

- i. Version Number: 2
- ii. Date of version: April 27, 2010 (incorporating feedback from workgroup meeting on April 16, 2010)
- iii. Current section number and short title: 25-403 best interests
- iv. Names of members: Bill Fabricius, Grace Hawkins
- v. Purpose:
 - to incorporate the language of SB1314;
 - to revise the 11 statutory factors as needed;
 - to provide some “decision tree” guidance regarding weighting of the factors and sequential steps for judicial consideration.

25-403. Parenting time and parental decision making; best interests of child

A. Absent evidence to the contrary, it is in a child's best interests for both parents:

- 1. To have substantial, meaningful, regular and continuing parenting time with their child;
- 2. To share parental decision-making concerning their child.

3. To develop together a mutually agreeable parenting time plan and a parental decision-making plan.

B. In the event the parents are unable to reach an agreement on a plan for either parenting time or parental decision-making, each parent shall submit to the court a proposed, detailed parenting time plan and proposal for parental decision-making as outlined in 25-403.02.

C. The court shall determine parenting time and parental decision-making, either originally or on petition for modification, in accordance with the best interests of the child. The court shall first consider any evidence contrary to either or both of the parents' proposals, including

- 1. The feasibility of each plan taking into account the distance between the parents' homes, the parents' and/or child's work, school, daycare or other schedules.
- 2. The wishes of the child as to the schedule of parenting time, when appropriate,
- 3. The interaction and interrelationship of the child with the child's parent or parents, the child's siblings and any other person who may significantly affect the child's best interest.
- 4. The child's adjustment to home, school and community.
- 5. The mental and physical health of all individuals involved.
- 6. Whether one parent is more likely to support and encourage the child's relationship and contact with the other parent. This paragraph does not apply if the court determines that a parent is acting in good faith to protect the child from witnessing an act of domestic violence or being a victim of domestic violence or child abuse.
- 7. The historical nature of the relationship between parent and child, the current relationship between parent and child and the potential future relationship of parent and child.
- 8. Whether either parent was convicted of an act of false reporting of child abuse or neglect under section 13-2907.02.
- 9. Whether there has been domestic violence or child abuse as defined in section 25-403.03.
- 10. Whether a parent has complied with chapter 3, article 5 of this title.

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D. Absent evidence to the contrary that such a plan would not be in a child's best interest or would cause harm to a parent the court shall adopt a plan that maximizes parenting time with both parents consistent with the child's physical safety and emotional well-being and provides

Deleted: favor a plan that allows the child the most substantial, meaningful, regular and continuing parenting time with each parent

for both parents to share parental decision-making concerning their child. In determining parenting time and/or parental decision-making responsibility, the court shall not prefer one parent over the other due to gender.

E. In a contested parenting time and parental decision-making case, the court shall make specific findings on the record about all relevant factors and the reasons for which the decision is in the best interests of the child.