be available for adoption shall not be deemed unavailable for adoption solely by reason of his or her death.

G. The singular includes the plural and the plural includes the singular and the "male" includes the "female", as the context of this Act may require.

H. "Adoption disruption" occurs when an adoptive placement

does not prove successful and it becomes necessary for the child to be removed from placement before the adoption is finalized.

I. "Foreign placing agency" is an agency or individual operating in a country or territory outside the United States that is authorized by its country to place children for adoption either directly with families in the United States or through United States based international agencies.

J. "Immediate relatives" means the biological parents, the parents of the biological parents and siblings of the biological parents.

K. "Intercountry adoption" is a process by which a child from a country other than the United States is adopted.

L. "Intercountry Adoption Coordinator" is a staff person of the Department of Children and Family Services appointed by the Director to coordinate the provision of services by the public and private sector to prospective parents of foreign-born children.

M. "Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children" is a law enacted by most states for the purpose of establishing uniform procedures for handling the interstate placement of children in foster homes, adoptive homes, or other child care facilities.

N. "Non-Compact state" means a state that has not enacted the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children.

O. "Preadoption requirements" are any conditions established by the laws or regulations of the Federal Government or of each state that must be met prior to the placement of a child in an adoptive home.

P. "Abused child" means a child whose parent or immediate family member, or any person responsible for the child's welfare, or any individual residing in the same home as the child, or a paramour of the child's parent:

(a) inflicts, causes to be inflicted, or allows to be inflicted upon the child physical injury, by other than accidental means, that causes death, disfigurement,

impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function;

(b) creates a substantial risk of physical injury to the child by other than accidental means which would be likely to cause death, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function;

(c) commits or allows to be committed any sex offense against the child, as sex offenses are defined in the Criminal Code of 1961 and extending those definitions of sex offenses to include children under 18 years of age;

(d) commits or allows to be committed an act or acts of torture upon the child; or

(e) inflicts excessive corporal punishment.

Q. "Neglected child" means any child whose parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare withholds or denies nourishment or medically indicated treatment including food or care denied solely on the basis of the present or anticipated mental or physical impairment as determined by a physician acting alone or in consultation with other physicians or otherwise does not provide the proper or necessary support, education as required by law, or medical or other remedial care recognized under State law as necessary for a child's well-being, or other care necessary for his or her well-being, including adequate food, clothing and shelter; or who is abandoned by his or her parents or other person responsible for the child's welfare.

A child shall not be considered neglected or abused for the sole reason that the child's parent or other person responsible for his or her welfare depends upon spiritual means through prayer alone for the treatment or cure of disease or remedial care as provided under Section 4 of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. A child shall not be considered neglected or abused for the sole reason that the child's parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare failed to vaccinate, delayed vaccination, or refused vaccination for the child due

to a waiver on religious or medical grounds as permitted by law.

R. "Putative father" means a man who may be a child's father, but who (1) is not married to the child's mother on or before the date that the child was or is to be born and (2) has not established paternity of the child in a court proceeding before the filing of a petition for the adoption of the child. The term includes a male who is less than 18 years of age. "Putative father" does not mean a man who is the child's father as a result of criminal sexual abuse or assault as defined under Article 12 of the Criminal Code of 1961.

S. "Standby adoption" means an adoption in which a parent consents to custody and termination of parental rights to become effective upon the occurrence of a future event, which is either the death of the parent or the request of the parent for the entry of a final judgment of adoption.

T. (Blank).

(Source: P.A. 92-16, eff. 6-28-01; 92-375, eff. 1-1-02; 92-408, eff. 8-17-01; 92-432, eff. 8-17-01; 92-651, eff. 7-11-02; 93-732, eff. 1-1-05.)