

LAWS OF THE GILBERT ISLANDS
REVISED EDITION 1977

CHAPTER 21

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

Section

1. Short title
2. Interpretation
3. Custody orders
4. Liability to maintain children
5. Jurisdiction of courts
6. Regulations

An Ordinance to provide for the custody of children and matters connected therewith 16 of 1973
13 of 1974

Commencement: 15th April 1974 L.N. 13/74

1. This Ordinance may be cited as the Custody of Children Ordinance. Short title

2. In this Ordinance— Interpretation
 "child" means any person under the age of 18 years;
 "custody order" means an order made under section 3 (1).

3. (1) A court may on application by or on behalf of any person make such order regarding— Custody orders

- (a) the custody of any child; and
- (b) the right of access to the child of his mother or father, as the court thinks fit having regard to the welfare of the child and to the conduct and wishes of the mother and father.

(2) Before making a custody order the court shall make a full enquiry into all the circumstances and shall call for any evidence or report it may in the interests of justice consider necessary.

(3) In exercising jurisdiction under this section the court shall regard the welfare of the child as the first and paramount consideration and shall not take into consideration whether from any other point of view the claim of the father is superior to that of the mother or the claim of the mother is superior to that of the father.

(4) A court may at any time on application by or on behalf of any person make an order discharging or varying a custody order.

Cap. 61

(5) This section is subject to the Native Lands Ordinance.

Liability to
maintain
children

4. Any person having the custody of a child and any person with whom a child is living shall be liable to maintain that child whether or not any other person is also so liable.

Jurisdiction
of courts

5. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary but subject to any different provision which may be made by regulations made under this Ordinance every court shall for the purpose of proceedings under this Ordinance exercise jurisdiction throughout the Gilbert Islands.

Regulations

6. Without prejudice to any powers conferred by other laws to make rules of court or regulations governing magistrates' courts the Governor after consultation with the Chief Justice may make regulations for those courts in respect of proceedings under this Ordinance—

- (a) regulating the jurisdiction of the courts;
- (b) regulating the practice and procedure;
- (c) regulating the forms to be used and all matters connected therewith;
- (d) prescribing rules of evidence to be observed;
- (e) generally for the better carrying into effect of the provisions, objects and intentions of this Ordinance.