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SCOTTISH STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2015 No. 312**

**Act of Sederunt (Rules of the Court of  
Session 1994 and Ordinary Cause Rules 1993  
Amendment) (Child Welfare Reporters) 2015**

**Amendment of the Ordinary Cause Rules 1993**

- 4.—(1) The Ordinary Cause Rules 1993<sup>(1)</sup> are amended in accordance with this paragraph.  
(2) For rule 33.21 (appointment of local authority or reporter to report on a child)<sup>(2)</sup>, substitute—

**“Child welfare reporters**

**33.21.**—(1) At any stage of a family action the sheriff may, in relation to any matter affecting a child, appoint a person (referred to in this rule as a “child welfare reporter”)—

- (a) to seek the views of the child and to report any views expressed by the child to the court; or
- (b) to undertake enquiries and to report to the court.

(2) A child welfare reporter may only be appointed under paragraph (1)(b) where the sheriff is satisfied that the appointment—

- (a) is in the best interests of the child; and
- (b) will promote the effective and expeditious determination of an issue in relation to the child.

(3) An interlocutor appointing a child welfare reporter must—

- (a) specify a date by which the report is to be submitted to the court;
- (b) include a direction as to the fees and outlays of the child welfare reporter;
- (c) where the appointment is under paragraph (1)(a), specify the issues in respect of which the child’s views are to be sought; and
- (d) where the appointment is under paragraph (1)(b), specify the enquiries to be undertaken, and the issues requiring to be addressed in the report.

(4) An interlocutor complies with subparagraph (c) or (d) of paragraph (3) if the issues or, as the case may be the enquiries, referred to in that subparagraph are specified in an annex to the interlocutor in Form F44.

(5) Where the sheriff has appointed a child welfare reporter with a view to the report being considered at an assigned hearing, the date specified in accordance with paragraph (3)(a) must be a date no less than three clear days before that hearing, excluding any day on which the sheriff clerk’s office is not open for civil court business, unless cause exists for specifying a later date.

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(1) The Ordinary Cause Rules 1993 are in Schedule 1 to the Sheriff Courts (Scotland) Act 1907 (c.51). Schedule 1 was substituted by S.I. 1993/1956 and was last amended by S.S.I. 2015/296.  
(2) Rule 33.21 was amended by S.I. 1996/2167.

- (6) On appointing a child welfare reporter the sheriff may also—
- (a) make such further order as may be required to facilitate the discharge of the child welfare reporter’s functions;
  - (b) direct that a party to the proceedings is to be responsible for providing the child welfare reporter with copies of such documents lodged in the process as may be specified; and
  - (c) give the child welfare reporter directions.
- (7) The direction referred to in paragraph (3)(b) must assign liability for payment of the child welfare reporter’s fees and outlays in the first instance, and require that liability to be borne—
- (a) in equal shares by—
    - (i) the pursuer,
    - (ii) any defender who has lodged a notice of intention to defend, and
    - (iii) any minuter who has been granted leave to enter the process; or
  - (b) by one or more parties to the proceedings on such other basis as may be justified on cause shown.
- (8) On the granting of an interlocutor appointing a child welfare reporter the sheriff clerk must—
- (a) give the child welfare reporter—
    - (i) a certified copy of the interlocutor, and
    - (ii) sufficient information to enable the child welfare reporter to contact the solicitor for each party to the proceedings, or any party not represented by a solicitor; and
  - (b) intimate the name and address of the child welfare reporter to any local authority to which intimation of the proceedings has been made.
- (9) A child welfare reporter appointed under this rule must—
- (a) where the appointment is under paragraph (1)(a)—
    - (i) seek the child’s views on the specified issues, and
    - (ii) prepare a report for the court reporting any such views;
  - (b) where the appointment is under paragraph (1)(b)—
    - (i) undertake the specified enquiries, and
    - (ii) prepare a report for the court having regard to the specified issues;
  - (c) send the report to the sheriff clerk by the date specified; and
  - (d) unless otherwise directed, send a copy of the report to each party to the proceedings by that date.
- (10) A child welfare reporter may—
- (a) apply to the sheriff clerk to be given further directions by the sheriff;
  - (b) bring to the attention of the sheriff clerk any impediment to the performance of any function arising under this rule.
- (11) Where a child welfare reporter acts as referred to in paragraph (10), the sheriff may, having heard parties, make any order or direction that could competently have been made under paragraph (6).

### **Appointment of local authority to report on a child**

**33.21A.**—(1) This rule applies where the sheriff appoints a local authority to investigate and report to the court on the circumstances of a child and on the proposed arrangements for the care and upbringing of the child.

(2) The following provisions of rule 33.21 apply as if the reference to the child welfare reporter was a reference to the local authority appointed by the sheriff—

- (a) paragraph (3)(a) and (b);
- (b) paragraph (6)(a) and (b);
- (c) paragraph (7); and
- (d) paragraph (8).

(3) On completion of the report referred to in paragraph (1), the local authority must—

- (a) send the report to the sheriff clerk; and
- (b) unless otherwise directed by the sheriff, send a copy of the report to each party to the proceedings.”.

(3) In Appendix 1—

- (a) omit forms F42 and F43 (forms of certificate under Article 32 of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1347/2000 of 29th May 2000)(3);
- (b) after Form F41 (form of intimation to parties of a Child Welfare Hearing)(4), insert the form set out in Schedule 2 to this Act of Sederunt.

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(3) Forms F42 and F43 were inserted by [S.S.I. 2001/144](#) for use in conjunction with rule 33.27A. The forms were rendered otiose when that rule was replaced by a rule of the same number by [S.S.I. 2006/207](#).

(4) Form F41 was substituted by [S.S.I. 2000/239](#).