



Family Law Act 1986

1986 CHAPTER 55

PART I

CHILD CUSTODY

CHAPTER II

JURISDICTION OF COURTS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

[^{F1} Interpretation of Chapter II.

In this Chapter—

- (a) “child” means a person who has not attained the age of eighteen;
- [“civil partnership proceedings” means proceedings for the dissolution or
^{F2}(aa) annulment of a civil partnership or for legal separation of the civil partners;]
- (b) “matrimonial proceedings” means proceedings for divorce, nullity of marriage or judicial separation;
- (c) “the relevant date” means, in relation to the making or variation of an order—
 - (i) where an application is made for an order to be made or varied, the date of the application (or first application, if two or more are determined together), and
 - (ii) where no such application is made, the date on which the court is considering whether to make or, as the case may be, vary the order; and
- (d) “section 1(1)(a) order” and “section 1(1)(d) order” mean orders falling within section 1(1)(a) and (d) of this Act respectively.]

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 7 substituted (14.10.1991) by [Children Act 1989 \(c. 41, SIF 20\)](#), s. 108, [Sch. 13 para. 67](#) (with [Sch. 14 para. 1\(1\)](#)); [S.I. 1991/828](#), [art. 3\(2\)](#)

Changes to legislation: Family Law Act 1986, Section 7 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 March 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) [View outstanding changes](#)

F2 S. 7(aa) inserted (5.12.2005) by [The Civil Partnership \(Family Proceedings and Housing Consequential Amendments\) Order 2005 \(S.I. 2005/3336\)](#), arts. 1, **10** (with art. 2(4))

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 1(1)(ca)-(cc) inserted by [2022 c. 18 \(N.I.\) Sch. 3 para. 7](#)
- s. 2A(1)(1A) substituted for s. 2(1) by [1996 c. 27 Sch. 8 para. 37\(3\)](#) (This amendment not applied to [legislation.gov.uk](#). Sch. 8 Pt. I repealed (except for paras. 4, 16(1)(5)(a)(6)(b)(7)) (13.5.2014) by Children and Families Act 2014 (c. 6), ss. 18(2)(e), 139(4))
- s. 19(1A)-(1C) inserted by [2022 c. 18 \(N.I.\) Sch. 3 para. 8](#)
- s. 29A inserted by [2020 asp 16 s. 29\(2\)](#)
- s. 38(4) inserted by [1996 c. 27 Sch. 8 para. 37\(9\)](#) (This amendment not applied to [legislation.gov.uk](#). Sch. 8 Pt. I repealed (except for paras. 4, 16(1)(5)(a)(6)(b)(7)) (13.5.2014) by Children and Families Act 2014 (c. 6), ss. 18(2)(e), 139(4))