

PUBLIC CHAPTER NO. 845

SENATE BILL NO. 2813

By Haynes

Substituted for: House Bill No. 3391

By Moore, Stewart

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 17-2-123, relative to magistrates.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 17-2-123, is amended by deleting the section in its entirety and by substituting instead the following:

(a)(1) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, in any county having a metropolitan form of government and having a population of more than five hundred thousand (500,000), according to the 1990 federal census or any subsequent federal census, the circuit court judges of such county may appoint a full-time master to serve as a judicial officer in the absence of any such judges.

(2) A master appointed pursuant to subsection (1) shall be an attorney licensed to practice law by this state and in good standing with the board of professional responsibility.

(3) The compensation for a master appointed pursuant to this section shall be fixed by the presiding judge of the judicial district and shall be paid from any fund appropriated for such purpose by the county governing body.

(4) The master shall have all the powers specified in § 17-2-118 and the powers granted to masters by Tenn. R. Civ. P. 53.

(b)(1) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, in any county having a metropolitan form of government and a population of more than five hundred thousand (500,000), according to the 1990 federal census or any subsequent federal census, the circuit courts exercising domestic or probate jurisdiction may appoint one (1) or more suitable persons to act as masters at the pleasure of the judge. A master shall be a member of the bar in good standing and shall hold office at the pleasure of the judge. The compensation of a master shall be fixed by the judge with approval of the county legislative body or the pertinent governing body, and paid from public funds.

(2) Provided the respective circuit court has jurisdiction in the manner provided for the hearing of cases by the court, the judge or judges for whom the master serves may direct that the master hear in the first instance the following types of cases:

(A) Orders of protection (both hearings and reviews);

(B) Motions to amend or alter orders of protection;

(C) Child support petitions;

(D) Signing appearance orders for child support cases;

(E) Signing and hearing Show Cause orders for Temporary Support and Parenting Time;

(F) Signing attachment orders; and

(G) Temporary parenting plans.

(3) A master has the same authority as the judge to issue any and all process necessary in the types of cases the master is authorized by subdivision (2) to hear. The master in the conduct of authorized proceedings has the powers of a trial judge.

(4) Upon the conclusion of the hearing in each case, the master shall transmit to the judge all papers relating to the case, together with the master's findings and recommendations in writing.

(5) Any party may, within five (5) days thereafter, excluding nonjudicial days, file a request with the court for hearing by the appropriate circuit court judge. The judge may, on the judge's own motion, order a rehearing of any matter heard before a master, and shall allow a hearing if a request for such hearing is filed as herein prescribed. Unless the judge orders otherwise, the order of the master shall be the decree of the court pending a rehearing.

(6) Any appeal from the master to the judge from a final order shall be tried de novo by the judge.

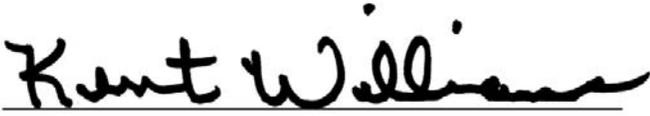
(7) In case no hearing of a final order before the judge is requested, or when the right to a hearing is waived, the findings and recommendations of the master become the decree of the court when confirmed by an order of the judge. The final order of the court is, in any event, proof of such confirmation, and also of the fact that the matter was duly referred to the master.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

PASSED: April 15, 2010



RON RAMSEY
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE



KENT WILLIAMS, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROVED this 30th day of April 2010



PHIL BREDESEN, GOVERNOR