

AN ACT

relating to the appointment of an associate judge in a family law proceeding involving a name change.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Sections 201.001(a) and (c), Family Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) A judge of a court having jurisdiction of a suit under this title, ~~or~~ Title 1, Chapter 45, or Title 4 may appoint a full-time or part-time associate judge to perform the duties authorized by this chapter if the commissioners court of a county in which the court has jurisdiction authorizes the employment of an associate judge.

(c) If more than one court in a county has jurisdiction of a suit under this title, ~~or~~ Title 1, Chapter 45, or Title 4 the commissioners court may authorize the appointment of an associate judge for each court or may authorize one or more associate judges to share service with two or more courts.

SECTION 2. Sections 201.005(a) and (d), Family Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) Except as provided by this section, a judge of a court may refer to an associate judge any aspect of a suit over which the court has jurisdiction under this title, ~~or~~ Title 1, Chapter 45, or Title 4, including any matter ancillary to the suit.

(d) The requirements of Subsections (b) and (c) shall apply

1 whenever a judge has authority to refer the trial of a suit under
2 this title, Title 1, Chapter 45, or Title 4 to an associate judge,
3 master, or other assistant judge regardless of whether the
4 assistant judge is appointed under this subchapter.

5 SECTION 3. Section 201.018(a), Family Code, is amended to
6 read as follows:

7 (a) If an associate judge appointed under this subchapter is
8 temporarily unable to perform the judge's official duties because
9 of absence or illness, injury, or other disability, a judge of a
10 court having jurisdiction of a suit under this title, [ex] Title 1,
11 Chapter 45, or Title 4 may appoint a visiting associate judge to
12 perform the duties of the associate judge during the period of the
13 associate judge's absence or disability if the commissioners court
14 of a county in which the court has jurisdiction authorizes the
15 employment of a visiting associate judge.

16 SECTION 4. The change in law made by this Act applies only
17 to a suit filed under Chapter 45, Family Code, on or after the
18 effective date of this Act. A suit filed under Chapter 45, Family
19 Code, before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law
20 in effect on the date the suit was filed, and that law is continued
21 in effect for that purpose.

22 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

S.B. No. 812

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 812 passed the Senate on April 9, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 812 passed the House on May 15, 2015, by the following vote: Yeas 139, Nays 0, two present not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

Date

Governor