

**I assent.**

**(Signed)** .....

**Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, CON, GSSRS**

Governor of Rivers State of Nigeria

Dated the .....day of .....2022.

**GOVERNMENT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA**



A Law to repeal and re-enact the Rivers State Child's Rights Law, No. 10 of 2009, to provide for the rights and responsibilities of the child in Rivers State of Nigeria and a system of Child Justice Administration and other related matters.

*General Statement of purpose*

**ENACTED** by the Rivers State House of Assembly of Nigeria as follows:

*Enactment*

**PART I**  
**BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD TO BE OF PRIMARY**  
**CONSIDERATION IN ALL ACTIONS**

- 1.** In every action concerning the child, whether undertaken by an individual, public or private body, institution or service, Court of Law, or administrative or legislative authority, the best interest of the child shall be the primary consideration.
- 2. (1)** The child shall be given such protection and care as is necessary for the well being of the child, taking into account the rights and duties of the child's parents, legal guardians, or other individuals, institutions, services, agencies, organizations or bodies legally responsible for the child.

**Best interest of the child to be of primary consideration in all actions.**

**The child to be given protection and care necessary for his/her well-being**

- (2) Every child, institution, service, agency, organization and body responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform to the standards established by the appropriate authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, welfare, number and suitability of their staff and competent supervision.

## PART II

### RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHILD

#### RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

3. (1) The provisions in Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 or any successive constitutional provisions relating to Fundamental Rights, shall apply as if those provisions are expressly stated in this Law. Application of Chapter IV of CFRN 1999 etc.
- (2) In addition to the rights guaranteed under Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 or under any successive constitutional provisions, every child has the rights set out in this Part of this Law.
4. Every child has the right to survival and development Right to survival and development
5. (1) Every child has the right to a name and, accordingly shall be given a name on his or her birth or on any other date as is dictated by the culture of the child's parents or guardians. Right to a name and identity
- (2) The birth of every child shall be registered in accordance with the provisions of the Birth, Death, etc. (Compulsory Registration) Act, 1992.
6. Every child has the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly in conformity with the law and in accordance with the necessary guidance and directions of the child's parents or guardians. Freedom of Association and Peaceful assembly
7. (1) Every child has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- (2) Parents and where applicable, legal guardians shall provide guidance and direction in the exercise of these rights having regard to the evolving capacities and best interest of the child.
- (3) The duty of parent and where applicable, legal guardians, to provide guidance and direction in the enjoyment of the right in subsection (1) of this section by their child or ward shall be respected by all persons, bodies, institutions and authorities.
- (4) Whenever the fostering, custody, guardianship or adoption of a child is in issue, the right of the child to be brought up in and to practice his or her religion shall be a paramount consideration.

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| <p><b>8.</b> (1) Every child is entitled to his or her privacy, family life, home, correspondence, telephone conversation and telegraphic communications, except as provided in subsection (3).</p> <p>(2) No child shall be subjected to any interference with the right in subsection (1), except as provided in subsection (3).</p> <p>(3) Nothing in subsections (1) and (2) shall affect the rights of parents and, where applicable, legal guardians, to exercise reasonable supervision and control over the conduct of their children and wards.</p>   | <p><b>Right to private and family life</b></p>                     |
| <p><b>9.</b> (1) Every child is entitled to freedom of movement subject to parental control which is not harmful to the child.</p> <p>(2) Nothing in subsection (1) shall affect the right of a parent, and where applicable, a legal guardian or other appropriate authority to exercise control over the movement of the child in the interest of the education, safety and welfare of the child.</p>  | <p><b>Right to freedom of movement</b></p>                         |
| <p><b>10.</b> (1) A child shall not be subjected to any form of discrimination by reason of the child belonging to a particular community or ethnic group or by reason of the child's place of origin, gender, disability, religion, or political opinion.</p> <p>(2) No child shall be subjected to any disability or deprivation merely by reason of the circumstances of the child's birth.</p>   | <p><b>Right to freedom from discrimination</b></p>                 |
| <p><b>11.</b> Every child is entitled to respect for the dignity of his or her person, and accordingly, no child shall be:</p> <p>(a) subjected to physical, mental or emotional injury, abuse, neglect or maltreatment, including sexual abuse;</p> <p>(b) subjected to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;</p> <p>(c) subjected to attacks upon the child's honor or reputation; or</p> <p>(d) held in slavery or servitude, while in the care of a parent, legal guardian or school authority or any other person or authority having the care of the child.</p>                   | <p><b>Right to dignity of the child</b></p>                        |
| <p><b>12.</b> (1) Every child is entitled to rest and leisure and to engage in play, sports and recreational activities appropriate to the child's age.</p> <p>(2) Every child is entitled to participate fully in the cultural and artistic activities of the Nigerian, African and world communities.</p> <p>(3) Every Government, person, institution, service, agency, organization and body, responsible for the care and welfare of a child shall, at all times, ensure adequate opportunities for the child in the enjoyment of the rights provided for the child in subsections (1) and (2).</p> | <p><b>Right to leisure, recreation and cultural activities</b></p> |
|  | <p><b>Right to health and health services</b></p>                  |

- 13.** (1) Every child is entitled to enjoy the best attainable state of physical, mental, spiritual health and has the right to a clean healthy and sustainable environment.
- (2) The Government, parent, guardian, institution, service, agency, organization or body responsible for the care of a child shall endeavour to provide for the child the best attainable state of health.
- (3) The State shall:
- (a) endeavour to reduce infant and child mortality rate;
  - (b) ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care services to all children with emphasis on the development of primary health care.
  - (c) ensure the provision of adequate nutrition and safe drinking water.
  - (d) ensure the provision of good hygiene and environmental sanitation
  - (e) combat disease and malnutrition within the framework of primary health care through the application of appropriate technology;
  - (f) ensure appropriate health care for expectant and nursing mothers; and
  - (g) support, through technical and financial means, the mobilization of national and local community resources in the development of primary health care for children.
- (4) Every parent, guardian or person having the care and custody of a child under the age of 2 years shall ensure that the child is provided with full immunization.
- (5) Every parent, guardian or person having the care of a child who fails in the duty imposed on him under subsection (4) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction for:
- (a) a first offence; to a fine not exceeding ₦100,000; and
  - (b) a second or any subsequent offence, whether in respect of that same child or any other child, to a fine of ₦500,000 and (or) imprisonment for a term not exceeding 1 month.
- (6) The Court may, in substitution for or addition to any penalty stipulated under subsection (5), make an order compelling the parent or guardian of a child to get the child immunized within a specified period failing which the appropriate penalty in subsection (5) automatically applies.
- 14.** (1) Every child has the right to parental care and protection and accordingly, no child shall be separated from the parents against his or her wish except:
- (a) for the purpose of the child's education and welfare; or
  - (b) in the exercise of a judicial determination in accordance with the provisions of this Law, in the best interest of the child.
- (2) Every child has the right to maintenance by the parents or guardians in accordance with the extent of their means, and the child has the right, in appropriate circumstances, to enforce this right in the Family Court.

**Right to  
parental care,  
protection and  
maintenance**

- 15. (1)** Every child has the right to free, compulsory and universal basic education, that is, education up to Senior Secondary School level and it shall be the duty of the Government to provide such education. **Right of the child to free, compulsory and universal primary education etc.**
- (2) Every parent or guardian shall ensure that his child or ward attends and completes:
- (a) Primary School education;
  - (b) Junior Secondary School; and
  - (b) Senior Secondary School.
- (3) Every parent, guardian or person who has the care and custody of a child who has completed basic education, shall endeavor to send the child to a Senior Secondary School, except as provided for in subsection (4).
- (4) Where a child to whom subsection (3) applies is not sent to a Senior Secondary School, the child shall be encouraged to learn an appropriate trade and the employer of the child shall provide the necessities for learning the trade.
- (5) A female child who becomes pregnant before completing her education shall be given the opportunity after the pregnancy and/or delivery of the child, to continue with her education on the basis of her individual ability and shall not be discriminated against by reason thereof.
- (6) Where a parent, guardian or person who has care and custody of a child, fails in the duty imposed on him under subsection (2), he commits an offence and is liable:
- (a) on first conviction to be reprimanded and ordered to undertake community service;
  - (b) on second conviction to a fine of ₦100,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 1 month, or to both such fine and imprisonment; and
  - (c) on any subsequent conviction to a fine not exceeding ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 1 year or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- (7) The provisions of this section shall not apply to children with mental disabilities.
- 16. (1)** Every child who is in need of special protection measures has the right to such measure of protection as is appropriate to the child's physical, social, economic, emotional and mental needs and under conditions which ensure the child's dignity, promote the child's self-reliance and active participation in the affairs of the community. **Right of the child in need of special protection measures**
- (2) Every person, authority, body or institution that has the care or the responsibility for ensuring the care of a child in need of special protection measures shall endeavor, within the available resources, to provide the child with such assistance and facilities necessary for the child's education, training, preparation for employment, rehabilitation, and recreational opportunities in a manner conducive

to the child achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development and the child's cultural and moral development.

- 17.** (1) A child may bring an action for damages against a person for harm or injury caused to the child willfully, recklessly, negligently or through neglect before, during or after the birth of that child. **Right of the unborn child to protection against harm, etc.**
- (2) Where the father of an unborn child dies intestate, the unborn child is entitled, if the child was conceived during the lifetime of the father, to be considered in the distribution of the estate of the deceased father.
- (3) Where the mother of an unborn child dies intestate before the child is delivered, the unborn child is entitled, if he or she survives the mother, to be considered in the distribution of the estate of the deceased mother.
- 18.** (1) No child shall enter into a contract, except as provided in this section. **Contractual rights of the child**
- (2) Any contract, except a contract for necessities, entered into by a child for repayment of money lent or for payment of goods supplied to the child, shall be void.
- (3) Accordingly:
- (a) no action shall be brought against a child by a person after the child has attained the age of maturity, to pay a debt contracted before maturity or ratified on maturity or any promise of contract made by the child before maturity, whether or not there was a new consideration for the promises or ratification after the child attained maturity;
- (b) if a child who has entered into a contract for a loan which is void agrees after maturity to pay the loan, the agreement in whatever form it may be, shall be void so far as it relates to money which is payable in respect of the loan.
- 19.** (1) Every child has responsibilities towards his family and society, the State and other legally recognized communities, nationally and internationally. **Responsibilities of the child and parent(s)**
- (2) A child shall, subject to his or her age and ability and any other limitations contained in this Law and any other law, to:
- (a) work towards the cohesion of the family and community;
- (b) respect his or her parents, superiors and elders at all times and assist them in case of need;
- (c) serve the State by placing his or her physical and intellectual abilities at her service;
- (d) contribute to the moral well-being of the society;
- (e) preserve and strengthen social and national solidarity;
- (f) preserve and strengthen the independence and integrity of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- (g) respect the ideals of democracy, freedom, equality, humaneness, honesty and justice for all persons;

- (h) relate with other members of the society, with different cultural values in the spirit of tolerance, dialogue and consultation;
  - (i) contribute to the best of his or her abilities, at all times and at all levels, to the promotion and achievement of Nigerian, African and world unity; and
  - (j) contribute to the best of his or her abilities, at all times and at all levels, to the solidarity of the African people and the human race.
- 20.** Every parent, guardian, institution, person or authority responsible for the care, maintenance, upbringing, education, training, socialization, employment and rehabilitation of a child has the duty to provide the necessary guidance, discipline, education and training for the child in his/her or its care such as will equip the child to secure his/her assimilation, appreciation and observance of the responsibilities set out in this part of the Law. **Parent(s), etc. to provide guidance with respect to child's responsibilities**

### **PART III**

#### **PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

- 21.** No person under the age of 18 years is capable of contracting a valid marriage and accordingly, a marriage so contracted is null and void and of no effect whatsoever. **Prohibition of child marriage**
- 22.** (1) No parent, guardian or any other person shall betroth a child to any person. **Prohibition of child betrothal**
- (2) A betrothal in contravention of subsection (1) is null and void.
- 23.** A person: **Punishment for child marriage and betrothal**
- (a) who marries a child; or
  - (b) to whom a child is betrothed; or
  - (c) who gives out a child in marriage or promotes the marriage of a child; or
  - (d) who betroths a child;
- commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦500,000; or imprisonment for a term of 5 years or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- 24.** (1) No person shall tattoo or make a skin mark or cause any tattoo or skin mark to be made on a child. **Tattoos and skin marks**
- (2) A person who tattoos or makes a skin mark on a child commits an offence under this Law and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding ₦100,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- 25.** (1) No person shall cause a female child to be subjected to female genital mutilation. **Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation**
- (2) A person who directly or indirectly causes a female child to be subjected to female genital mutilation commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term of 4 years or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- 26.** (1) No person shall:

- (a) expose or involve a child in the use of narcotic drugs and psycho tropic substances; or
  - (b) expose or involve a child in the production or trafficking of narcotic drugs and psycho tropic substance.
- (2) A person who contravenes the provisions of subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for life.

Exposure to use production and trafficking of narcotics, etc.

## USE OF CHILDREN IN OTHER CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

- 27.** (1) No person shall employ, use or involve a child in any activity involving or leading to the commission of any other offence not already specified in this Part of the Law.
- (2) A person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of 14 years.
- 28.** (1) No person shall remove or take a child out of the custody or protection of the child's father or mother, guardian or any other person having lawful care or charge of the child against the will of the father, mother, guardian or other person.
- (2) A person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on conviction:
- (a) where the child is unlawfully removed or taken out of the State:
    - (i) with intention to return the child to the State, to imprisonment for a term of 15 years, or
    - (ii) with no intention to return the child to the State, to imprisonment for a term of 20 years.
  - (b) where the child is unlawfully removed or taken out of the State in which the father, mother, guardian or such other person who has lawful care of the child is ordinarily resident, to imprisonment for a term of 10 years, or
  - (c) in any other case, to imprisonment for a term of 7 years.

Use of children in other criminal activities

Abduction, removal and transfer from lawful custody

## CHILD LABOUR

- 29.** (1) Subject to this Law, no child shall be:
- (a) subjected to any forced or exploitative labour; or
  - (b) employed to work in any capacity except where the child is employed by a member of the family on light work of an agricultural, horticultural or domestic character; or
  - (c) required in any case, to lift, carry or remove anything so heavy as to be likely to adversely affect the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development; or
  - (d) employed as a domestic help outside the child's own home or family.
- (2) No child shall be employed or work in an industrial undertaking and nothing in this subsection shall apply to work done by children in technical schools or

Prohibition of exploitative labour

similar approved institutions if the work is supervised by the appropriate authority.

- (3) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) or (2) commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term of 5 years or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- (4) Where an offence under this section is committed by a body corporate, any person who at the time of the commission of the offence was a Proprietor, Director, General Manager or other similar officer, servant or agent of the body corporate shall be deemed to have jointly and severally committed the offence and may be liable on conviction to a fine of ₦1,000,000.
30. The provisions relating to young persons in sections 59, 60, 61, 62, 63 and 64 of the Labour Act shall apply to children under this Law.

**Application of  
Labour Act,  
Cap L1 LFN  
2004**

### **BUYING, SELLING ETC. FOR THE PURPOSE OF BEGGING AND PROSTITUTION, ETC.**

31. (1) No person shall buy, sell, hire, let on hire, dispose of or obtain possession of or otherwise deal in a child.
- (2) A child shall not be used:
- (a) for the purpose of begging for alms, guiding beggars, prostitution, domestic or sexual labour or for any unlawful or immoral purpose; or
  - (b) as a slave or for practices similar to slavery such as sale or trafficking of the child, debt bondage or serfdom and forced or compulsory labour;
  - (c) for hawking of goods or services on main city streets, brothels or highways;
  - (d) for any purpose that deprives the child of the opportunity to attend and remain in school as provided for under the Compulsory, Free Universal Basic Education Law;
  - (e) procured or offered for prostitution or for the production of pornography or for any pornographic performance; and
  - (f) procured or offered for any activity in the production or trafficking of illegal drugs and any other activity relating to illicit drugs as specified in the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency Act.
- (3) A person who contravenes subsections (1) and (2) commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of 10 years.

**Prohibition of  
buying, selling,  
hiring or  
otherwise  
dealing in  
children for the  
purpose of  
hawking,  
begging for  
alms,  
prostitution, etc.**

### **UNLAWFUL SEXUAL INTERCOURSE, ETC.**

32. (1) No person shall have sexual intercourse with a child.
- (2) A person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence of defilement and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for life.

**Unlawful sexual  
intercourse with  
a child, etc.**

- (3) Where a person is charged with an offence under this section, it is immaterial that:
- (a) the offender believed the person to be of or above the age of 18 years; or
  - (b) the sexual intercourse was with the consent of the child.

### **OTHER FORMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION**

- 33.** (1) A person who sexually abuses or sexually exploits a child in any manner not already mentioned under this Part of this Law commits an offence. **Forms of sexual abuse and exploitation**
- (2) A person who commits an offence under subsection (1) is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of 14 years.

### **OTHER FORMS OF EXPLOITATION**

- 34.** (1) A person who exploits a child in any other form or way not already mentioned in this Part of this Law which is prejudicial to the welfare of the child commits an offence. **Other forms of exploitation**
- (2) A person who commits an offence under subsection (1) is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment to a term of 5 years, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

### **RECRUITMENT INTO THE ARMED FORCES**

- 35.** (1) No child shall be recruited into any of the branches of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. **Prohibition of recruitment of children into the Armed Forces**
- (2) The State or any other relevant agency or body shall ensure that no child is directly involved in any military operation or hostilities.

### **HARMFUL PUBLICATION**

- 36.** (1) No person shall import any harmful publication under this Law **Prohibition of importation of harmful publication**
- (2) A person who imports any harmful publication commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term of 3 years or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- 37.** (1) A person who:
- (a) prints, publishes, sells or lets on hire any harmful publication; or
  - (b) has in his possession for the purpose of selling or letting or hiring any harmful publication, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦1,000,000 or imprisonment for a term of 5 years or to both such fine and imprisonment. **Penalty for harmful Publication**
- (2) Where a person is charged with an offence under this section, it is immaterial that the person had not examined the contents of the publication and had no reasonable cause to suspect that the publication was one to which this Law applies. **Power to issue warrant of arrest, summons, search etc. for harmful publication**

**38.** (1) Where an information is brought before a Court that a person has committed or is suspected of committing an offence under sections 36 or 37 of this Law with respect to any harmful publication, the Court may issue a warrant for the arrest of that person.

(2) The Court may, if satisfied by the information substantiated on oath, that there is reasonable ground for suspecting that a person charged with or suspected of committing an offence has in his possession or under his control:

(a) copies of any harmful publication; or

(b) any data storage medium prepared for the purpose of printing copies of harmful publication or any photographic film prepared for that purpose,

grant a search warrant authorizing a Police Officer named in the warrant to enter, if necessary by force, any premises specified in the warrant and any vehicle, shop or stall used by the ~~said~~ person for the purpose of any trade or business and to search the premises, vehicle, shop or stall.

(3) The Police Officer on searching the premises may seize any of the following items:

(a) any copy of the harmful publication and any other copies which the Police Officer has reasonable cause to believe to be harmful publication; and

(b) any device or photographic film which the Police Officer has reasonable cause to believe to have been prepared for the purpose of printing copies of any harmful publication.

**39.** (1) The Court by or before which a person is convicted of an offence under section 36 or 37 of this Law may order for any copy of the harmful publication and any device or photographic film prepared for the purpose of printing the harmful publication found in the possession of the convicted person under his control, to be forfeited to the State Government.

**Power of Court  
to order  
forfeiture, etc.**

(2) The power to order forfeiture under subsection (1) shall not extend to a case where the accused person has successfully raised a defence against the charge.

(3) No order made under subsection (1) by a Magistrates' Court or a High Court in case of an appeal from a Magistrates' Court to the High Court, shall take effect:

(a) until the expiration of the ordinary time within which an appeal may be lodged, whether by giving notice of appeal or applying for a case to be stated for the opinion of the High Court; or

(b) where an appeal is duly lodged, until the appeal is finally decided or abandoned

(4) Before a forfeiture order is made under this section, the Court shall hear the author, copyright owner or main publisher of the harmful publication if he so wishes.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

**40.** The jurisdiction of a Magistrate to impose a penalty under this Law is limited to his powers under the Rivers State Magistrates Courts Law, No 2 of 2004 and any subsequent amendment to that Law. **Jurisdictional limitations of Magistrates,**

**41.** Any other Law securing the protection of the child, whether born or unborn, shall continue to apply and is hereby adopted for the protection of the child by this Law, **Application of the provisions of other Laws**

notwithstanding that the said provision has not otherwise been specifically provided for by this Law.

#### **PART IV PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

- 42.** (1) The State Government or an appropriate authority may apply to the Court for a Child Assessment Order with respect to a child and the Court may make the Order, if it is satisfied that: **Child Assessment Orders**
- (a) the applicant has reasonable cause to suspect that the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm;
  - (b) an assessment of the state of the health or development of the child or of the way in which the child has been treated, is required to enable the applicant to determine whether or not the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm; and
  - (c) it is unlikely that such assessment will be made, or be satisfactory, in the absence of an Order under this section.
- (2) A Court may treat an application under this section as an application for an Emergency Protection Order.
- (3) No Court shall make a Child Assessment Order if it is satisfied that:
- (a) there are grounds for making an Emergency Protection Order with respect to the child; and
  - (b) it ought to make an Emergency Protection Order rather than a Child Assessment Order.
- (4) A Child Assessment Order shall:
- (a) specify the date in which the assessment is to begin; and
  - (b) have effect for such period, not exceeding 9 days beginning with that date, as may be specified in the Order
- (5) Where a Child Assessment Order is in force with respect to a child, it shall be the duty of any person who is in a position to produce the child to:
- (a) produce the child to the person named in the Order; and
  - (b) comply with such directions relating to the assessment of the child as the Court thinks fit to specify in the Order.

- (6) A Child Assessment Order shall contain an authority to the person carrying out the assessment or any part of the assessment, to do so in accordance with the terms of the Order.
  - (7) Notwithstanding subsection (6), if the child has sufficient understanding to make an informed decision, the child may refuse to submit to medical or psychiatric examination or any other assessment.
  - (8) A child may only be kept away from home:
    - (a) in accordance with the directions specified in the Child Assessment Order;
    - (b) if it is necessary for the purpose of the assessment; and
    - (c) for such period or periods as may be specified in the Assessment Order.
  - (9) Where a child is to be kept away from home, the Order shall contain such direction as the Court thinks fit with regards to the contact that the child must be allowed to have with other persons while away from home.
  - (10) A person making an application for a child assessment order shall, before the hearing of the application, take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that notice of the application is given to:
    - (a) the parents of the child;
    - (b) a person who though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child;
    - (c) any other person having the care of the child;
    - (d) a person in whose favour a contract is in force with respect to the child;
    - (e) a person who is allowed to have contact with the child by virtue of an Order made under section 56 of this Law; or
    - (f) the child concerned.
  - (11) Rules of Court may make provision as to circumstances in which:
    - (a) any of the persons mentioned in subsection (10) of this section; or
    - (b) such other persons as may be specified in the Rules, may apply to the Court for a Child Assessment Order to be varied or discharged.
- 43. (1)** The State Government or an appropriate authority may apply to the Court for an Emergency Protection Order with respect to a child and the Court may make the Order if it is satisfied:
- (a) that there is reasonable cause to believe that the child is likely to suffer significant harm if:
    - (i) the child is not removed to an Emergency Protection Centre or any other approved, suitable accommodation provided by or on behalf of the applicant, or
    - (ii) the child does not remain in the place in which he or she is then being accommodated; and
  - (b) in the case of an application made by the State Government or any appropriate authority, that:

- (i) the applicant has reasonable cause to suspect that the child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm;
  - (ii) enquiries with respect to the welfare of the child are being frustrated by access to the child being unreasonably refused to a person authorized to seek access; and
  - (iii) the applicant has reasonable cause to believe that access to the child is required as a matter of urgency.
- (2) A person:
  - (a) seeking access to a child in connection with enquiries of any kind mentioned in subsection (1); and
  - (b) purporting to be a person authorised to do so, shall, on being asked to do so, produce any duly authenticated document as evidence that he is that person.
- (3) While an Emergency Protection Order is in force, it:
  - (a) gives the applicant parental responsibility for the child;
  - (b) operates as a direction to a person who is in a position to do so, to comply with any request to produce the child to the applicant;
  - (c) authorises the removal of the child at any time, to accommodation provided by or on behalf of the applicant and the child being kept there; or
  - (d) prevents the child from being removed from any hospital, or other place, in which he or she was being accommodated, immediately before the making of the Order.
- (4) Where an Emergency Protection Order is in force, the applicant shall:
  - (a) only exercise the power given by virtue of subsection (3)(c) or (d) in order to safeguard the welfare of the child;
  - (b) take only such action, in meeting his parental responsibility for the child, as is reasonably required to safeguard or promote the welfare of the child, having regard, in particular, to the duration of the Order; and
  - (c) comply with the requirement of any regulations made by the Commissioner for the purposes of this subsection.
- (5) Where the Court makes an Emergency Protection Order, it may give such directions as it considers appropriate with respect to:
  - (a) the contact which is, or is not, to be allowed between the child and any named person(s); or
  - (b) medical or psychiatric examination or any other assessment of the child.
- (6) Where a direction is given under subsection (5)(b), the child may, if he or she has sufficient understanding to make an informed decision, refuse to submit to the examination or other assessment.
- (7) A direction given under subsection (5) (a) may impose such conditions as the Court considers appropriate and a direction under subsection (5)(b) may:
  - (a) prohibit the examination or assessment of the child; or

- (b) allow the examination or assessment of the child only when the Court so directs;
- (8) A direction under subsection (5) may be:
  - (a) given when an Emergency Protection Order is made or at any time while it is in force; and
  - (b) varied at any time of the application of any class of persons prescribed by Rules of Court for the purposes of this subsection.
- (9) Where an Emergency Protection Order is in force in respect of a child and the applicant has exercised the power conferred by:
  - (a) subsection (3)(c), but it appears to the applicant that it is safe for the child to be so returned; or
  - (b) subsection (3)(d), but it appears to the applicant that it is safe for the child to be allowed to be removed from the place in question, the applicant shall return the child or allow the child to be so removed, as the case may be.
- (10) Where the applicant is required by subsection (9) to return the child, the applicant shall:
  - (a) return the child to the care of the person from whose care the child was removed; or
  - (b) if it is not reasonably practicable, return the child to the care of:
    - (i) a parent of the child; or
    - (ii) a person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility of the child, or
    - (iii) such other person as the applicant, with the agreement of the Court, considers appropriate.
- (11) Where the applicant has returned a child or allowed a child to be removed as required by subsection (9), the applicant may again, exercise the powers conferred by subsection (3)(c) and (d) at any time while the Emergency Protection Order remains in force, if it appears to the applicant that a change in the circumstances of the case makes it necessary for him to do so.
- (12) Where an Emergency Protection Order is in force, the applicant shall, subject to any direction given under subsection (5), allow the child reasonable contact with:
  - (a) the parent of the child;
  - (b) a person who, though not a parent of the child has parental responsibility of the child;
  - (c) a person with whom the child was living immediately before the making of the Order;
  - (d) a person in whose favour a Contact Order is in force with respect to the child;
  - (e) a person who is allowed to have contact with the child by virtue of an Order made under section 56; and
  - (f) a person acting on behalf of any of the persons specified in paragraphs (a) to (e).

- (13) Whenever it is reasonably practicable to do so, an Emergency Protection Order shall name the child and where it does not name the child, it shall describe the child as clearly as possible.
  - (14) A person who willfully obstructs a person exercising the power under subsection (3) (c) and (d) to remove or prevent the removal of the child, commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term of 3 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- 44.(1)** An Emergency Protection Order shall have effect for such a period, not exceeding 9 days as may be specified in the Order.
- (2) Where the Court making an Emergency Protection Order would, but for this subsection, specify a period of 9 days as the period for which the Order is to have effect, but the last of those 9 days is a public holiday or a Sunday, the Court may specify a period which ends at noon on the first later day which is not a public holiday or a Sunday.
  - (3) Where an Emergency Protection Order is made on application under section 43, the period of 9 days mentioned in subsection (2) shall begin with the first day on which the child was taken into police protection under section 45.
  - (4) A person who:
    - (a) has parental responsibility for a child as a result of an Emergency Protection Order; and
    - (b) is entitled to apply for a Care Order with respect to a child, may apply to the Court for the extension of a period during which the Emergency Protection Order is to have effect.
  - (5) On an application under subsection (4), the Court may extend the period during which the Order is to have effect, by such period, not exceeding 7 days, if it has reasonable cause to believe that the child concerned is likely to suffer significant harm if the Order is not extended.
  - (6) An Emergency Protection Order may only be extended once.
  - (7) Notwithstanding any enactment or rule of law which would otherwise prevent it from doing so, a Court hearing an application for, or with respect to an Emergency Protection Order may take account of:
    - (a) any statement contained in any report made to the Court in the course of, or in connection with, hearing; or
    - (b) any evidence given during the hearing, which is, in the opinion of the Court, relevant to the application.
  - (8) Any of the following persons may apply to the Court for an Emergency Protection Order to be discharged:
    - (a) the child; or
    - (b) a parent of a child; or
    - (c) a person who has parental responsibility for the child; or

**Duration of  
Emergency  
Protection  
Order, etc.**

- (d) a person with whom the child was living immediately before making of the Order.
  - (9) No application for the discharge of an Emergency Protection Order shall be heard by the Court before the expiry of the period of 72 hours beginning with the making of the Order.
  - (10) No appeal may be made against the making of, or refusal to make, an Emergency Protection Order or against any directions given by the Court in connection with the Emergency Protection Order.
  - (11) Subsection (8) does not apply:
    - (a) where the person who would otherwise be entitled to apply for the discharge of the Emergency Protection Order:
      - (i) was given notice, in accordance with the Rules of Court, of the hearing at which the Order was made, or
      - (ii) was present at the hearing, or
    - (b) to any Emergency Protection Order, the effective period of which has been extended under subsection (5).
  - (12) A Court making an Emergency Protection Order may direct that the applicant, in exercising any power which he has by virtue of the Order, may be accompanied by a registered Medical Practitioner, registered Nurse or registered health visitor, if he/she so chooses.
- 45. (1)** Where the Specialised Children Police in the State has reasonable cause to believe that a child is otherwise likely to suffer significant harm, a Specialised Children Police Officer may take the child into police protection by:
- (a) removing the child to an Emergency Protection Centre or any other approved suitable accommodation and keeping the child there; or
  - (b) taking such step as are reasonable to prevent the child from being removed from any hospital, or other place, in which the child is then being accommodated.
- (2) As soon as is reasonably practicable after taking a child into police protection, the Police Officer concerned shall:
- (a) inform the Local Government within whose area the child was taken, of the steps that have been and are to be taken with respect to the child under this section and the reason for taking those steps;
  - (b) give details of the case to the appropriate authority within whose area the child is ordinarily resident, that is, the appropriate authority of the place in which the child is being accommodated;
  - (c) inform the child, if he or she appears capable of understanding:
    - (i) the steps that has been taken with respect to him/her under this section and of the reason for taking those steps; and
    - (ii) further steps that will be taken with respect to him/her under this section;

**Children taken  
into police  
protection in  
case of  
emergency**

- (d) take such steps as are reasonably practicable to discover the wishes and feelings of the child;
  - (e) ensure that the case is enquired into by an Officer designated for the purpose of this section by the Officer in charge of the Specialized Children Police in the Local Government Area concerned; and
  - (f) where the child was taken into protection by being removed to an accommodation which is not provided: –
    - (i) by or on behalf of the State Government,
    - (ii) as a refuge, in compliance with the requirements of section 49 of this Law, secure that he/she is moved to an Emergency Protection Centre or any other approved suitable accommodation which is so provided.
- (3) As soon as is reasonably practicable after taking a child into police protection, the Police Officer concerned shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to inform:
- (a) the parents of the child
  - (b) a person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child; and
  - (c) any other person with whom the child was living immediately before being taken into police protection, the reasons for taking those steps and the further steps that may be taken with respect to the child under this section.
- (4) A Police Officer designated under subsection (3)(c) shall, on completing an enquiry under that subsection, release the child from police protection unless he considers that there is still reasonable cause for believing that the child is likely to suffer significant harm if released.
- (5) No child may be kept in police protection for more than 3 days.
- (6) While a child is being kept in police protection, the designated Officer may apply on behalf of the appropriate authority for an Emergency Protection Order to be made under section 43 of this Law with respect to the child.
- (7) An application may be made under subsection (6) of this section whether or not the appropriate authority knows of it or agrees to its being made.
- (8) While a child is being kept in police protection, the Police Officer concerned or the designated Officer shall not have parental responsibility for the child, but the designated Officer shall do what is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the welfare of the child, having regard in particular to the length of the period during which the child will be so protected.
- (9) Where a child has been taken into police protection, the designated Officer shall allow:
- (a) the parents of the child

- (b) a person who, though not a parent of the child has parental responsibility for the child;
- (c) a person with whom the child was living immediately before he/she was taken into police protection;
- (d) a person in whose favour a Contact Order is in force with respect to the child;
- (e) a person who is allowed to have contact with the child by virtue of an Order made under section 56 of this Law; or
- (f) a person acting on behalf of the persons specified in paragraphs (a) to (e) of this subsection,

to have such contact, if any, with the child as, in the opinion of the designated Officer, in reasonable and in the best interest of the child.

- (10) Where a child who has been taken into police protection is in an accommodation provided by or on behalf of, the appropriate authority, subsection (9) of this section shall have effect as if references to designated Officer were references to the appropriate authority.

**46. (1) Where the State Government:**

- (a) is informed that a child who lives, or is found in the State:
  - (i) is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order, or
  - (ii) has been taken into police protection; or
- (b) has reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in the State is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm,

**Duty of the  
Rivers State  
Government to  
investigate**

the Government shall make, or cause to be made such enquiries as it considers necessary to enable it to decide whether it should take any action to safeguard or promote the welfare of the child.

- (2) Where the State Government has obtained an Emergency Protection Order with respect to a child, it shall make, or cause to be made, such enquiries as it considers necessary to enable it to decide what action it should take to safeguard or promote the welfare of the child.
- (3) The enquiries made under subsection (2) of this section shall, in particular, be directed towards establishing:
  - (a) whether the State Government should make an application to the Court, or exercise any of its other powers under this Law with respect to the child;
  - (b) whether, in the case of a child:
    - (i) with respect to whom an Emergency Protection Order has been made, and
    - (ii) who is not in accommodation provided by or on behalf of the appropriate authority, it would be in the best interest of the child, while an Emergency Protection Order remains in force for the child to be in an accommodation so provided; and

- (c) whether in the case of a child who has been taken into police protection, it would be in the best interest of the child for the appropriate authority to ask for an application to be made under section 44(6) of this Law.
- (4) Where enquiries are being made under subsection (1) of this section with respect to a child, the State Government shall, with a view to enabling it to determine what action, if any, to take with respect of the child, take such steps as are responsibly practicable to:
  - (a) obtain access to the child; or
  - (b) ensure that access to the child is obtained, on its behalf by a person authorized by it for the purpose, unless the State Government is satisfied that it already has sufficient information with respect to the child.
- (5) Where as a result of enquiries under this section, it appears to the State Government that there are matters connected with the education of the child which should be investigated, it shall consult the relevant education authority.
- (6) Where, in the course of enquiries under this section, an Officer of the State Government or a person authorized by the State Government to act on its behalf in connection with those enquiries is:
  - (a) refused access to the child concerned; or
  - (b) denied information as to the whereabouts of the child,the State Government shall apply for an Emergency Protection Order, a Child Assessment Order, a Care Order or a Supervision Order with respect to the child, unless it is satisfied that the welfare of the child can be satisfactorily safeguarded without its doing so.
- (7) If, on conclusion of any enquiry or review made under this section, the State Government decides not to apply for an Emergency Protection Order, a Child Assessment Order, a Care or Supervision Order, it shall:
  - (a) consider whether it will be appropriate to review the case at a later date and
  - (b) if it decides that it would be appropriate to review the case, determine the date on which that review is to begin.
- (8) Where, as a result of complying with this section, the State Government concludes that it should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of the child, it shall take that action, if the action is within its powers and it is reasonably practicable for it to do so.
- (9) Where the State Government is making an enquiry under this section, the other State Government referred to in subsection (11) of this section shall assist it with the enquiry, in particular, by providing relevant information and advice, if called by the State Government to do so.

- (10) Subsection (9) of this section does not oblige the State Government to assist any other State Government where doing so would be unreasonable in all circumstances of the case.
- (11) Where the State Government is making an enquiry under this section with respect to a child who appears to it to be ordinarily resident within another State, it shall consult the Government of that other State and the Government of that other State may undertake the necessary enquiry in the place of the State Government that commended the enquiry.
- 47.(1)** Where it appears to a Court making an Emergency Protection Order that adequate information as to the whereabouts of a child: –
- (a) is not available to the applicant for the Emergency Protection Order; and
- (b) is available to another person who is not the applicant,
- the Court may include in the Order, a provision requiring that other person to disclose, if asked to do so by the applicant, any information that he/she may have as to the whereabouts of the child.
- (2) No person shall be excused from complying with a requirement under subsection (1) on the grounds that complying may incriminate him or her or his or her spouse of an offence, but a statement or admission made in compliance with the requirement shall not be admissible in evidence against either of them in proceedings for an offence, other than perjury.
- (3) An Emergency Protection Order may authorize the applicant to enter premises specified by the Order and search for the child with respect to whom the order is made. The Court, if satisfied that there is reasonable cause to believe that there may be another child on those premises with respect to whom an Emergency Protection Order ought to be made, may make an Order authorizing the applicant to search for the child on those premises.
- (4) Where:
- (a) an Order has been made under subsection (3);
- (b) the child concerned has been found on the premises, and
- (c) the applicant is satisfied that the grounds for making Emergency Protection Order exist with respect to the child,
- the applicant shall notify the Court, accordingly.
- (5) A person who willfully obstructs a person exercising the power of entry and search under subsection (3) of this section commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term of 3 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- 48.(1)** A person who knowingly and without lawful authority or reasonable excuse:
- (a) takes or keeps a child to whom this section applies away from the person responsible for the child; or

**Disclosure of whereabouts, etc. of children who may be in need of emergency protection.**

**Abduction of children in care, etc.**

- (b) induces, assists or incites a child to whom this section applies to runaway or stay away from the person responsible for the child;

commits an offence under this section and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding ₦1,000.000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

- (2) This section applies in relation to a child who is:
  - (a) in care;
  - (b) the subject of an Emergency Protection Order or
  - (c) taken into police protection.

**49.(1)** Where it is proposed to use a voluntary home or registered children's home to provide refuge for children who appear to be at risk of harm, the Commissioner may issue a certificate under this section with respect to that home.

**Refuge for  
children at  
risk**

- (2) Where an appropriate Doctor or a voluntary organization arranges for a foster parent to provide such a refuge, the Commissioner may issue a certificate under this section with respect to the foster parent.
- (3) Where a certificate is in force with respect to a home, none of the provisions contained in this Law or any other Law relating to: –
  - (a) the harbouring of a child who has absconded from residential establishment; or
  - (b) compelling, persuading, inciting or assisting a child to be absent from detention; or
  - (c) the abduction of a child, shall apply in relation to a person providing refuge for a child in that home.
- (4) Where a certificate is in force with respect to a foster parent, the provision referred to in subsection (3) of this section shall not apply in relation to the provision by him of a refuge for a child in accordance with arrangements made by the appropriate authority or voluntary organization.
- (5) The Commissioner may by regulations:
  - (a) make provisions as to the manner in which certificates may be issued.
  - (b) impose conditions which shall be complied with while a certificate is in force; and
  - (c) provide for the withdrawal of certificates in prescribed circumstances.

**50. (1)** Without prejudice to section 166 of this Law or any other power to make such Rules, the Court may make Rules specifying procedures to be followed in connection with the proceedings under this Part of this Law.

**Rules and  
Regulations  
under this Part.**

- (2) The Rules may, in particular make provisions:
  - (a) as to the form in which an application is to be made or a direction is to be given;
  - (b) prescribing the persons who are to be notified of:

- (i) the making or extension, of an Emergency Protection Order; or
  - (ii) the making of an application under Section 43(4) or 95) or 44 (6) of this Law; and
  - (c) as to the content of any notification and the manner in which, and the person by whom, it is to be given.
- (3) The Commissioner may, by regulations, provide that where:
- (a) an Emergency Protection Order has been made with respect to a child;
  - (b) the applicant for the Order was not the appropriate authority within whose area the child is ordinarily resident; and
  - (c) the appropriate authority is of the opinion that it would be in the best interest of the child for the applicant's responsibilities under the Order to be transferred to it;
- the appropriate authority shall, subject to its having complied with any conditions imposed by the regulations, be treated, for the purpose of this Law as though it and not the original applicant had applied for and been granted the Order.
- (4) Regulations made under subsection (3) of this section may, in particular, make provisions as to:
- (a) the consideration to which the appropriate authority is to have, regarding the forming of an opinion as mentioned in subsection (3) (c) of this section; and
  - (b) the time at which responsibility under any Emergency Protection Order is to be treated as having been transferred to an appropriate authority.

## PART V

### CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION

**51.(1)** A Child Development Officer, a Police Officer, or any other person authorized by the Commissioner may bring a child before the Court if he has reasonable grounds for believing that the child:

- (a) is an orphan or is deserted by the child's relatives;
- (b) has been neglected or ill-treated or battered by the person having the care and custody of the child;
- (c) has a parent or guardian who does not exercise proper guidance and control over the child;
- (d) if found destitute, has both parents or his or her surviving parent, undergoing imprisonment or mentally disordered or otherwise severely incapacitated to make rational decisions affecting the child;
- (e) is under the care of a parent or guardian who, by reason of criminal or drunken habits, is unfit to have the care of the child;
- (f) is the daughter of a father who has been convicted of the offence of defilement or indecent treatment of any of his daughters;
- (g) is found wandering or has no home or settled place of abode or is on the street or other public place, or has no visible means of subsistence;
- (h) is found begging or receiving alms, whether or not there is any pretense of singing, playing, performing, offering anything for sale or otherwise or is

**Power of certain persons to bring children in need of care and protection before a Court in certain cases**

- found in any street, premises or place for the purpose of so begging or receiving alms;
- (i) accompanies any person when that person is begging or receiving alms, whether or not there is any pretense of singing, playing, performing, offering anything for sale, or otherwise;
  - (j) frequents the company of a reputed thief or con-man or reputed prostitute;
  - (k) is lodging or residing in a house or the part of a house used by a prostitute for the purpose of prostitution, or is otherwise living in circumstances calculated to cause, encourage or favour the seduction or prostitution of the child;
  - (l) is a child in relation to whom an offence against morality has been committed or attempted;
  - (m) is otherwise exposed to moral or physical danger;
  - (n) is otherwise in need of care, protection or control or
  - (o) is beyond the control of his or her parents or guardians.
- (2) The person making an application under subsection (1) of this section shall, before the hearing of the application, take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure the notice of the application is given to:
- (a) the parents of the child;
  - (b) a person who, though not a parent of the child, has a parental responsibility for the child; or
  - (c) any person who has the care of the child; and
  - (d) the child concerned, if the child has sufficient understanding.
- (3) The Court, if satisfied that a child brought before it comes within any of the paragraphs of subsection (1) of this section may:
- (a) cause the parents or guardians of the child to enter into a recognizance, to exercise proper care and guardianship over the child; or
  - (b) make a Corrective Order:
    - (i) committing the child to the care of any first person whether a relative or not, who is willing to undertake the care of a child; or
    - (ii) sending the child to an approved institution, in exceptional circumstances where a non-Institutional measure is impracticable or inappropriate;
  - (c) without making any other Order, or in addition to making an Order under paragraph (b), make an Order placing the child for a specified period, not exceeding 3 years, under the supervision of a Supervision Officer, or of some other person appointed for that purpose by the Court.
- (4) A child shall not be deemed to come within the scope of paragraph (j) of subsection (1) of this section, if the only con-man or reputed prostitute whose company the child frequents is the father or mother of the child and it is proved that he or she exercises proper guidance and due care to protect the child from moral danger.
- (5) For the purpose of paragraph (m) of subsection (1) of this section, but without prejudice to the generality of the words thereof, the fact that a child is found:

- (a) destitute or wandering, without any settled place of abode and without visible means of subsistence;
  - (b) begging or receiving alms, whether or not there is any pretense of singing, playing, performing or offering anything for sale or otherwise;
  - (c) loitering for the purpose of begging or receiving alms;
  - (d) hawking or street trading; or
  - (e) living in the streets, under bridges, in market places, in motor parks or in other public places,
- is evidence that the child is exposed to moral danger.
- (6) A Court before which a person is convicted to having committed, in respect of a child, any offence referred to in subsection (1) (f) or (i) may:
- (a) direct that the child be brought before the Court with a view to that Court making such Order under subsection (2) as may be proper; or
  - (b) if satisfied that the evidence before it is sufficient to enable it properly exercise jurisdiction, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in Part XIII of this Law, make any Order which the Court has power to make.
- 52.** (1) Where the Court is satisfied that the parent or guardian of a child is unable to control the child, the Court may, if further satisfied that:
- (a) it is expedient so to deal with the child; and
  - (b) the parent or guardian understands the results which will follow from the consents to making of the Order,
- make a Corrective Order in respect of the child or order the child to be placed for a specified period, not exceeding 3 years, under the supervision of an appropriate supervisory Child Development Officer or of some other persons appointed for the purpose by the Court.
- 53.** (1) Where a child is committed:
- (a) to the care of an individual under this Law;
  - (b) in exceptional circumstances, to an approved institution or any other institutions and the Court is satisfied that the need for the Order arose from the neglect on the part of any of the persons named in subsection (2),
- the Court may order that person to make such contribution towards the maintenance of the child as it may think fit, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, including the means of the person ordered to make the contribution.
- (2) The persons referred to in subsection (1) are:
- (a) the father, step father, mother or step mother of the child; or
  - (b) a person who is cohabiting with the mother or step mother of the child, whether or not he is the putative father of the child; or
  - (c) the person in whose care and custody the child has been, during the 2 years immediately preceding the date of the Order of committal.
- (3) The Court shall order the contribution of such amount per week, per month or per each such period as it deems proper having regard to the means and earning

**Power to make Order where parent or guardian is unable to exercise control**

**Power of Court to order parent, etc. to contribute to maintenance**

capacity of the person ordered to make the contribution and other relevant circumstances.

- (4) If a person fails or neglects to comply with an Order made under subsection (1), the Court may for every breach of the Order direct the amount due to be levied in the manner by law provided for levying distress in the enforcement of damages or other awards ordered by the Court in a civil proceeding.
- (5) The Court which has the jurisdiction over the place in which the person or persons liable to make contribution may, at any time, on the application of an Officer of an appropriate authority or other authorized officer, and on proof of a change of circumstances in the person or persons so required to make the contribution increase or reduce the contribution or rescind any Order as the Court may seem just.

## **PART VI CARE AND SUPERVISION**

- 54. (1)** The Court may, on application of the State Government, an appropriate authority or any other authorized person, make a:
- (a) Care Order, placing a child with respect to whom an application is made in the care of a designated authorized person, appropriate authority or the State Government;
  - (b) Supervision Order, placing a child under the supervision of a designated appropriate authority or Supervision Officer.
- (2) A Court may make a Care Order or Supervision Order if it is satisfied that:
- (a) the care given to the child, or likely to be given to the child if the Order were not made, is not what a parent would reasonably be expected to give to the child; or
  - (b) the child is beyond parental control.
- (3) No Care or Supervision Order may be made with respect to a person who has attained the age of 18 years.
- (4) An application under this section may be made on its own or in any other family proceeding.
- (5) The Court may, on an application:
- (a) for a Care Order, make a Supervision Order;
  - (b) for a Supervision Order, make a Care Order.
- (6) An authorised person who proposes to make an application under this section shall:
- (a) if it is reasonably practicable to do so; and
  - (b) before making the application, consult the State Government or the appropriate authority appearing to him to be the authority in whose jurisdiction the child concerned is ordinarily resident.

**Care and  
Supervision  
Order, general**

- (7) An application for a Care Order or a Supervision Order made by an authorized person shall not be entertained by the Court if, at the time when it was made, the child concerned is:
- (a) the subject matter of an earlier application for a Care Order or a Supervision Order, which has not been disposed of; or.
  - (b) subject to a Care Order or Supervision Order
- (8) The Local Government designated in a Care Order or Supervision Order shall:
- (a) be the Local Government in which the child is ordinarily resident; or
  - (b) where the child does not reside in the State, be the Local Government within the State in which the circumstances arose in consequence of which the Order is being made.
- (9) Where the question as to whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health or development, the child's health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar circumstances.
- 55.**(1) A Court before which an application for an Order is brought under this Part of this Law shall, in consideration of any Rules made pursuant to subsection (2) of this section:
- Period within which application for Order under this Part must be disposed of.**
- (a) draw up a timetable with a view of disposing of the application without delay; and
  - (b) give such directions as it considers appropriate for the purpose of ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the timetable is adhered to.
- (2) The Court may by rules:
- (a) specify the period within which specified steps must be taken in relation to the proceeding; and
  - (b) make other provisions with respect to the proceedings for the purpose of ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the proceedings are disposed of without delay.
- 56.** (1) Where a Care Order is made, the State Government and the appropriate authority designated by the Order shall receive the child into its care and keep the child in its care while the Order remains in force.
- Effect of a Care Order**
- (2) Where:
- (a) a Care Order has been made on the application of an authorized person; and
  - (b) the State Government or appropriate authority designated by the Order was not informed of the application,
- the child may be kept in the care of that person until received into the care of the State Government or the appropriate authority.
- (3) While a Care Order is in force, the State Government or appropriate authority designated by the Order shall have:

- (a) parental responsibility for the child, subject to any right, duty, power, responsibility or authority which a parent or guardian of the child has in relation to the child and the child's property by virtue of any other enactment; and
  - (b) the power, subject to the following provisions of this section, to determine the extent to which a parent or guardian of the child may meet his parental responsibility for the child.
- (4) The State Government or appropriate authority shall not exercise power in subsection (3)(b) of this section unless it is satisfied that it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard or promote the welfare of the child.
- (5) Nothing in subsection (3) shall prevent a parent or guardian of the child who has care of the child from doing what is reasonable in all circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the welfare of the child.
- (6) While a Care Order is in force with respect to a child, the State Government or appropriate authority designated by the Order shall not:
  - (a) cause the child to be brought up in any religious persuasion, other than that on which the child would have been brought up if the Order had not been made; or
  - (b) have the right to:
    - (i) consent or withhold consent to the making of an application with respect to the child under the adoption provisions of this Law; or
    - (ii) appoint a guardian for the child
- (7) While a care order is in force with respect to a child, no person shall:
  - (a) cause the child to be known by a new surname; or
  - (b) remove the child from the State of jurisdiction, without either the written consent of every person who has parental responsibility for the child or the leave of the Court.
- (8) Subsection (7)(b) shall not:
  - (a) prevent the removal of a child from the State jurisdiction, for a period of less than one month, by the authority in whose care the child is; or
  - (b) apply to arrangements for a child to live outside the State, if the required written consent or the leave of the Court has been obtained.
- (9) The making of a Care Order with respect to a child who is subject to a Contact Order, a Prohibited Steps Order, a Residence Order or a Specific Issue Order, discharges the Contact Order, the Prohibited Steps Order, the Residence Order or the Specific Issue Order.
- (10) The making of a Care Order with respect to a child who is:
  - (a) the subject of a Supervision Order, discharges the Supervision Order
  - (b) a ward of court, bring that wardship to an end; and
  - (c) the subject of a school attendance Order, discharges the school attendance Order.

- (11) Where an Emergency Protection Order is made with respect to a child who is in care, the Care Order shall have effect subject to the Emergency Protection Order.
- (12) Any Order made under section 70 or 85 shall continue in force until the child attains the age of 18 years, unless it is brought to an end earlier.
- (13) An:
  - (a) agreement under section 71 of this Law; and
  - (b) appointment under section 85 (3) of (4) of this Law,shall continue in force until the child attains the age of 18 years, unless it is brought to an end earlier.
- (14) The provisions of Schedule I shall have effect with respect to financial relief for **Schedule I** children.
- (15) Subject to this Law, an Order made under this section shall, if it would otherwise continue in force, cease to have effect when the child attains the age of 18 years.
- (16) Where an order under this section has effect with respect to a child who has attained the age of 16 years, it shall, if it would otherwise continue in force, cease to have effect when the child attains the age of 18 years.
- (17) A Care Order, other than an Interim Care Order, shall continue in force until the child attains the age of 18 years, unless it is brought to an end earlier.
- (18) An Order made under any other provision of this Law in relation to a child shall, if it would otherwise continue in force, cease to have effect when the child attains the age of 18 years.
- (19) Where an application (in this section referred to as “the previous application”) had been made for:
  - (a) the discharge of a Care Order;
  - (b) the discharge of a Supervision Order;
  - (c) the discharge of an Education Supervision Order; or
  - (d) the substitution of a Supervision Order for a Care Order; or
  - (e) a Child Assessment Order,no further application of a kind mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (e) of this subsection may be made with respect to the child concerned, without leave of the Court, unless the period between the disposal of the previous application and the making of the further application exceeds 6 months.
- (20) Subsection (19) does not apply to applications made in relation to Interim Orders.
- (21) Where:
  - (a) an application made for an Order under section 59 of this Law has been refused; and
  - (b) a period of less than 6 months has elapsed since the refusal,

the person who made the application shall not make  
a further  
application for such an Order with respect to the same child, unless  
the person has obtained the leave of the Court.

- (22) On disposing of an application for an Order under this Law, the Court may, whether or not it makes any other Order in response to the application, order that no application for an Order under this Law of any specified kind may be made with respect to the child concerned by any person named in the Order without leave of the Court.

**57.**(1) The State Government or an appropriate authority shall, subject to the provisions of this section, allow a child under its care, reasonable contact with:

**Parental  
contacts, etc.  
with children  
in care**

- (a) the parents of the child;
  - (b) the guardian of the child;
  - (c) a person in whose favour a Residence Order was previously made immediately before a Care Order was made; and
  - (d) a person who, immediately before the Care Order was made, had care of the child by virtue of an Order made by the Court.
- (2) On an application made by the State Government, appropriate authority or the child, the Court may make such Order as it considers appropriate with respect to the contact which is to be allowed between the child and a named person.
- (3) On an application made by:
- (a) a person mentioned in paragraph (a) to (d) of subsection (1) of this section;  
or
  - (b) a person who had obtained leave of the Court to make the application,
- the Court may make such Order as it considers appropriate with respect to the contact which is to be allowed between the child and that person.
- (4) On an application made by the State Government or the appropriate authority with respect to the child, the Court may make an order authorising the State Government or the appropriate authority to refuse to allow contact between the child and a person who is mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (d) of subsection (1) of this section and named in the Order.
- (5) When making a Care Order, or in any family proceeding in connection with a child who is in the care of the State Government, the Court may make an Order under this section notwithstanding that no application for the Order has been made with respect to the child, if it deems that the Order should be made in the best interest of the child.
- (6) The State Government or appropriate authority may refuse to allow the contact that would otherwise be required by virtue of subsection (1) of this section or an Order made under this section if:
- (a) it is satisfied that it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard or promote the welfare of the child; and

- (b) the refusal:
      - (i) is decided on as a matter of urgency and
      - (ii) does not last for more than 7 days.
  - (7) An Order made under this section may impose such conditions as the Court considers appropriate.
  - (8) The Court may vary or discharge an Order made under this section on the application of the State Government, the appropriate authority, the child concerned or the person named in the Order.
  - (9) An Order under this section may be made at the same time as the Care Order itself or later.
  - (10) The Court shall, before making a care order:
    - (a) consider the arrangement which the State Government or appropriate authority has made, or proposes to make, for affording a person contact with a child to whom this section applies and
    - (b) invite the parties to the proceedings to comment on the arrangement.
  - (11) The Commissioner may by regulation make provisions as to:
    - (a) the steps to be taken by the State Government or appropriate authority that has exercised its powers under subsection (6) of this section;
    - (b) the circumstances in which and conditions subject to which, the terms and conditions of an Order made under this section may be departed from by agreement between the appropriate authority and the person in relation to whom the Order is made; and
    - (c) notification by the State Government or an appropriate authority of any variation or suspension of arrangements made, otherwise than under this section, with a view to affording a person contact with a child to whom this section applies.
- 58. (1) While a Supervision Order is in force the Supervisor shall:**
- (a) advise, assist and befriend the supervised child;
  - (b) take such steps as are reasonably necessary to give effect to the Order and
  - (c) where:
    - (i) the Order is not wholly complied with or
    - (ii) the Supervisor considers that the Order may no longer be necessary, consider whether or not to apply to the Court for its variation or discharge.
- (2) The supplementary provisions set out in Parts I and II of the Second Schedule to this Law shall apply with respect to Supervision Orders.

**Duties of Supervisors while Supervision Orders are in force**

**Schedule II**

**Education Supervision Orders**

- 59.**(1) On the application of an appropriate education authority, the Court may make an Order to be known as an Education Supervision Order putting the child with respect to whom the application is made under the supervision of a designated appropriate education authority.
- (2) The Court shall only make an Education Supervision Order if it is satisfied that the child concerned is of compulsory school age and is not being properly educated.
- (3) For the purposes of this section, a child is being properly educated only if the child is receiving efficient full-time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have.
- (4) Where a child is:
- (a) the subject of a school attendance Order which is in force and which has not been complied with; or
  - (b) a registered pupil at a school which the child is not attending regularly, it shall be assumed that he/she is not being properly educated unless the contrary is proved.
- (5) An Education Supervision Order may be made with respect to a child who is in the care of a State Government if the Court deems it necessary in the interest of the child.
- (6) The appropriate education authority designated in an Education Supervision Order shall be:
- (a) the authority within whose area the child concerned is living or will live or
  - (b) the authority within whose area a school is situated if:
    - (i) the child is a registered pupil at that school and
    - (ii) the authority mentioned in paragraph (a) of this subsection and the authority within whose area the school is situated, agree.
- (7) An appropriate education authority which proposes to make an application for an Education Supervision Order shall, before making the application, consult the child services committee or unit of the appropriate authority.
- (8) The supplementary provision set out in Part III of the Second Schedule to this Law shall apply with respect to Education Supervision Orders.

**Schedule  
II**

- 60.** (1) Where, it appears to the Court in proceedings in which a question arises as to the welfare of a child, that it may be appropriate for a Care or Supervision Order to be made with respect to that child, the Court may direct the appropriate authority to undertake an investigation of the child's circumstances.

**Power of  
Court in  
proceedings  
where  
question of  
welfare of  
child arises**

- (2) Where the Court gives a direction under this section, the appropriate authority concerned shall, when undertaking the investigation, consider whether it should:

- (a) apply for a Care order or a Supervision Order with respect to the child or
  - (b) provide services or assistance for the child and the child's family or
  - (c) take any other action in furtherance of the best interest of the child.
- (3) Where the appropriate authority undertakes an investigation under this section and decides not to apply for a Care Order or Supervision Order with respect to the child concerned, the appropriate authority shall inform the Court of:
- (a) its reason for so doing;
  - (b) any service or assistance which it has provided, or intends to provide, for the child and the child's family; and
  - (c) any other action which it has taken or proposes to take, with respect to the child.
- (4) The information referred to in subsection (3) shall be given to the Court before the end of the period of 8 weeks, beginning with the date of the direction, unless the Court otherwise directs.
- (5) If, on the conclusion of any investigation or review under this section, the appropriate authority decides not to apply for a Care Order or Supervision Order with respect to the child, the appropriate authority shall consider whether it would be appropriate to review the case at a later date.
- (6) If the appropriate authority decides that it would review the case pursuant to subsection (5), it shall determine the date on which that review is to begin.
- (7) In this section, 'the appropriate authority' means:
- (a) the authority in whose jurisdiction the child is ordinarily resident; or
  - (b) where the child does not reside in the state, the authority within whose jurisdiction any circumstances arose in consequence of which the direction is being given.

**61. (1) Where:**

- (a) in any proceeding on an application for a Care or Supervision Order, the proceeding is adjourned; or
  - (b) the Court gives a direction under section 60 (1),
- the Court may make an Interim Care Order or an Interim Supervision Order with respect to the child concerned. **Interim Orders**
- (2) The Court shall not make an Interim Care Order or Interim Supervision Order under this section unless it is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for believing that the circumstances with respect to the child are as mentioned in section 54(2).
- (3) Where, in any proceeding on an application for a Care Order or Supervision Order, the Court makes a Residence Order with respect to the child concerned, it

shall also make an Interim Supervision Order with respect to the child unless it is satisfied that the welfare of the child will be satisfactorily safeguarded without an Interim Supervision Order being made.

- (4) An Interim Order made under or by virtue of this section shall have effect for such period as may be specified in the Order, but shall cease to have effect on whichever of the following events first occurs:
    - (a) the expiry of the period of 10 weeks beginning with the date on which the Order is made;
    - (b) if the Order is the second or is subsequent to an Order made with respect to the same child in the same proceedings, the expiry of the relevant period;
    - (c) in a case which falls within subsection (1)(a), the disposal of an application;
    - (d) in a case which falls within subsection (1)(b), the disposal of an application for a Care Order or Supervision Order made by the appropriate authority with respect to the child;
    - (e) in a case which falls within subsection (1)(b) and in which the Court has given a direction under section 63 (1), but no application for a Care Order or Supervision Order has been made with respect to the child, the expiry of the period fixed by the direction.
  - (5) Where the Court makes an Interim Care Order or Interim Supervision Order, it may give such directions, if any, as it considers appropriate with regards to the medical examination, including psychiatric examination, or other assessment of the child, but if the child has sufficient understanding to make an informed decision he/she may refuse to submit to the examination or other assessment.
  - (6) A direction under subsection (5) of this section may provide that there shall be:
    - (a) no examination or assessment; or
    - (c) no examination or assessment unless the Court directs otherwise.
  - (7) A direction under subsection (5) of this section may be:
    - (a) given when the Interim Care Order or Interim Supervision Order is made or at any time while it is in force; and
    - (b) varied at any time on the application of any person falling within any class of persons prescribed by Rules of Court for the purposes of this subsection.
  - (8) Where the Court makes an Order under or by virtue of this section, it shall, in determining the period for which the Order is to be in force, consider whether any party who was or might have been, opposed to the making of the order was in a position to argue his case against the Order in full.
  - (9) The provisions set out in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Second Schedule shall not apply in relation to an Interim Supervision Order.
- 62.** (1) The Court may vary or discharge a Care Order on the application of:
  - (a) a person who has parental responsibility for the child; or
  - (b) the affected child himself or herself; or
  - (c) the State Government or appropriate authority designated by the order.

**Schedule  
II**

**Discharge and  
variation, etc. of  
Care Orders  
and Supervision  
Orders**

- (2) The Court may vary or discharge a supervision order on the application of:
    - (a) a person who has parental responsibility for the child;
    - (b) the affected child himself or herself; or
    - (c) the Supervisor.
  - (3) On the application of a person who is not entitled to apply for the order to be discharged, but who is a person with whom the child is living, the Court may vary a Supervision Order in so far as it imposes a requirement which affects that person.
  - (4) Where a care order is in force, the Court may, on the application of any person entitled to apply for the order to be discharged, substitute a Supervision Order for the Care Order.
  - (5) When the Court is considering whether to substitute one Order for another under subsection (4), any provision of this Law which would otherwise require section 53(2) to be satisfied, at the time when the proposal order is substituted or made, shall be disregarded.
  - (6) The making of a residence order with respect to a child who is the subject of a care order discharges the care order.
- 63.** (1) Where the Court dismisses an application for a care order in respect of a child who is also the subject of an interim care order, the Court may make a care order with respect to the child to have effect subject to such directions, if any, as the Court may deem fit to include in the order.
- (2) Where the Court dismisses an application for a care order or supervision order in respect of a child who is also the subject to an interim supervision order, the Court may make a supervision order with respect to the child to have effect subject to such directions if any, as the Court may deem fit to include in the order.
  - (3) Where a Court grants an application to discharge a Care Order or Supervision Order, it may order that:
    - (a) its decision is not to have effect; or
    - (b) the Care Order or Supervision Order is to continue to have effect, subject to such directions as the Court may deem fit to include in the order.
  - (4) An Order made under this section shall only have effect for such period, not exceeding the appeal period, as may be specified in the Order.
  - (5) Where:
    - (a) an appeal is made against any decision of a Court under this section; or
    - (b) an application is made to the appellate Court in connection with a proposed appeal against that decision,
 the appellate Court may extend the period for which the order in question is to have effect, but not so as to extend it beyond the end of the appeal period.

**Orders pending appeals in cases relating to Care or Supervision Orders**

- (6) For the purposes of this section, the appeal period includes:
  - (a) the period between the making of the decision against which the appeal is made and the determination of the appeal; and
  - (b) the period during which an appeal may be made against the decision.

**PART VII**  
**PROVISIONS FOR USE OF SCIENTIFIC TESTS IN DETERMINING PATERNITY OR MATERNITY, ETC.**

- 64.** (1) In any civil proceedings in which the paternity or maternity of a person is to be determined by the Court hearing the proceedings, the Court may, on an application by a party to the proceedings or *suo motu*, give a directions for:
- (a) the use of scientific tests, including blood test and Deoxyribonucleic Acid tests, to ascertain whether the tests show that a party to the proceedings is or is not the father or mother of that person; and
  - (b) the taking, within a period to be specified in the direction, of blood or other bodily samples from that person, the mother of that person, the father of that person and any party alleged to be the father or mother of that person or from any two of those persons for the purpose of scientific tests in determining paternity or maternity of a person.
- (2) The Court may at any time revoke or vary a direction previously given by it under subsection (1).
- (3) Where:
- (a) an application is made for a direction under this section; and
  - (b) the person whose paternity or maternity is in issue is under the age of 18 years when the application is made, the application shall specify who is to carry out the tests.
- (4) In the case of a direction made on an application to which subsection (3) of this section applies, the Court:
- (a) shall specify that the person who is to carry out the test is the person specified in the application; or
  - (b) may, where the Court considers that it would be inappropriate to specify the person referred to in paragraph (a), because specifying that person would be contrary to any provisions of regulations made under section 66 or for any other reason, decline to give the direction applied for.
- (5) The person responsible for carrying out blood or other bodily samples taken for tests for the purpose of giving effect to a direction under this section, shall produce before the Court which gave the direction, a report in which he shall state:
- (a) the result of the tests;
  - (b) whether the party to whom the report relates is or is not indicated by the results as the father or mother of the person whose paternity or maternity, as the case may be, is to be determined; and

**Power of Court to require use of scientific tests**

- (c) if the party is so indicated, the value, if any, of the results in determining whether that party is actually the father or mother of that person.
- (6) The report made under this subsection (5) shall be:
  - (a) received by the Court as evidence in the proceedings of the matters stated in the report; and
  - (b) in the form prescribed by the regulations made under section 66.
- (7) Where a report has been made to the Court under subsection (5), any party to the proceedings may, with the leave of the Court, or shall, if the Court so directs, obtain from the person who made the report a written statement explaining or amplifying any statement made in the report, and that statement shall be deemed for the purposes of this section, except subsection (5)(b), to form part of the report made to the Court.
- (8) Where a direction is given under this section in any proceedings, a party to the proceedings, shall not, unless the Court otherwise directs, be entitled to call as a witness:
  - (a) the person who carried out the tests taken for the purpose of giving effect to the direction; or
  - (b) any person who did anything necessary for the purpose of enabling those tests to be carried out, unless within 14 days after receiving a copy of the report that party serves notice on the other parties to the proceedings or on such of those other parties as the Court may direct, of his intention to call that person, and where a person is called as a witness the party who called the person shall be entitled to cross-examine that person.
- (9) Where a direction is given under this section, the party on whose application the direction is given shall pay the cost of taking and testing blood or other samples for the purpose of giving effect to the direction, including any expenses reasonably incurred by any persons:
  - (a) in taking any step required of the person for the purpose; and
  - (b) in making a report to the Court under this section, but the amount paid shall be treated as costs incurred by the party in the proceedings.

Provided that when the direction is given by the Court *suo motu*, the Court may further direct as to how expenses incidental to the tests are to be borne by the parties affected.

- 65.** (1) Subject to the provisions of subsections (3) and (4), scientific sample which is required to be taken from any person for the purpose of giving effect to a direction under section 64 shall not be taken from that person except with the person's consent.
- (2) The consent of a child who has attained the age of 16 years to the taking from the child of a scientific sample shall be as effective as it would be if the child had attained the age of majority and where a child has by virtue of this subsection

**Consents, etc,  
required for  
taking scientific  
samples**

given an effective consent to the taking of scientific sample, it shall not be necessary to obtain any consent for it from any other person.

- (3) A scientific sample may be taken from a child under the age of 16 years, not being a child referred to in subsection (4), if the person with parental care and control over the child consents.
  - (4) A scientific sample may be taken from a child who:
    - (a) is suffering from mental disorder within the meaning of any relevant law in Nigeria; and
    - (b) is incapable of understanding the nature and purpose of the scientific tests, if the person who has the care and control over the child consents and the medical practitioner in whose care the child is has certified that the taking of the scientific sample from the child shall not be prejudicial to the child's proper care and treatment.
  - (5) The provisions of this section are without prejudice to the provisions of section 67.
- 66.** The Commissioner may by regulations make provisions as to the manner of giving effect to directions given under section 64 and, in particular, the regulations may:
- (a) provide that scientific samples shall not be taken except by such medical practitioners as may be appointed by the Commissioner.
  - (b) regulate the taking, identification and transporting of the scientific samples;
  - (c) require the production, at the time when the scientific sample is to be taken of such evidence as to the identity of the person from whom it is to be taken as maybe prescribed by the regulations;
  - (d) require any person from whom a scientific sample is to be taken, or, in such cases as may be prescribed by the regulations, such other person as may be so prescribed, to state in writing whether he/she or the person from whom the sample is to be taken, as the case may be, has during such period as may be specified in the regulations, suffered from any such illness as may be so specified or received a transfusion of blood;
  - (e) provide that scientific tests shall not be carried out except by such persons, and at such places, as may be appointed by the Commissioner;
  - (f) prescribe the scientific tests to be carried out and the manner in which they are to be carried out;
  - (g) regulate the charges that may be made for the taking and testing of the scientific samples and for the making of a report to a Court under section 64;
  - (h) make provision for securing that, so far as practicable, the samples to be tested for the purpose of giving effect to a direction under section 64 are tested by the same person;
  - (i) prescribe the form of the report to be made to a Court under section 64.

**Power of Commissioner to provide for manner of giving effect to directions for use of scientific tests**

- 67.** (1) Where the Court gives a direction under section 64 and the person fails to take any step required of him for the purpose of giving effect to the direction, the Court may draw such inferences, if any, from that fact as appear proper in the circumstances.
- (2) Where, in any proceedings in which the paternity or maternity fails to be determined by the Court hearing the proceedings, there is a presumption of law that the person is legitimate then if a:
- (a) direction is given under section 64 of this Law in those proceedings; and
- (b) party who is claiming any relief in the proceedings and who for the purpose of obtaining that relief is entitled to rely on the presumption fails to take any step required of the person for the purpose of giving effect to the direction, the Court may adjourn the hearing for such period as it thinks fit to enable that party to take the step required.
- (3) If at the end of the period referred to in subsection (2), the person fails without reasonable cause to take the step required, the Court may, without prejudice to subsection (1), dismiss the person's claim for relief notwithstanding the absence of evidence to rebut the presumption.
- (4) Where a person named in a direction under section 64 fails to consent to the taking of scientific sample from him or from a child named in the direction of whom the person has the care and control, the person shall be deemed for the purposes of this section to have failed to take a step required of him for the purpose of giving effect to the direction.
- 68.** If, for the purpose of providing scientific samples for a test required to give effect to a direction under section 64, a person impersonates another, or proffers a child knowing that it is not the child named in the direction, that person commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦1,000,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or to both such fine and imprisonment.

**Failure to  
comply with  
directions for  
taking scientific  
tests**

**Penalty for  
impersonating  
another, etc. for  
the purpose of  
providing  
scientific sample**

## **PART VIII POSSESSION AND CUSTODY OF CHILDREN**

- 69.** (1) Where the father and mother of a child were not married to each other at the time of the birth of the child:
- (a) the Family Court established under section 154 may:
- (i) on the application of the father, order that he shall have parental responsibility for the child, or
- (ii) on the application of the mother, order that she shall have parental responsibility for the child; or
- (b) the father and mother may by agreement have joint parental responsibility for the child.

**Acquisition of  
parental  
responsibilities**

- (2) No parental responsibility agreement shall have effect for the purposes of this Law, unless it is made in the form and manner prescribed by regulations made by the Chief Judge of the State under this section.
- (3) Subject to subsection (4), an Order under subsection (1)(a), or a parental responsibility agreement, may only be brought to an end by an Order of the Court made on the application:
  - (a) of a person who has parental responsibility for the child; or
  - (b) of the child himself, with leave of the Court
- (4) The Court may only grant leave under subsection (3) (b) if it is satisfied that the child has sufficient understanding to make the proposed application.
- (5) Where the Court makes a Residence Order in favour of the father or the mother of a child, it shall, if the father or mother would not otherwise have parental responsibility for the child, also make an order under subsection (1) giving the father or mother that responsibility.
- (6) Where the Court makes a residence order in favour of a person who is not the parent or guardian of the child concerned, that person shall have parental responsibility for the child while the residence order remains in force.
- (7) Where a person has parental responsibility for a child as a result of subsection (5), he shall not have the right to:
  - (a) refuse to consent, to the making of an application in respect of the child under Part XII; or
  - (b) agree, or refuse to agree, to the making of an Adoption Order, or any Order under Part XII with respect to the child; or
  - (c) appoint a guardian for the child
- (8) Where subsection (5) requires the Court to make an Order under subsection (1) in respect of the father or mother of a child, the Court shall not bring that Order to an end at any time while the Residence Order concerned remains in force.
- (9) The fact that a person has, or does not have, parental responsibility for a child shall not affect:
  - (a) any obligation which he/she may have in relation to the child, including a statutory duty to maintain the child; or
  - (b) any right which, in the event of the death of the child, he or any other person may have in relation to the property of the child.
- (10) A person who does not have parental responsibility for a particular child but has care of the child may, subject to this Law, do what is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the welfare of the child.

**70.** (1) The Court may:

**Power of the  
Court to make  
order in respect  
of custody or  
right of access to  
a child**

<p>(a)on the application of the father or mother of a child, make such Order as it may deem fit with respect to the custody of the child and the right of access to the child to either parent, having regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the welfare of the child and the conduct of the parent and</li> <li>(ii) the wishes of the mother and father of the child;</li> </ul> <p>(b) alter, vary or discharge an Order made under paragraph (a) on the application of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the father or mother of the child, or</li> <li>(ii) the guardian of the child, after the death of the father or mother of the child; and</li> </ul> <p>(c)in every case, make such order with respect to costs as it may think just.</p>	
<p>(2) The power of the Court under subsection (1) to make an Order as to the custody of a child and the right of access to the child may be exercised notwithstanding that the mother of the child is at that time not residing with the father of the child.</p>	
<p>(3) Where the Court makes an Order under subsection (1), giving the custody of the child to the mother, the Court may further order that the father shall pay to the mother towards the maintenance of the child such weekly or other periodical</p>	
<p>sum as the Court may, having regard to the means of the father, think reasonable.</p>	
<p>(4) Where the Court makes an Order under subsection (1) giving custody of the child to the father, the Court may further order that the mother shall pay to the father towards the maintenance of the child such weekly or other periodical sum as the Court may, having regard to the means of the mother, think reasonable.</p>	
<p>(5) Subject to this section, no Order whether for custody or maintenance shall be enforceable and no liability thereunder shall accrue while the mother of the child resides with the father, and any such Order shall cease to have effect if for a period of 3 months after it is made, the mother of the child continues to reside with the father.</p>	
<p>(6) An Order made under this section may, on the application of the father or mother of the child, be varied or discharged by a subsequent Order.</p>	
<p><b>71.</b> No agreement contained in any separation deed made between the father and the mother of a child shall be valid by reason only of its providing that the father of the child gives up the custody or control of the child to the mother.</p>	<p><b>Orders as to custody.</b></p>
<p><b>72.</b> Where in any proceedings before a Court the custody or upbringing of a child or the administration of any property belonging to or held in trust for a child, or the application of the income thereof; is in question, the Court shall, in deciding that question, regard the welfare of the child as the first and paramount consideration.</p>	<p><b>Validity of custody agreed to in separation deeds</b></p>
<p><b>73.</b> Where the parent of a child has: (a)abandoned or deserted the child; or</p>	<p><b>Principle on which questions relating to custody, upbringing etc. of a child is to be decided</b></p>

- (b) allowed the child to be brought up by another person  
at the expense of that other person, for such a length of time and under such  
circumstances as to satisfy the Court that the parent was unmindful of his parental  
responsibilities,  
the Court shall not make an Order for the child to be delivered to the parent, unless  
the parent satisfies the Court that, having regard to the welfare of the child, the  
parent is a fit and proper person to have the custody of the child.
- 74.** Where the parent of a child applies to the Court for a writ or an order for the production  
of a child, and the Court is of the opinion that the parent:  
(a) has abandoned or deserted the child; or  
(b) had so conducted himself that the Court should refuse to enforce his right to the  
custody of the child,  
the Court may, in its discretion, decline to issue the writ or make the Order.
- 75.** If at the time of the application for a writ or an Order for the production of a child, the  
child is being brought up by another person, the Court may, in its discretion, if it orders  
that the child be given up to the parent, further order that the parent pays to that other  
person the whole of the costs properly incurred in bringing up the child, or such  
portion of the costs as seems to the Court to be just and reasonable, having regard to  
the circumstances of the case.
- 76.** Nothing contained in sections 73, 74 and 75 of this Law interferes with or affects the  
power of the Court to consult the wishes or opinion of the child in considering what  
Order ought to be made under section 75 of this Law or diminishes the right which  
any child has to exercise on his or her own free choice.
- 77.** The Court may, on an application by a parent for the production or custody of a child,  
if it is of the opinion: –  
(a) that the parent ought not to have the custody of the child; and  
(b) that the child is being brought up in a different religion other than that in which  
the parent has brought the child up,  
make such order as it may deem fit to ensure that the child is brought up in the religion  
in which the parent requires the child to be brought up.
- 78.** Where the Court makes an Order for the payment of money in pursuance of this Law,  
the Court shall in addition to any other powers for enforcing compliance with the  
Order, have power, in any case where pension or income, which is capable of being  
attached, is payable to the person against whom the Order is made, after giving the  
person by whom the pension or income is payable an opportunity of being heard, order  
that such part of the pension or income as the Court may deem fit be attached for the  
payment of any money under this Law.

**Court to  
have regard  
to conduct  
of parent**

**Power of  
Court as to  
production  
of child**

**Power of Court  
to consult child's  
wishes or  
opinion**

**Power of Court  
to child's  
religious  
education**

**Enforcement  
of order for  
payment of  
money by  
attachment of  
income**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>79.</b> A person who for the time being is under an obligation to make payment in pursuance of an order for the payment of money under this Law shall give notice of any change in the address to the person, if any, as may be specified in the Order.</p>   | <p><b>Notice of change of address by person ordered to pay money</b></p>                                  |
| <p><b>80.</b> (1) The Commissioner may, by Order, notwithstanding any customary law to the contrary, prohibit:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(a) the giving or acquiring of the custody, possession, control or guardianship of a child or</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(b) the removal of a child from any part of the State.</p> <p>(2) Where an Order is made by the Commissioner in pursuance of subsection (1) of this section, no person shall give or acquire the custody, possession or control of or remove a child from any part of the State specified in the Order except in accordance with rules made by the Commissioner and such rules may be in general or in respect of any particular part of the State.</p> <p>(3) An appeal from the Order of the Commissioner shall lie to the appropriate level of the Court.</p>   | <p><b>Power of the Commissioner to make Orders, etc. as to custody of children</b></p>                    |
| <p><b>81.</b> (1) No person shall hire, give or acquire the custody, possession, control or guardianship of a child whether or not for pecuniary or other benefit in circumstances that it may reasonably be inferred that the child has been hired, sold or battered, or that by reason of the hiring, giving or acquiring, the child may reasonably be inferred to be placed in any danger, whatsoever.</p> <p>(2) In any prosecution for the contravention of subsection (1), where it is proved that the custody, possession, control or guardianship of a child has been given to or acquired by a person other than a person who is a member of the family of the child, it shall be presumed by the Court that the child has been given or acquired in contravention of the provisions of subsection (1).</p> <p>(3) It shall be a defence to this section to prove that the child concerned was given or acquired in accordance with Customary Law, provided that the Customary Law is not repugnant to natural justice, morality or humanity or inconsistent with any written Law.</p> | <p><b>Prohibition against acquiring custody, etc of child for the purpose of dealing in the child</b></p> |
| <p><b>82.</b> A person who contravenes sections 80 and 81 or of any Rules made under those sections commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term of one year or to both such fine and imprisonment.</p>  | <p><b>Penalties for contravening Sections 80 and 81</b></p>   |

## PART IX GUARDIANSHIP

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| <p><b>83.</b> (1) Except as provided under section 70, a person appointed as a guardian under this Part of this Law shall have parental responsibility for the child.</p> | <p><b>Parental responsibility of a guardian</b></p> |
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- (2) A person appointed as guardian ad litem under section 90 shall be a guardian only for the purposes of representing the child and the child's interest in certain proceedings, but shall otherwise have no parental responsibility for the child.
- 84.** (1) The parents of a child shall have guardianship of the child and in the event of death of a parent, the surviving parent shall be the guardian of the child. **Guardianship of a child**
- (2) Where the parents of a child are not fit to be guardians of a child jointly or severally, the Court shall, on application of a member of the family or an appropriate authority, appoint a person to be a joint guardian with the parent or parents of the child.
- (3) A surviving parent who has guardianship of a child may by deed, appoint a guardian for the child in the event of the death of that parent.
- (4) A single parent may by deed, appoint a person to be the guardian of the child upon the death of that single parent.
- (5) Where a guardian is appointed to act jointly with a parent or parents of a child under subsection (2) and the guardian so appointed considers the parents unfit to have the custody of the child, the guardian may apply to the Court and the Court may make:
- (a) an Order that the guardian be the sole guardian of the child; and
- (b) such Order regarding the custody and right of access of the parents to the child as the Court may think fit, having regard to the welfare of the child.
- (6) The Court may under subsection (2), order that a parent or parents of a child make a payment to a joint guardian towards the maintenance of the child.
- 85.** (1) Where an application for the guardianship of a child is made to the Court by a person, the Court may by order, appoint that person to be the guardian of the child if: **Order for guardianship of a child**
- (a) the child has no parent with parental responsibility for him/her; or
- (b) a Residence Order had been made in respect to the child in favour of a parent or guardian of the child who died while the Order was in force.
- (2) The power conferred under subsection (1) may also be exercised in any family proceedings if the Court considers that the order should be made notwithstanding that no application was made for it.
- (3) A guardian of a child may, by deed, appoint another person to be the guardian of the child in the event of his death.
- (4) An appointment made by a Will which is not signed by the testator, shall have effect only if it is signed at the direction of the testator.
- 86.** The consent of a person appointed as a guardian is necessary for the appointment to have effect. **Consent of a person appointed as a guardian**

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|---|--|
| <p><b>87.</b> The appointment of a guardian under sections 85 and 90 may be brought to an end at any time by an Order of the Court:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) on the application of a natural parent or any person who has parental responsibility for the child; or</li> <li>(b) on the application of the child concerned, with leave of the Court; or</li> <li>(c) in any family proceedings, if the Court considers that it should be brought to an end notwithstanding that no application has been made; or</li> <li>(d) on the application of an appropriate authority.</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Revocation of guardianship</b></p>                     |
| <p><b>88.</b> A guardian under this Law shall have all such powers over the Estate, as the case may be, of a child as a guardian appointed by Will or otherwise by virtue of the rules of Common Law, equity, or appropriate personal law.</p>  | <p><b>Power of a guardian over the Estate of a child</b></p> |
| <p><b>89.</b> Where two or more persons act as joint guardians of a child and they are unable to agree on any question affecting the welfare of the child, any of them may apply to the Court for its direction, and the Court may make an order regarding the question in dispute.</p>   | <p><b>Dispute between joint guardians</b></p>                |
| <p><b>90.</b> (1) The Court may, for the purpose of any specified proceedings, appoint a guardian <i>ad litem</i> for the child concerned to safeguard the interests of the child, unless it is satisfied that it is not necessary to do so.</p> <p>(2) The guardian <i>ad litem</i> shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) be appointed in accordance with the Rules of Court; and</li> <li>(b) be under a duty to safeguard the interests of the child in the manner prescribed by those Rules.</li> </ul> <p>(3) Where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the child concerned is not represented by a legal practitioner; and</li> <li>(b) any of the conditions mentioned in subsection (4) is satisfied, the Court may appoint a legal practitioner to represent the child.</li> </ul> <p>(4) The conditions under which an appointment may be made under subsection (3) are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) no guardian <i>ad litem</i> has been appointed for the child</li> <li>(b) the child has sufficient understanding to instruct a legal practitioner and wishes to do so;</li> <li>(c) it appears to the Court that it would be in the best interest of the child for him/her to be represented by a legal practitioner.</li> </ul> <p>(5) A legal practitioner appointed under or by virtue of this section shall represent the child, in accordance with the Rules of Court.</p> <p>(6) Notwithstanding any enactment or rules of law to the contrary, the Court may take account of:</p> | <p><b>Appointment of Guardian <i>ad litem</i></b></p>        |

- (a) any statement contained in a report made by a guardian *ad litem* who is appointed under this section for the purpose of the proceedings in question; and
- (b) any evidence given in respect of the matters referred to in the report, in so far as the statement or evidence is, in the opinion of the Court, relevant to the question which the Court is considering.

91. (1) The Commissioner may by regulations provide for the establishment of panels of persons from which guardians *ad litem* appointed under this section may be selected.

**Establishment of panel from which Guardians *ad litem* may be appointed**

- (2) The regulations may, in particular, make provisions:
  - (a) as to the constitution, administration and procedures of the panels;
  - (b) requiring two or more specified Local Governments to make arrangements for the joint management of a panel;
  - (c) for the defrayment by the State Government of expenses incurred by members of panels;
  - (d) for the payment by the State Government of fees and allowances to members of panels;
  - (e) as to the qualifications for membership of a panel;
  - (f) as to the training to be given to members of the panel;
  - (g) as to the co-operation required of specified Local Governments in the provision of panels in specified areas; and
  - (h) for monitoring the work of guardian *ad litem*.
- (3) Rules of Court may make provisions as to the:
  - (a) assistance which a guardian *ad litem* may be required by the Court to give to it;
  - (b) consideration to be given by a guardian *ad litem*, where an Order of a specified kind has been made in the proceedings in question, as to whether to apply for the variation or discharge of the Order;
  - (c) participation of guardian *ad litem* in any review, of the kind specified in the Rules of Court, conducted by the Court.

92. (1) Where a person has been appointed as a guardian *ad litem* under this Law, he shall have the right at all reasonable times to examine and take a copy of:

**Right of Guardian *ad litem* to have access to records**

- (a) any record held by the State Government or the appropriate authority which was compiled in connection with the making, or proposed making, by any person of any application under this Law with respect to the child concerned; or
- (b) any other record held by the State Government or the appropriate authority which was compiled in connection with any function which have been referred to their social service committee, so far as those records relate to that child.

- (2) Where a guardian *ad litem* takes a copy of a record which he is entitled to examine under this section, that copy or any part of it shall, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any enactment or rules, be admissible as evidence of any matter referred to in any:
- (a) report which he or she makes to the Court in the proceedings in question; or
  - (b) evidence which he gives in those proceedings.
- 93.** (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of this Law, an Order lawfully made by any Court relating to the guardianship or custody of a child before the commencement of this Law and which is in force at the time of the commencement of this Law and is not inconsistent with this Law shall continue in force until other provisions are made under and by virtue of this Law.
- (2) Nothing in this Law shall restrict or affect the jurisdiction of a Court to appoint or remove guardians by virtue of the High Court Laws or any other written Law, until the Court has been established in the relevant jurisdictions.
- PART X  
WARDSHIP**
- 94.** The Court shall have jurisdiction in all matters pertaining to making a child a ward of court.
- 95.** (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, no child shall be made a ward of Court except by virtue of an Order to that effect, made by the Court.
- (2) Where application is made for an Order in respect of a child, the child becomes a ward of court on the making of the Order or on the expiration of such period as may be prescribed, unless within that period, another Order is made in accordance with the new application.
- (3) The Court may, either upon an application in that behalf or without an application, order that a child who, is for the time being a ward of court, ceases to be a ward of court.
- 96.** (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, the Court may make an Order:
- (a) requiring either parent of a ward of court to pay to the other parent; or
  - (b) requiring either parent or both parents of a ward of court to pay to any other person having the care and control of the ward, such weekly or other periodical sums towards the maintenance and education of the ward as the Court thinks reasonable, having regard to the means of the person or persons making the payment.

**Saving of existing orders and jurisdiction of the Court.**

**Jurisdiction of Court.**

**Wardship order**

**Maintenance of a ward of Court**

- (2) An Order under subsection (1) may require such sums as are mentioned in that subsection to continue to be paid in respect of any period but not beyond the date on which the ward of court attains the age of majority and such Order, if made, may provide that any sum which is payable for the benefit of that ward, having regard to the age of the child, be paid directly to that ward.
- (3) No Order shall be made under subsection (1) (a), and no liability under an Order made under this section, shall accrue, at a time when the parents of the ward of court or former ward of court, as the case may be, are residing together and if they so reside for a period of 3 months after an Order has been made, the Order shall cease to have effect.
- (4) The Court shall have power, from time to time, by an Order under this section, to vary or discharge any previous Order made under this section.
- 97.** (1) Where it appears to the Court that there are exceptional circumstances making it impracticable or undesirable for a ward of court to be, or to continue to be, under the care of either of his or her parents or any other person, the Court may, if it thinks fit, make an Order committing the care of the ward to an appropriate authority.
- (2) Where it appears to the Court that there are exceptional circumstances making it desirable that a ward of court, not being a ward who in pursuance of an order under subsection (1), is in the care of an appropriate authority, should be under the supervision of an independent person, the Court may, with regard to such period as the Court thinks fit, order that the ward be under the supervision of a Child Development Officer or other appropriate authority.
- (3) The Court shall have power, from time to time by an Order under this section, to vary or discharge any previous Order made under this section.
- 98.** A Court hearing a matrimonial case in which a child may be involved, may direct that proper proceedings be taken in the Court at the High Court level, for making the child a ward of court.
- 99.** Where the Court is of the opinion that an application for wardship is an abuse of the court process, it shall dismiss the application forthwith.
- 100.** An application for wardship shall be made in compliance with the Rules contained in the Third Schedule to this Law.

**Committal of ward to care of appropriate authority, etc.**

**Matrimonial causes**

**Dismissal of application for wardship**

**Rules for application for wardship  
Third schedule**

## **PART XI FOSTERING**

- 101.** (1) A person may foster a child by making an application to the Court within the jurisdiction in which the person and the child reside at the date of the application.

**Application for fostering**

- (2) An application for fostering shall be made in accordance with the procedure and in the manner prescribed by the Rules made under the provision of this Law.
- 102.** A child who may be fostered under this Law includes a child who:
- (a) is abandoned by the parents;
  - (b) is an orphan and:
    - (i) is deserted by the relatives;
    - (ii) is voluntarily presented by the relatives for fostering; or
    - (iii) voluntarily presents himself or herself for fostering, where no relatives of the child can be found;
  - (c) has been abused, neglected or ill-treated by the person having care and custody over the child;
  - (d) has a parent or guardian who does not or cannot exercise proper guidance over the child;
  - (e) is found destitute;
  - (f) is found wandering, has no home or settled place of abode, is on the streets or other public place, or has no visible means of subsistence; or
  - (g) is voluntarily presented by the child's parents for fostering.
- 103.** (1) Subject to the provisions of this Law, the Court may, on receipt of the application for fostering, make an Order authorizing the application to foster the child.
- (2) Except where a man and his wife have applied jointly to foster a child, a Fostering Order shall not authorize more than one person to foster a child.
- 104.** The number of children who may be fostered by a person shall not exceed 3, unless exceptional circumstances are shown.
- 105.** (1) A Fostering Order shall not be made by the Court unless:
- (a) the applicant or, in the case of a joint application, each of the applicants is not less than 25 years old and is at least 21 years older than the child to be fostered;
  - (b) the applicant and the child are resident in the State;
  - (c) the applicant is a citizen of Nigeria;
  - (d) the applicant is a person of unquestionable integrity; and
  - (e) the applicant is certified by a medical officer to be physically and mentally fit.
- (2) A Fostering Order shall not be made in favour of a sole applicant who is unmarried, unless the applicant has attained the age of 35 years and the child to be fostered is of the same gender as the applicant.
- 106.** (1) Where a married person is the sole applicant for a Fostering Order, the application shall be accompanied with the consent in writing, of the other spouse, that the Order be made.

**Child who  
may be  
fostered**

**Making a  
Fostering Order.**

**Limit on number  
of children who  
may be fostered.**

**Restriction on the  
making of  
Fostering Orders**

**Consent to  
fostering**

- (2) Where it appears to the Court that a person other than the father or mother or relative of a child has any right or obligation in respect of the child under an Order of Court or an agreement or under Customary Law, the Court may refuse to make the Fostering Order until the consent of that person is first obtained.
- (3) The Court may dispense with any consent required under this section if it is satisfied that the person whose consent would have been required:
  - (a) has abandoned, neglected or persistently ill-treated the child; or
  - (b) cannot be found or is incapable of giving his consent or is unreasonably withholding his consent.

**107.(1)** Before making a Fostering Order, the Court shall be satisfied that:

- (a) every consent under section 108, which has not been dispensed with, had been obtained and every person who has given his consent understands the nature and effect of the Fostering Order for which the application is made;
- (b) the Order, if made, will be for the maintenance, care, education and general welfare and best interest of the child; and
- (c) the applicant has not received or agreed to receive and no person has made or given or agreed to make or give to the applicant, any payment or other reward in consideration of the fostering.

**Further  
conditions for  
making Fostering  
Orders**

- (2) The Court may, in a Fostering Order, impose such terms and conditions as it may think fit and in particular, may require the foster parent by bond or otherwise to make for the child, such provisions as in the opinion of the Court is just and expedient.

**108.(1)** Subject to this section, the Court may, on application for a Fostering Order by a person, postpone the determination of the application and make an Interim Order giving the custody of the child to the applicant for a period not exceeding 2 years, as a probationary period, on such terms and conditions as the Court thinks fit as regards provision for the maintenance, education and supervision of the child and otherwise.

**Interim  
Orders**

- (2) The Court shall impose the following conditions under subsection (1), that is:
  - (a) that the child shall be under the supervision of an Officer appointed by the Court; and
  - (b) that the child shall not be taken out of the State without the prior consent of the Court.

Provided that in an emergency situation and if it is in the best interest of the child, the child may be taken out of Rivers State without the prior consent of the Court and the Court shall promptly be notified by the foster parent or his representative in writing and no more than 2 days thereof, of the particular

place the child was taken to, the reason, and any other circumstances or situation pertaining to the child and the proposed return date of the child, back to Rivers State.

- (3) All consents as are required for the making of a Fostering Order shall be necessary for an Interim Order but subject to a like power on the part of the Court to dispense with any such consent.
  - (4) An Interim Order shall not be made in any case where the making of a Fostering Order would be unlawful by virtue of section 128.
  - (5) An Interim Order shall not have the same effect as a Fostering Order under this Law.
  - (6) An Interim Order may be revoked by the Court if the foster parent fails to comply with any condition imposed on him by the Interim Order pursuant to this section.
- 109.** (1) The Chief Judge of the State may make Rules of Court providing generally for the practice and procedure of the Court in respect of the fostering of children under this Law. **Rules of Court**
- (2) The power to make Rules conferred under subsection (1) shall, without prejudice to the generality of that subsection, include power to make provisions for:
- (a) proceedings to be held in camera in determining the application in the Court;
  - (b) excluding or restricting the jurisdiction of any Court where a previous application made by the applicant in respect of the same child has been refused by that or any other Court;
  - (c) the admission of documentary evidence of any consent required under section 108 of this Law and
  - (d) a report for the assistance of the Court in determining whether or not the Fostering Order will be in the overall interest and welfare of the child having regard to the ability of the applicant to maintain, care for and educate the child.
- 110.** An appeal shall lie to the Court at the High Court level from the Court at the Magistrate's Court level in respect of a decision on an application for a Fostering Order, other than a decision to postpone the determination of an application for the Order or to make an Interim Order. **Appeal**
- 111.** (1) On the making of a Fostering Order:
- (a) all rights, duties, obligations and liabilities, including:
    - (i) any arising under Customary Law applicable to the parents of the child, or any other person or persons in relation to the custody, maintenance and education of the child; and
    - (ii) all rights to appoint a guardian and to consent or give notice of consent or marriage, shall be suspended; and
  - (b) there shall vest in and be exercisable by and enforced against the foster parents, all such rights, duties, obligations and liabilities in relation to custody, maintenance and education of the child as if the child were a child born to the foster parent in lawful marriage.
- Rights and duties of foster parents and other persons**

- (2) A child shall, in respect of the child's custody, maintenance and education, stand to the foster parent exactly in the position of a child born to the foster parent in lawful marriage.
- (3) Where a husband and wife are joint foster parents, they shall, in respect of the custody, maintenance and education of the child and for the purpose of the jurisdiction of any Court to make Orders as to the custody and maintenance or a right of access to the child, stand to each other and to the child in the same relationship as they would have stood if the child were a child born to them in lawful marriage.
- 112.** Where at the time a Fostering Order is made in respect of a child, an Order requiring a person to contribute towards the maintenance of that child under this Law is in force, the Fostering Order shall prevail.
- 113.** (1) The Chief Registrar and the appropriate child development service shall each keep and maintain a register to be known as the Fostered Children Register in which shall be made such entries as may be directed by a Fostering Order to be made therein.
- (2) A Fostering Order shall contain a direction to the Chief Registrar and the appropriate child development service to make in the Fostered Children Register the entry in the Form specified in Part II of Fourth Schedule.
- (3) If, on an application to the Court for a Fostering Order, it is proved to the satisfaction of the Court that the date of birth of the child and other particulars of the child are identical with a child to whom an entry in the Register of Births kept by the National Population Commission relates, the Fostering Order shall contain a further direction to the Chief Registrar and the appropriate child development service to cause the entry in the Register of Births to be marked "Fostered".
- (4) Where a Fostering Order is made in respect of a child who has been the subject of a previous Fostering Order made under this Law, the Fostering Order shall contain a direction to the Chief Registrar and the appropriate child development service to cause the previous entry in the Fostered Children Register and the Register of Births in respect of that child to be marked "Re-fostered".
- (5) The Court shall cause a copy of every Foster Order to be communicated to the Chief Registrar and the appropriate child development service and on receipt of the Order, the Chief Registrar and the appropriate child development service shall comply with the direction contained therein.
- (6) A certified copy of an entry in the Fostered Children Register if purporting to be stamped or sealed with the seal of office of the Chief Registrar shall be prima facie proof of the facts contained therein, including the date of birth of a child to

**Effects of  
fostering on  
Maintenance  
Order**

**Fostered  
Children  
Register**

whom it relates without any further evidence as if the same were certified copy of an entry in the Register of Births.

- (7) The Chief Registrar shall cause an index of the Fostered Children Register to be made and kept in the registry.
- (8) A copy of the extract of an entry in any register, being an entry which is cancelled under this section, shall be prima facie evidence of that cancellation.
- (9) A register, record or book as is mentioned in subsection (8) or an index thereof shall not be liable to be searched by any member of the public and the Chief Registrar shall not make a certified copy thereof or furnish any information therein contained to a person except under an Order made by the Court.
- (10) On the revocation of a Fostering Order, the Court shall cause the fact of the revocation to be communicated to the Chief Registrar and the appropriate child development service who shall cancel or cause to be canceled:
  - (a) the entry in the Fostered Children Register relating to the fostered child; and
  - (b) the word “Fostered” or “Re-fostered” in the entry relating to the fostered child in the Register of Births.
- (11) The Chief Registrar may keep such record books and make such other entries therein as may be consistent with the particulars contained in the Fostered Children Register.

**114.** (1) The appropriate child development service shall keep itself informed from time to time, of the condition and welfare of each child fostered under this Law and for that purpose, arrange for Child Development Officers to do all or any of the following things, that is:

**Visit to fostered child by Child Development Officers**

- (a) to pay periodic visits at reasonable times to each child fostered under this Law until the child attains the age of 18 years; and
- (b) to enter any premises for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is any contravention by a person, of any condition of the Fostering Order or of any other provision of this Law.

(2) During the visit under this section, the Officer conducting the visit may require the production of the fostered child or that information be given, regarding the condition of the child.

**115.** Where it is proved to the satisfaction of a Court that a foster parent has abandoned, neglected or persistently ill-treated or assaulted a fostered child, the Court shall:

**Revocation of a foster order on grounds of the interest of the child**

- (a) revoke the Fostering Order in respect of the child; and
- (b) proceed to take other necessary action pursuant to the provisions of this Law.

**116.** (1) A person who:

**Prohibition of receiving money or reward as inducement to foster a child**

- (a) receives or agrees to receive money or a reward as an inducement to foster a child;

- (b) receives or agrees to receive money or any reward in order to facilitate arrangements to foster a child; or
- (c) gives or agrees to give money or reward to secure consent of a person to foster a child;
- commits an offence under this Law.
- (2) A person who commits an offence under subsection (1) is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- 117.** (1) Where a foster parent intends to take a fostered child outside the State or Nigeria, the foster parent shall give notice to the Court of his intention to do so and shall, on return to the State or Nigeria, notify the Court of their return provided that in appropriate cases, the proviso to section 108 (2) may apply.
- (2) A person who permits, causes or procures the possession of a child to be given to any person:
- (a) outside Rivers State, where the Fostering Order was made; or
- (b) outside Nigeria, with the intent to get that child fostered by that person; commits an offence.
- (3) A person who commits an offence under subsection (2) is liable on conviction in the case of an offence under:
- (a) subsection (2)(a), to imprisonment for a term of 10 years; and
- (b) subsection (2)(b), to imprisonment for a term of 15 years.
- 118.** While an application for a Fostering Order is pending in a Court, no person who has given his consent to a Fostering Order being made in respect of a child shall withdraw the child or cause the child to be withdrawn from the care and possession of the applicant without the leave of the Court and the Court shall, in granting the leave, have regard to the welfare of the child.
- 119.** (1) No foster parent shall marry any child fostered by him pursuant to this Law.
- (2) A foster parent who marries a child fostered by him commits an offence under this Law and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 14 years.
- 120.** A person who:
- (a) without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with a lawful directive given by a Child Development Officer; or
- (b) obstructs a Social Welfare Officer in the exercise of the powers conferred by this Law;
- commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦100,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- 121.** (1) For the purposes of this Part of this Law and subject to subsection (2):

**Prohibition of taking, sending fostered child out of the State or Nigeria**

**Prohibition of withdrawal of a child from the care of the applicant**

**Foster parent prohibited from marrying fostered child.**

**Non-compliance with lawful directives**

**Private arrangement for fostered children**

- (a) a child shall be deemed to be fostered privately if the child is cared for, and provided with accommodation by a person other than:
    - (i) a parent of the child; or
    - (ii) any other person who has parental responsibility for the child; or
  - (b) a person shall be deemed to foster a child privately if he cares for the child in circumstances in which the child is fostered privately as defined under paragraph (a).
- (2) A child is not fostered privately if the person caring for and accommodating the child has done so for a period of less than 28 days and does not intend to do so for any longer period.
- (3) The provisions in Part III of the Fourth Schedule shall have effect for the purposes of supplementing the provisions of this section. **Schedule iv**
- 122.** (1) The State Government shall: **Welfare of a child fostered privately**
- (a) satisfy itself that the welfare and best interest of a child who is fostered privately within the State are satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted; and
  - (b) ensure that the person caring for that child is given such advice as appears to the State Government to be needed.
- (2) Where a person who is authorised by the State Government to visit a child who is fostered privately has reasonable cause to believe that the child who is or is proposed to be fostered privately is being accommodated in premises within the State, the person may, at any reasonable time, inspect those premises and any child accommodated in the premises.
- (3) A person exercising the power under subsection (2) shall, if so required, produce some duly authenticated document showing his authority to do so.
- (4) Where an Officer of the State Government is not satisfied that the welfare of a child who is fostered privately within the State is satisfactorily safeguarded or promoted, he shall:
- (a) unless he considers that it would not be in the best interest of the child, take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that the care and accommodation of the child is undertaken by:
    - (i) a parent of the child,
    - (ii) any other person who has parental responsibility for the child or
    - (iii) a relative of the child, and
  - (b) consider the extent to which, if at all, they shall exercise any of their powers under this Law with respect to the child.
- (5) The Commissioner may make regulations:
- (a) requiring every child who is fostered privately within the State to be visited by an Officer of the State Government:
    - (i) in prescribed circumstances, and
    - (ii) on specified occasions or within specified periods; and

- (b) imposing requirements which are to be met by any State Officer in carrying out his functions under this section.

**123.** (1) A person shall not foster a child privately if he is disqualified from doing so by regulations made by the Commissioner for the purposes of this section, unless he has disclosed the fact to the appropriate authority and obtained its written consent.

**Person  
disqualified  
from fostering  
a child  
privately**

(2) The regulations shall, in particular, provide for a person to be so disqualified where:

- (a) an Order of a kind specified in the regulations has been made at any time:
  - (i) with respect to that person, or
  - (ii) with respect to a child who has been in the care of that person;
- (b) a requirement of a kind so specified has been imposed by an enactment;
- (c) he has been convicted of an offence of a kind so specified, or has been placed on probation or discharged absolutely or conditionally for any offence;
- (d) a prohibition has been imposed on him at any time under section 124 or under any other specified enactment;
- (e) his rights and powers with respect to a child have at any time been vested in a specified authority under a specified enactment.

(3) A person shall not foster a child privately if:

- (a) he lives in the same household as a person who is himself prevented from fostering a child by subsection (1); or
- (b) he lives in a household at which any such person is employed, unless he has disclosed the fact to the appropriate authority and obtained their written consent.

(4) Where an appropriate authority refuses to give its consent under this section, it shall inform the applicant by a written notice, of:

**Fourth iv**

- (a) the reason for the refusal
- (b) the applicant's right to appeal against the refusal; and
- (c) the time within which he may appeal.

(5) The Form set out in Part IV of the Fourth Schedule and the provisions contained in Part V and VI of that Schedule shall be used and have effect for the purposes of this section and this Part of this Law.

**124.** (1) This section applies where a person:

**Power of State  
Government to  
prohibit private  
fostering**

- (a) proposes to foster a child privately; or
- (b) is fostering a child privately.

(2) Where the State Government is of the opinion that:

- (a) a person is not a suitable person to foster a child;
- (b) the premises in which the child will be, or is being accommodated are not suitable; or
- (c) it would be prejudicial to the welfare of the child for the child to be or continue to be accommodated by that person in those premises; the State

Government may impose on the person a prohibition specified under subsection (3).

- (3) A prohibition imposed on a person under subsection (2) may prohibit the person from fostering privately:
  - (a) any child in any premises within the State; or
  - (b) any child in premises specified in the prohibition; or
  - (c) a child identified in the prohibition, in premises specified in the prohibition.
- (4) Where the State Government has imposed a prohibition on any person under subsection (2), it may, if it thinks fit, cancel the prohibition:
  - (a) of its own motion; or
  - (b) on an application made by that person, if it is satisfied that the prohibition is no longer justified.
- (5) A prohibition imposed under this section shall be by notice in writing addressed to the person on whom it is imposed and informing the person of:
  - (a) the reason for imposing the prohibition
  - (b) his right to appeal against the prohibition; and
  - (c) the time within which the person may appeal.

**125. (1) A person who:**

**Offences  
under this Part**

- (a) being required, under any provisions made by or under this Part of this Law, to give any notice or information:
    - (i) fails, without reasonable excuse, to give the notice within the time specified in that provision;
    - (ii) fails, without reasonable excuse, to give the information within a reasonable time; or
    - (iii) makes or causes or procures another person to make any statement in the notice of information which the person knows or believes to be false or misleading in a material particular;
  - (b) refuses to allow a child fostered privately to be visited by a duly authorised Officer of the State Government;
  - (c) intentionally obstructs another person in the exercise of the power conferred by section 122 (2);
  - (d) contravenes section 125;
  - (e) fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with any requirement imposed by the State Government under this Part of this Law;
  - (f) accommodates a child fostered privately in any premises in contravention of a prohibition known to the person to have been imposed by the State Government under this Part of this Law; or
  - (g) knowingly publishes or causes to be published, an advertisement which the person knows contravenes paragraph 8 of Part III of Schedule 4, commits an offence under this Law.
- (2) Where a person contravenes section 125(3), he does not commit an offence under this section if he proves that he did not know and had no reasonable ground for

believing that a person to whom section 125(1) applies was living or employed in the premises in question.

- (3) A person who commits an offence:
  - (a) under subsection (1)(a), is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦100,000;
  - (b) under subsection (1)(b), (c), (d), (e), (j), (g), is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- (4) If a person who is required under any provisions of this Part of this Law to give notice fails to give the notice within the time specified in that provision, proceedings for an offence may be brought at any time within 6 months from the date when evidence of the offence came to the knowledge of the State Government.

## **PART XII**

### **ADOPTION**

- 126.** (1) The State Government shall, for the purpose of adoption, establish and maintain within the State, a service designed to meet the needs of:
- (a) a child who has been or may be adopted;
  - (b) parents and guardians of the child specified in paragraph (a); and
  - (c) persons who have adopted or who may adopt a child;
- and for this purpose, the State Government shall provide the requisite facilities or ensure that the facilities are provided by approved adoption services as may be prescribed by the appropriate authority.
- (2) The facilities to be provided as part of the services maintained under subsection (1) of this section include:
- (a) temporary boarding and lodging, where needed by a child and in exceptional circumstances, the mother of a child;
  - (b) arrangements for assessing a child and prospective adopters and placing of the child for adoption; and
  - (c) counseling for persons with problems relating to adoption.
- (3) The best interest of the Child shall be the paramount consideration in every Adoption matters.

**Establishment  
of adoption  
services etc.**

- 127.** (1) An application for adoption shall be made to the Court in such form as may be prescribed, and shall be accompanied with:
- (a) where the applicant is a married couple, their marriage certificate or a sworn declaration of marriage;
  - (b) the birth certificate or sworn declaration of age of each applicant;
  - (c) two passport photographs of each applicant;

**Application for  
adoption etc.**

- (d) a medical certificate of the fitness of the applicant from a Government Hospital; and
  - (e) any other document, requirements and information as the Court may require for the purposes of adoption.
- (2) On receipt of an application under subsection (1), the Court shall order an investigation to be conducted by:
- (a) a Child Development Officer
  - (b) a Supervision Officer; and
  - (c) such other persons as the Court may determine, to enable the Court to assess the suitability of the applicant as an adopter and of the child to be adopted.
- (3) The Court shall, in reaching a decision relating to the adoption of a child, have regard to all the circumstances, first consideration being given to:
- (a) the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and the best interest of the child throughout the childhood of that child; and
  - (b) ascertaining as far as is practicable, the wishes and feelings of the child regarding the decision and giving due consideration to those wishes and feelings, having regard to the age and understanding of the child.
- 128.** The Court shall, in placing a child for adoption, have regard, as far as is practicable, to the wishes, if any, of the parents or guardian of the child as to the religious upbringing of the child. **Religious upbringing of an adopted child**
- 129.** The Court shall not make an Adoption Order in respect of a child unless: **Persons who may be adopted**
- (a) the parents of the child or, where there is no surviving parent, the guardian of the child consents to the adoption; or
  - (b) the child is abandoned, neglected or persistently abused or ill-treated, and there are compelling reasons in the interest of the child why he/she should be adopted.
- 130.** The following persons may apply for an adoption order: **Persons who may adopt.**
- (a) a married couple where:
    - (i) each of them has attained the age of 25 years; and
    - (ii) there is an Order authorizing them jointly to adopt a child; or
  - (b) a married person, if the person has obtained consent of his spouse, as required under section 133 of this Law; or
  - (c) a single person, if he has attained the age of 35 years, provided that the child to be adopted is of the same sex as the person adopting; or
  - (d) in all cases specified in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c), the adopter or adopters shall be persons found to be suitable to adopt the child in question by the appropriate investigating officers.
- Power to make Adoption Order**

**131.** (1) Subject to this Law, the Court may, on the application of a person stated in section 127, in the prescribed manner, make an Order under this Law referred to as an “Adoption Order”.

(2) An Adoption Order shall be made in the Form specified in the Fifth Schedule.

**132.** (1) An Adoption Order shall not be made in respect of a child unless:

- (a) the applicant, or in the case of a joint application, one of them, is not less than 25 years old and is, at least 21 years older than the child;
- (b) the applicant, or in the case of a joint application, both or, at least one of them and the child are resident in the State;
- (c) the applicant has been resident, or in the case of a joint application, both of them have been resident in the State for a period of at least, 5 years;
- (d) the applicant is a Nigerian citizen, or in the case of a joint application, both applicants are citizens of Nigeria;
- (e) the child has been in the care of the applicant for a period of at least 3 consecutive months immediately preceding the date on which the Order is made; and
- (f) the applicant has, at least 12 months before the making of the Order, informed the social Welfare Officer of his intention to adopt the child.

(2) On the application of a married couple, if they consist of a parent and a step parent of the child, the Court shall dismiss the application if it considers that the matter would be better dealt with under Part VIII.

**133.** (1) Where a married person is the sole applicant for an Adoption Order, the Court may, if it thinks fit, refuse to make the Order if the consent of the spouse of the applicant to the making of the Order is not first obtained.

(2) Where it appears to the Court that a person other than the parent or relative of a child has any right or obligation in respect of the child under an Order of the Court or any agreement or under Customary Law, the Court may, if it thinks fit, refuse to make the Adoption Order if the consent of that person is not first obtained.

(3) The Child Development Officer, on an application for an Adoption Order in respect of a child, shall prepare a report to assist the Court in determining whether a person who is not a parent or relative of the child has any right or obligation in respect of that child and whether the consent of the person ought first to be obtained.

(4) A consent under this section may be given either:

- (a) unconditionally; or
- (b) subject to conditions with respect to the religious persuasion in which the child is to be brought up.

(5) In giving a consent under this section, it may not be necessary for the person giving the consent to know the identity of the applicant for the Adoption Order.

**Restrictions  
on making  
Adoption  
Orders**

**Required  
consent.**

- (6) The Court may dispense with any consent required under this section if it is satisfied that the person whose consent is required cannot be found or is incapable of giving his consent or is withholding his consent unreasonably.
- (7) While an application for an Adoption Order is pending in any Court, no person who has given his consent to an Adoption Order to be made in respect of a child shall withdraw the child from the care and possession of the applicant without the leave of the Court and the Court shall have regard to the welfare of the child in considering whether or not to grant the leave.

**134.** The Court shall, before making an Adoption Order, satisfy itself that:

- (a) every consent required under section 133 of this Law which has not been dispensed with has been obtained;
- (b) every person who has given consent understands the nature and effect of the Adoption Order for which the application is made and for this purpose, the relevant adoption service shall provide adequate counseling for the parties involved in the adoption;
- (c) the Order, if made, shall be for the welfare and best interest of the child, due consideration for this purpose being given to the wishes of the child having regard to the child's age and understanding; and
- (d) the applicant has not received or agreed to receive and no person has made, given or agreed to make or give to the applicant any payment or other reward in consideration of the adoption other than what the Court may approve.

**Conditions  
preceding the  
making of an  
Adoption Order**

**135.** The Court may, in making an Adoption Order, impose such terms and conditions as the Court may think fit and in particular, may require the adopter, by bond or otherwise, to make for the child such provisions, if any, as in the opinion of the Court, are just and expedient.

**Power of Court  
to impose  
terms and  
conditions.**

**136.** (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, the Court may, on an application for an Adoption Order, postpone the determination of the application and make an Interim Order giving the custody of the child to the applicant for a period not exceeding 2 years on such terms and conditions as the Court thinks fit as regards provision for the maintenance, education and supervision of the welfare of the child and otherwise.

**Interim Orders,  
pending  
Adoption  
Orders.**

- (2) The Court shall, in making an Interim Order under subsection (1), specify that the child shall:
  - (a) be under the supervision of such Child Development Officer as the Commissioner may appoint; and
  - (b) not be taken out of the State or country without the consent of the Court, save for situations where the proviso to section 108 (2) applies.
- (3) The consents to the making of an Adoption Order which are required under section 133 shall be required to the making of an Interim Order and the power of

the Court to dispense with any such consent shall also apply in the case of an Interim Order.

- (4) An Interim Order shall not be made in any case where the making of an Adoption Order would be unlawful under this Law.
- (5) An Interim Order shall not be deemed to be an Adoption Order within the meaning of this Law.
- 137.** Subject to Rules of the Court made under section 138, the Court shall have exclusive jurisdiction to deal with an application for an Adoption Order.
- 138.** (1) The Chief Judge of the State may make Rules of Court for regulating generally the practice and procedure of the Court in respect of the adoption of a child.
- (2) The power to make Rules conferred by subsection (1), shall, without prejudice to the generality of that subsection, include power to make provisions for:
- (a) application for the Adoption Orders being heard and determined otherwise than in open court;
- (b) the admission of documentary evidence of any consent required under section 133; and
- (c) requiring the Child Development Officer to prepare for the consideration of the Court, on an application for an Adoption Order, a report, for the assistance of the Court in determining whether the Order will be for the welfare and best interest of the child.
- 139.** (1) An appeal shall lie to the Court at the High Court level from the Court at the Magistrates' Court level in respect of a decision on any application for an Adoption Order, other than a decision to postpone the determination of the application for such an Order and make an Interim Order.
- (2) Where the Court at the High Court level exercises original or appellate jurisdiction, appeal shall lie to the Court of Appeal.
- (3) Proceedings in respect of an appeal under this section shall be conducted in chambers.
- 140.** (1) A child may be adopted notwithstanding that a Corrective Order is in force in respect of the child.
- (2) On the application for an Adoption Order being made in a case under subsection (1) and on being satisfied that the adoption would be for the welfare and best interest of the child concerned, the Court shall suspend the Corrective Order so as to enable the applicant to have the child in this case for a period of at least 3 consecutive months immediately preceding the date of the Adoption Order.
- 141.** (1) A child may be adopted notwithstanding that a Maintenance Order is in force in respect of the child.

**Jurisdiction  
of the Court**

**Rules of the  
Court for the  
adoption of a  
child**

**Appeals**

**Adoption  
when  
Corrective  
Order is in  
force.**

**Adoption  
where  
Maintenance  
Order is in  
force.**

- (2) Where, at the time when an Adoption Order is made in respect of a child, a Maintenance Order requiring a person to contribute towards the maintenance of that child under this Law or any other law is in force, the Maintenance Order shall cease to have effect at that time.
- 142.** (1) On an Adoption Order being made:
- Effect of adoption**
- (a) all rights, duties. Obligations and liabilities, including any other Order under the personal law applicable to the parents of the child or any other person in relation to the future custody, maintenance, supervision and education of the child, including all religious rights, right to appoint a guardian and to consent or give notice of dissent to marriage, shall be extinguished; and
  - (b) there shall vest in, and be exercisable by and enforceable against the adopter:
    - (i) all rights, duties, obligations and liabilities in respect of the future custody, maintenance, supervision and education of the child; and
    - (ii) all rights to appoint a guardian and to consent or give notice of dissent to marriage of the child, as would vest in the adopter as if the child were a natural child of the adopter, and in respect of those matters, the child shall stand to the adopter in the relationship of a child born to the adopter.
- (2) Where a husband and wife are joint adopters of a child, they shall:
- (a) in respect of the matters specified under this section; and
  - (b) for the purpose of the jurisdiction of the Court to make orders as to the custody and maintenance of and rights of access to the children, stand to each other and to the child in the same relationship as they would have stood if the child were their natural child and in respect of those matters, the child shall stand to them in the relationship of a child born to the adopters.
- (3) For the purpose of the devolution of the property on the intestacy of the adopter an adopted child shall be treated as a child born to the adopter.
- (4) In a disposition of property made after the date of an Adoption Order, reference whether express or implied, to:
- (a) the child or children of the adopter shall, unless the contrary intention appears, be considered as including a reference to the adopted child; and
  - (b) a person related to the adopted child in any degree shall, unless the contrary intention appears, be construed as a reference to the person who would be related to the child in that degree if the child were the natural child of the adopter and were not the child of any other person.
- 143.** (1) The Chief Registrar shall establish and maintain a register to be called and known as the “Adopted Children Register” in which shall be made such entries as may be directed by an adoption order to be made therein, but no other entries.
- Establishment of the Adopted Children Register**
- (2) An Adoption Order shall contain a direction to the Chief Registrar and the National Population Commission (in this Part of this Law referred to as “the Commission”) to make in the Adopted Children Register entry in the Form specified in the Fifth Schedule.

- (3) If on any application to the Court for an adoption, there is proof to the satisfaction of the Court that:
  - (a) the date of birth of the child; and
  - (b) the identity of the child is identical to, a child to whom an entry in the Register of Births kept by the Commission relates, the Adoption Order shall contain a further direction to the Chief Registrar to cause that birth entry in the Register of Births to be marked “Adopted” and to include in the entry relating to the adoption of the child in the Adopted Children Register the day of the child’s birth.
- (4) Where an Adoption Order is made in respect of a child who had been the subject of a previous Adoption Order made by the Court under this Law, the Order shall contain a direction to the Chief Registrar and the Commission to cause the previous entry in the Adopted Children Register in respect of that child to be marked “Re-adopted”.
- (5) The Court shall cause a copy of every Adoption Order to be communicated to the Chief Registrar and the Commission and on receipt of the Order; the Chief Registrar and the Commission shall comply with the directions contained therein.
- (6) A certified copy of an entry in the Adopted Children Register if purporting to be stamped or sealed by the Chief Registrar’s office shall be proof of the adoption as is therein specified, and where the copy of the entry includes the date of the birth of the child to whom it relates, it shall be proof also of the date without any further evidence as though the same were also a certified copy of an entry in the Register of Births.
- (7) The Chief Registrar shall cause an index of the Adopted Children Register to be made and kept in the Registry.
- (8) The Chief Registrar shall, in addition to the Adopted Children Register and the index thereof keep such other registers and books and make such entries therein as may be necessary to record, in connection with an entry in the Register of Births which has been marked “Adopted”.
- (9) Any such Register of books as are mentioned in subsection (8) of this section or any index thereof, if any, shall not be liable to searches by members of the public and the Chief Registrar shall not make a certified copy thereof or furnish any information therein contained to any person except under an Order made by the Court.
- (10) On the revocation of an Adoption Order, the Court shall cause the fact of the revocation to be communicated to the Chief Registrar who shall cause to be cancelled:
  - (a) the entry in the Adopted Children Register relating to the adopted child; and
  - (b) the marking with the word “Adopted” or “Re-adopted” of any entry relating to the child in the Register of Births.

- (11) A copy of an extract of an entry in any register being an entry the marking of which is cancelled under this section shall be deemed to be an accurate copy if both the marking and the cancellation are omitted there from.

**144. (1)** No adopter or any other person shall:

**Prohibition  
of certain  
payments  
for adoption**

- (a) except with the sanction of the Court, receive or agree to receive any payment or reward, in consideration for or for the facilitation of the adoption of a child under this Law;
  - (b) make or give or agree to make or give to an adopter any payment or reward the receipt of which is prohibited by this subsection.
- (2) A person who contravenes the provisions of subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦1,500,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- (3) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (2), an adoption order affected by the payment prohibited under subsection (1) may be allowed to continue or be resolved at the discretion of the Court having regard to all the circumstances of the case particularly the best interest of the child.

**145. (1)** Except under a license issued pursuant to section 146, no person shall permit or cause or procure the care and possession of a child to be given to any person outside the State in which the Adoption Order was made with a view to getting the child adopted by any person.

**Restrictions on  
inter-state  
adoption**

- (2) A person who permits or causes or procures the possession of a child to be given to any person:
- (a) outside the State in which the fostering order was made, or
  - (b) outside Nigeria, with intent to getting that child fostered by that person commits an offence.
- (3) A person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- (4) A person who commits an offence under subsection (2) is liable on conviction to a term of:
- (a) in the case of an offence under subsection (2)(a) of this section, to imprisonment for a term of 10 years;
  - (b) in the case of an offence under subsection (2)(b), to imprisonment for a term of 15 years.

**146.(1)** Subject to this section, the Commissioner may grant a license for a child to be transferred to a person, subject to such conditions and restrictions as the

**Grant of license  
for inter-state  
adoption of a  
child**

Commissioner may think fit, authorizing the care and protection of a child for whom inter-state adoption arrangements have been made.

- (2) A license shall not be granted under subsection (1) unless the Commissioner is satisfied, in respect of every person whose consent is required under section 133 to the making of an Adoption Order for the child, that:
- (a) the application for the license is made with the consent of that person: or
  - (b) the consent of that person can properly be dispensed with, on any ground on which the Court could dispense with a consent to an Adoption Order under that section.
- (3) A license shall not be granted under this section unless the Commissioner is satisfied that:
- (a) the person to whom the care and possession of the child is proposed to be transferred is a suitable person, under the provision of this Law, to be entrusted with the child; and
  - (b) the transfer is for the welfare and best interest of the child.
- (4) The Commissioner shall, in granting a license under this section, give consideration to the wishes of the child having regard to the age and understanding of the child.
- 147.** Where a person has been adopted under any Law in force in any part of Nigeria or under the Law of any Country other than Nigeria, the adoption shall have the likely validity and effect as if the adoption has been effected by an Adoption Order under this Law.
- 148.** (1) A marriage between a person who has adopted a child under this Law or a natural child of a person who adopted a child and the adopted child is hereby prohibited and any such marriage shall be null and void.
- (2) A person who marries an adopted child in violation of subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 14 years.
- 149.** (1) The Director of Child Welfare Development in the State Ministry shall keep himself informed, from time to time, of the condition and welfare of a child adopted by any person in the State and arrange for Officers of that Department to do all or any of the following:
- (a) to pay periodic visits, at reasonable times, to every child adopted under this Law;
  - (b) to enter any premises for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is any contravention by any person of any condition of adoption imposed in an Adoption Order or any provision of this Law in relation to an adopted child.

**Recognition of adoption processed outside Rivers State**

**Adoptive parents etc. prohibited from marrying adopted child**

**Visit to adopted child by Child Development Officers**

- (2) During any visit under subsection (1); the Officer paying the visit may require production of the adopted child or that information be given regarding the condition of the child.
- (3) The Officer shall only undertake duties as outlined in this section in a reasonable manner, to allow for the child's enjoyment of a normal family life.
- (4) A person who:
  - (a) without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with a requirement imposed by a Child Development Officer, or
  - (b) obstructs a Child Development Officer in the exercise of the powers conferred by this section, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment not exceeding 3 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.

### PART XIII THE FAMILY COURT

- 150.** (1) There shall be established for the State a Court to be known as the Family Court (in this Law referred to as "the Court") for the purpose of hearing and determining matters relating to children. **Establishment of the Family Court**
- (2) Conduct of proceedings at the Court shall be lawfully done ~~either~~ in person or by virtual hearing procedures.
- (3) The Chief Judge may, by Rules made pursuant to this Law, give further directives on hearing procedures in the Court.
- 151.** The Court shall be at two levels: **Family Court to have two levels**
- (a) the Court as a Division of the High Court at the High Court Level; and
  - (b) the Court as a Magisterial District of the Magistrates' Court, at the Magistrates' Court level.
- 152.** (1) Subject to the provision of this Law and in addition to such other jurisdiction as may be conferred on it by any other Law, the Court shall have unlimited jurisdiction to hear and determine: **General jurisdiction**
- (a) any civil proceedings in which the existence or extent of a legal right, power, duty, liability, privilege, interest, obligation or claim in respect of a child is in issue and
  - (b) any criminal proceeding involving or relating to any penalty, forfeiture, punishment or other liabilities in respect of an offence committed by a child, against a child or against the interest of a child.
- (2) The reference to civil or criminal proceedings in this section includes a reference to a proceeding that originates in the Court and which is brought by the Court at the High Court level to be dealt with by the Court in the exercise of its appellate or supervisory jurisdiction.
- (3) The Court shall, in any matter relating to or affecting a child or a family and all stages of any proceeding before it:

- (a) be guided by the principle of conciliation of the parties involved or likely to be affected by the result of the proceedings, including:
  - (i) the child,
  - (ii) the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child and
  - (iii) any other person having parental or other responsibility for the child; and
- (b) encourage and facilitate the settlement of the matter before it in an amicable manner.

**153. (1) The Court at the High Court level shall consist of such number of:**

**Family Court  
at the High  
Court level**

- (a) Judges of the High Court of the State; and
  - (b) Assessors who shall be Officers not below the rank of the Child Welfare Development Officer, as shall enable the Court to effectively perform its functions under this Law.
- (2) The members of the Court at the High Court level shall be appointed by the Chief Judge of the State.
- (3) The Court at the High Court level may be duly constituted if it consists of a Judge sitting alone or the Judge with:
- (a) 2 Assessors, one of whom may be a woman;
  - (b) retired directors of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation;
  - (c) child psychologists and;
  - (d) any other person who possesses sufficient knowledge and experience in dealing with children and matters relating to children, preferably in the area of child psychology education,

Provided that in the exercise of its criminal jurisdiction, the Court at the High Court level may be duly constituted by a Judge sitting alone.

- (4) The High Court at the High Court level has power to:
- (a) deal with all matters relating to the enforcement of the rights of the child as set out in this Law, on the application for redress by a child who alleges that his or her right has been, is being or is likely to be infringed upon;
  - (b) deal with all offences punishable with:
    - (i) death; or
    - (ii) terms of imprisonment for a term of 10 years and above;
  - (c) deal with other matters relating to a child where the claim involves an amount of ₦500,000 and above;
  - (d) deal with other matters relating to a child;
  - (e) Where the cause of action involves a Respondent who resides outside Rivers State, the Family Court at the High Court level shall have exclusive jurisdiction over such matters; and
  - (f) hear appeals from the Magistrates' Court.
- (5) Appeals shall lie to the Court of Appeal on any matter decided by the High Court in the same manner as appeals lie in respect of cases decided by the High Court.

**154. (1) The Court at the Magistrates' Court level shall consist of such number of:**

**Family Court at  
the Magistrates'  
Court level**

- (a) Magistrates, not below the rank of Chief Magistrate; and

- (b) Assessors, who shall be Officers not below the rank of Senior Welfare Development Officer, as shall enable the Court to effectively perform its functions under this Law.
- (2) The members of the Court at the Magistrates' Court level shall be appointed by the Chief Judge of the State.
- (3) The Court at the Magistrates' Court level shall be duly constituted if it consists of:
- (a) a Magistrate sitting alone; or with
  - (b) 2 Assessors one of whom shall be a woman and the other person who has attributes of dealing with children and matters relating to children, preferably in the area of child psychology education,
- Provided that in the exercise of its criminal jurisdiction, the Court at the Magistrates' Court Level shall be duly constituted by a Magistrate sitting alone.
- (4) The Court at the Magistrates' Court level has power to try offences and deal with all matters not specifically assigned to the Court at the High Court level under section 153 of this Law.
- (5) Appeals shall lie to the Court at the High Court level from a decision of the Court at the Magistrates' Court level in the same manner as appeals lie from the decisions of Magistrates' Court to the High Court of the State.
- 155.** (1) The personnel of the Court shall be afforded professional education, in-service training, refresher courses and other modes of instruction to promote and enhance the necessary professional competence they require.
- (2) The contents of the education, training and courses referred to in subsection (1) shall be such as shall reflect the diversity of the children who come into contact with and the diversity and complexity of matters dealt with by the Court.
- (3) In constituting a Court handling a matter concerning a child, consideration shall be given to the circumstances and the needs of the child, particularly the age, gender, religion or other special characteristics of the child.
- 156.** A child has the right to be represented by a legal practitioner and to free legal aid in the hearing and determination of any matter concerning the child in the Court.
- 157.** No person other than:
- (a) the Members and Officers of the Court;
  - (b) the parties to the cases, their Solicitors and Counsel;
  - (c) parents or guardian of the child; and
  - (d) other persons directly concerned in the case.
- shall be allowed to attend the Court and accordingly, members of the press are excluded from attending the Court's proceedings.

**Professionalization  
and training of  
Court personnel**

**Right to  
Counsel etc.**

**Exclusion of  
persons from  
attending  
Court**

<p><b>158.</b> (1) No person shall publish the name, address, school, photograph or anything likely to lead to the identification of a child whose matter is before the Court, except in so far as is required by the provisions of this Law.</p> <p>(2) A person who contravenes this section commits an offence and is liable to a fine of ₦1,000,000 or imprisonment for a term of 5 years or to both such fine and imprisonment.</p>	<p><b>Prohibition of publication of particulars touching child's identity</b></p>
<p><b>159.</b> The proceedings in the Court shall be:</p> <p>(a) conducive to the best interest of the child; and</p> <p>(b) conducted in an atmosphere of understanding, allowing the child to express himself or herself, and participate in the proceedings.</p>	<p><b>Proceedings to be conducted in the best interest of the child</b></p>
<p><b>160.</b> (1) In any proceedings in which the Court is hearing an application for an Order under this Law, or is considering whether to make an Order, the Court may order the parents, guardian or the child concerned to attend such stage or stages of the proceeding as may be specified in the Order.</p> <p>(2) The power conferred by subsection (1) shall be exercised in accordance with the Rules of the Court.</p> <p>(3) Where an Order made under subsection (1) has not been complied with or the Court has reasonable cause to believe that it will not be complied with, the Court may:</p> <p>(a) make an Order authorising a Police Officer or such person as may be specified in the Order to:</p> <p>(i) take charge of the child and to bring the child to the Court, and</p> <p>(ii) enter and search any premises specified in the Order if he has reasonable cause to believe that the child may be found on the premises; or</p> <p>(b) order any person who is in a position to do so, to bring the child to the Court.</p> <p>(4) Where the Court has reason to believe that a person has information about the whereabouts of a child, it may, by an Order, require the person to disclose such information to the Court.</p> <p>(5) A person who refuses to comply with an Order made under this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 18 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.</p>	<p><b>Attendance of parents, guardians or child at the hearing in Court</b></p>
<p><b>161.</b>(1) In any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, the evidence of the child may be given unsworn.</p> <p>(2) A written deposition of a child's sworn evidence shall be received in evidence for the purpose of any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, as if that evidence had been given in person by the child notwithstanding that the child is unable to appear in Court to adopt his or her deposition.</p>	<p><b>Evidence given by a child.</b></p>
	<p><b>Rules regulating procedure, fees, forms, etc.</b></p>

- 162.** (1) The Chief Judge of the State may make Rules regulating the procedure in the Court, the parties entitled to participate in any proceedings, the fees to be charged and the forms to be used in proceedings.
- (2) The provision of any written Law relating to the practice and procedure in Magistrates' Courts or High Courts, as the case may be, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Law shall have effect with respect to proceedings in the Court.
- 163.** (1) No other Court, except the Family Court shall exercise jurisdiction in any matter relating to children as are specified in this Law.
- (2) Subsection (1) shall not affect the jurisdiction of the normal criminal courts to try cases or offences by adult offenders as specified in Part III of this Law or any other law.

**Exclusive  
jurisdiction of  
the Family  
Court**

#### **PART XIV**

#### **CHILD MINDING AND DAY CARE OF YOUNG CHILDREN**

- 164.** (1) The State Government shall keep a register into which shall be entered the names and other particulars of persons who:
- (a) work or act as child minders on domestic premises within the area of the appropriate authority; and
- (b) provide day care for children under the age of 6 years on premises other than domestic premises within the areas of the State Government.
- (2) A person acts as child minder if:
- (a) the person cares for one or more children under the age of 6 years for reward, and
- (b) the period, or the total of the periods, which the person spends in caring for the children in a day exceeds two hours; and
- (c) the person provides day care for children if the period, or the total of the periods during which children are cared for by the person in any day exceeds 2 hours.
- (3) Where a person provides day care for children under the age of 6 years on different premises situated within the State, the person shall make a separate application with respect to each of those premises.
- (4) A person who:
- (a) is a parent, or a relative, of a child;
- (b) though, not the parent of a child, has parental responsibility for the child; or
- (c) is a foster parent of a child; is not a child minder for the purposes of this Part when caring for the child.
- (5) Where a person is employed as a nanny for a child, she does not act as a child minder when caring for that child wholly or mainly in the home of the person so employing her.

**Registration,  
etc. of child  
minders, child  
minding and  
day care  
centers**

- (6) Where a person is employed by two different employers, she does not act as a child minder caring for the children concerned wholly or mainly in the home of either of her employers.
- (7) A person who wishes to be entered in the Register kept under subsection (1) shall apply in writing to the State Government to be so registered.
- (8) The State Government may refuse to register an applicant under subsection (1) (a), if it is satisfied that:
  - (a) the applicant; or
  - (b) a person caring for or likely to be caring for children on the premises on which the applicant is or is likely to be child minding, is not fit to care for children under the age of 6 years.
- (9) The State Government may also refuse to register an applicant under subsection (1) (a), if it is satisfied that the applicant is:
  - (a) living, or likely to be living with a person; or
  - (b) employed, or likely to be employed with a person, at any premises on which the applicant is or likely to be child minding, who is not fit to be in the proximity of children under the age of 6 years.
- (10) The State Government may refuse to register an applicant under subsection (1)(b) if it is satisfied that a person caring for or likely to care for, children on the premises to which the application relates, is not fit to care for children under the age of 6 years.
- (11) The State Government may also refuse to register an applicant under subsection (1)(b), if it is satisfied that a person:
  - (a) living, or likely to be living, or
  - (b) employed or likely to be employed, at the premises to which the application relates, is not fit to be in the proximity of children under the age of 6 years.
- (12) The State Government may refuse to register an applicant under this section if it is satisfied:
  - (a) in the case of application under subsection (1)(a), that the premises on which the applicant is, or is likely to be child minding; or
  - (b) in the case of an application under subsection (1)(b), that the premises to which the application relates, is not fit to be used for caring for children under the age of 6 years, whether because of the condition of the premises or the condition of any equipment used on the premises or for any reason connected with the situation, construction, style or location of the premises.
- (13) For the purposes of this section, a person acts as a nanny for a child if she is employed to care for the child by:
  - (a) a parent of the child; or
  - (b) a person who, though is not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child.

- (14) A register kept under this section:
- (a) shall be open to inspection by members of the public at all reasonable times; and
  - (b) may be kept by means of a computer, any other electronic device or on a website.
- (15) The provisions of Part VI of the Fourth Schedule and Sixth Schedule shall have effect for the purpose of making further provisions with respect to registration under this section, including in particular, further provisions for exemption from the requirement to be registered and provisions for disqualification.
- 165.** (1) Where the State Government registers a person under section 164(1)(a), it shall, in addition to the requirement set out in subsection (2), impose such reasonable conditions on the person as it considers appropriate in each case.
- (2) The State Government shall, on registering a child minder:
- (a) specify that the maximum number of children, or the maximum number of children within specified age groups, whom the child minder may care for when acting as child minder shall be 5;
  - (b) require the child minder to secure that any premises on which he so cares for the children, and the equipment used on those premises are adequately maintained and kept safe.
  - (c) require the child minder to keep a record of the name and address of every:
    - (i) child being cared for by him on any premises within the area of the State Government
    - (ii) person who assists in caring for the child, and
    - (iii) person living, or who is likely at any time to live on those premises.
  - (d) require the child minder to notify the State Government in writing of any change in the names and addresses of persons mentioned in paragraph (c)(ii) and (iii).
- (3) The State Government may, at any time vary, any conditions imposed by it under this section.
- (4) The Commissioner may, by regulations, make provisions as to:
- (a) conditions, which shall be imposed by the State Government under this section in prescribed circumstances;
  - (b) conditions of such description as may be prescribed which shall not be imposed by the State Government under this section.
  - (c) the annual fees payable in respect of registration and inspection of premises.
- 166.** (1) Where the State Government registers a person under section 164(1), it shall, in addition to the requirements set out in subsection (3), impose such reasonable conditions on the person as it considers appropriate in each case.

**Schedule  
iv**

**Conditions to  
be complied  
with by child  
minders**

**Conditions to be  
complied with by  
persons  
providing day  
care for children**

- (2) Where a person is regarded under section 164(1)(b) with respect to different premises within the area of the State Government, this section shall apply separately in relation to each registration.
  - (3) The State Government shall on registering a person providing day care for children:
    - (a) specify the maximum number of children, or the maximum number of children within specified age groups, who may be cared for on the premises.
    - (b) require the person to secure that the premises on which he/she so cares for the children and the equipment used on those premises, are adequately maintained and kept safe;
    - (c) require the person to notify the State Government in writing of any change in the facilities which the person provides, or in the period during which those facilities are provided.
    - (d) specify the number of persons required to assist in caring for children on the premises;
    - (e) require the person to keep a record on the name and address of every:
      - (i) child cared for;
      - (ii) person who assists in caring for the child, and
      - (iii) person who lives or is likely at any time to live, on the registered premises.
    - (f) require the person to notify the State Government in writing of any change in the names and address of a person mentioned in paragraph (e) (ii) and (iii).
  - (4) In determining the maximum number of children to be specified under subsection (3)(a) the State Government shall take account of the number of other children who may at any time be on the premises.
  - (5) The State Government may at any time vary, remove or add to any of the conditions imposed under this section.
  - (6) The Commissioner may, by regulation, make provisions as to conditions:
    - (a) which shall be imposed by the State Government under this section in prescribed circumstances;
    - (b) of such description as may be prescribed which shall not be imposed by the State Government under this section.
  - (7) In subsection (3), reference to children cared for are references to children cared for in accordance with the provision of day care made by the registered person.
- 167.** (1) The State Government may at any time cancel the registration of a child minder if:
- (a) it appears to the State Government that the prevailing circumstances of the case are such that the State Government would be justified in refusing to register that person as a child minder; or

**Cancellation of  
registration of a  
child minder**

- (b) the care provided by that person when caring for any child as a child minder is, in the opinion of the State Government, seriously inadequate having regard to the needs of that child; or
    - (c) the child minder has:
      - (i) contravened or failed to comply with any requirement of or condition imposed on him under section 166; or
      - (ii) failed to pay any annual fee under Paragraph 7 of the Sixth Schedule within the prescribed time.
  - (2) The State Government may at any time cancel the registration of a person providing day care for children with respect to particular premises if:
    - (a) it appears to the State Government that the prevailing circumstances of the case are such that it would be justified in refusing to register that person as a person providing day care.
    - (b) the care provided by that person when on the premises is, in the opinion of the State Government, seriously inadequate having regard to the needs of the children concerned; or
    - (c) that person has:
      - (i) contravened or failed to comply with any requirement of or conditions imposed on him under section 166; or
      - (ii) failed to pay any annual fee under paragraph 7 of Schedule 6 within the prescribed time.
  - (3) The State Government may at any time cancel the registration of any person providing day care for children if it appears to it that the circumstances of the case are such that it would be justified in refusing to register that person with respect to any premises.
  - (4) Where a condition to carry out repairs or make alterations or additions has been imposed on a registered person under section 165 or 166, the registration shall not be cancelled on the ground that the premises are not fit to be used for caring for children if:
    - (a) the time set for complying with the condition has not expired; and
    - (b) it is shown that the condition of the premises is due to the repairs not having been carried out or the alteration or additions not having been made.
  - (5) A cancellation under this section shall be in writing.
  - (6) In considering the needs of a child for the purpose of subsection (1)(b) or (2)(b), the State Government shall, in particular, have regard to the religious persuasion, cultural and linguistic background of the child.
- 168.** (1) Where an application is made to the Court for an Order:
- (a) canceling a registered person's registration;

- (b) varying any condition imposed on a registered person under section 165 or 166; or
    - (c) removing a condition or imposing an additional condition on such a person, the Court may make the Order if it appears to the Court that a child who is being or may be, cared for by a person, or as the case may be, in accordance with the provision for child minding or day care, is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm.
  - (2) Any cancellation, variation, removal or imposition order made under this section shall have effect from the date on which the Order is made.
  - (3) Any application under subsection (1) maybe ex-parte and shall be supported by written statement of the State Government's reason for making it.
  - (4) Where an Order is made under this section, the State Government shall serve on the registered person, as soon as is reasonably practicable, after the making of the Order:
    - (a) notice of the Order and of its terms; and
    - (b) a copy of the statement of the State Government's reasons that supports its application for the Order.
  - (5) Where the Court imposes or varies any condition under subsection (1) of this section the condition or the condition as varied, shall be treated for all purposes, other than for the purposes of section 174, as if it had been imposed under section 165 or 166, by the State Government.
- 169.** (1) A person authorised to do so by the State Government may, at any reasonable time, enter:
- (a) any domestic premises within the State in which child minding is at any time carried on; or
  - (b) any premises within the State in which day care for children is, at any time, provided.
- (2) Where the State Government has reasonable cause to believe that a child is being cared for on any premises within the State in contravention of this Part of this Law, a person authorized to do so by the State Government may enter the premises at any reasonable time.
- (3) A person entering any premises under this section may inspect:
- (a) the premises
  - (b) the child being cared for on the premises;
  - (c) the arrangements made for the health and welfare of the child being cared for on the premises; and
  - (d) any record relating to the child being cared for on the premises which are kept as a result of this Part of this Law.
- (4) A person inspecting any record under this section:

**Power of the  
State  
Government to  
inspect premises,  
etc**

- (a) shall be entitled at any reasonable time to have access to and inspect and check the operation of any computer and any associated apparatus or material which is or has been in use in connection with the records in question; and
  - (b) may require:
    - (i) the person by whom or on whose behalf the computer is or has been so used, or
    - (ii) any person having charge of, or otherwise concerned with the operation of the computer, apparatus or material, to afford him such reasonable assistance as he may require.
  - (5) A person exercising any power conferred by this section shall, if required, produce any duly authenticated documents showing his authority to do so.
  - (6) The State Government shall exercise its powers to inspect the premises mentioned in subsection (1) at least once every year.
  - (7) A person who intentionally obstructs another person in the exercise of any power conferred under this section, commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦150,000 or imprisonment for a term of 3 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.
- 170.** (1) The State Government shall, not less than 14 days before taking any of the following steps:
- (a) refusing an application for registration under section 168;
  - (b) canceling any registration under section 164;
  - (c) refusing consent under paragraph 3 of the Schedule VI;
  - (d) imposing, removing or varying any condition under section 169 or 170; or
  - (e) refusing to grant any application for variation or removal of any condition; send to the applicant, or as the case may be, a registered person, notice in writing of its intention to take the applicable step in question.
- (2) A notice sent under subsection (1) shall:
- (a) give the State Government's reasons for proposing to take the step; and
  - (b) inform the person concerned of his right under this section.
- (3) Where the recipient of a notice informs the State Government in writing of his desire to object to the step being taken, the State Government shall afford him an opportunity to do so.
- (4) Any objection made under subsection (3) may be made in person or by a representative.
- (5) If the State Government, after giving the person concerned an opportunity to object to the step being taken, decides nevertheless to take any step, it shall send written notice of its decision.

**State  
Government's  
notice of action  
to an applicant**

**Schedule VI**

- (6) A person aggrieved by the taking of any step mentioned in subsection (1) may appeal against it to the Court.
- (7) Where the Court allows an appeal against a refusal or cancellation of any registration under section 167, it may impose any condition under section 165 or 166 or any other condition as it may deem fit.
- (8) Where the Court allows an appeal against a condition, it may, instead of canceling the condition, vary it.
- (9) Where the Court imposes or varies any condition under subsection (7) or (8), the condition, as varied, shall be treated for all purposes, other than this section, as if it had been imposed by the State Government.
- (10) A step referred to in subsection (1)(b) or (d) shall not take effect until the expiry of the time within which an appeal may be brought under this section or where such an appeal is brought, before its determination.

**171.** (1) No person shall provide day care for children under the age of 6 years in any premises within the State unless he is registered by the State Government under section 164(1)(b).

**Offences under  
this Part**

- (2) A person who contravenes subsection (1), without reasonable excuse, commits an offence.
- (3) No person shall act as a child minder on any domestic premises within the State unless he is registered by State Government under section 164 (1)(a).
- (4) Where it appears to the State Government that a person has contravened subsection (3), it may serve an Enforcement Notice on that person.
- (5) An Enforcement Notice shall have effect for a period of 6 months beginning with the date on which it is served.
- (6) A person with respect to whom an Enforcement Notice is in force who contravenes subsection (3) without reasonable excuse, commits an offence.
- (7) Subsection (6) applies whether or not the subsequent contravention occurs within the area of the State Government which served the Enforcement Notice.
- (8) A person who without reasonable excuse contravenes or fails to comply with any condition imposed on him under section 165 or 166, commits an offence.
- (9) A person who:
  - (a) acts as a child minder on any domestic premises at any time when he is disqualified by regulation made under paragraph 2 of the Sixth Schedule; or
  - (b) contravenes any provision of sub-paragraph (3), (4) or (5) of paragraph 2 of the Sixth Schedule, commits an offence.
- (10) A person who contravenes sub-paragraph (3) of paragraph 2 of the Sixth Schedule is not guilty of an offence under this section if he proves that he did not know,

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and had no reasonable ground for believing, that the person in question was living or employed in the household.

- (11) A person who contravenes sub-paragraph (5) of paragraph 2 of the Sixth Schedule, is not guilty of an offence under this section if he proves that he did not know that the person whom he was employing was disqualified.
- (12) A person who, commits an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction:
  - (a) in the case of an offence under subsection (8), to a fine of ₦150,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.
  - (b) in the case of an offence under subsection (9), to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or to both fine and imprisonment.
  - (c) in the case of any other offence, to a fine of ₦100,000 or imprisonment for a term of 3 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.

## PART XV

### THE STATE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- 172.** (1) The State Government shall, generally:
- (a) safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in need within the State; and
  - (b) so far as is consistent with that duty, promote the upbringing of those children by their families by **providing a range and level of services** appropriate to the needs of the children.
- (2) The State Government shall also **encourage private organizations** that may wish to provide services for children in need, to provide such services as may be permitted by the State Government.
- (3) Any service provided by the State Government in the discharge of its duty under this section may be provided for the family of a particular child in need or for a member of the family of the child, if the service is provided with a view to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of the child.
- (4) The State Government shall, for the purpose of facilitating the discharge of its general duty under this section, have the duties and powers set out in Part 1 of the Seventh Schedule.
- (5) The Commissioner may, by an Order, amend duties and powers set out in Paragraph one of the Seventh Schedule.
- (6) The State Government:
- (a) shall facilitate the provision by voluntary organizations and other bodies of services which the State Government has power to provide by virtue of section 178, 179, 183 and 184; and

**Provision of  
services for  
children in  
need, etc**

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- (b) may make such arrangements as it deems fit, for any person to act on its behalf in the provision of any of those services.
  - (7) The services provided by the State Government in the discharge of its duty under this section may include giving assistance in kind or in exceptional cases, in cash and the assistance may be conditional or unconditional.
  - (8) Before giving assistance or imposing any condition under this section, the State Government shall have regard to the means of the child concerned and of each of the child's parents.
  - (9) No person shall be liable to make any repayment of assistance or of its value at any time when he is in receipt of income support or any form of support from public funds.
  - (10) For the purposes of this section and other sections of this Part of this Law:
    - (a) a child shall be taken to be in need if :
      - (i) the child is unlikely to achieve or maintain or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for the child, of services by the State Government under this Part of this Law; or
      - (ii) the health and development of the child is likely to be significantly impaired or further impaired without the provision for the child, of services provided for under this Part of this Law; or
      - (iii) the child is physically challenged, internally displaced, a refugee or is otherwise in especially difficult circumstances.
    - (b) a child is physically challenged if the child is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or any other disability as may be prescribed.
- 173.** (1) The State Government shall provide such day care for children in need within the State who are:
- (a) not more than 6 years old; and
  - (b) not yet attending school, as is appropriate.
- (2) The State Government may provide day care for children within the State who satisfy the conditions mentioned in subsection (1)(a) and (b) notwithstanding that those children are not in need.
- (3) The State Government may provide facilities including training, advice, guidance and counseling for persons:
- (a) caring for children in day care; or
  - (b) who, at any time, accompany those children while they are in day care.

**Day care for  
pre-school  
children**

- (4) The State Government shall provide for a child in need within the State who is attending any school, day care or supervised activities as is appropriate:
  - (a) outside school hours; or
  - (b) during school holidays
- (5) The State Government may provide such care or supervised activities for children within the State who are attending any school, notwithstanding that those children are not in need.

**174. (1) The State Government shall review:**

- (a) services provided by it under section 176;
  - (b) the extent to which the services of child minders are available within the State with respect to children under the age of 6 years; and
  - (c) the provision for day care within the State made for children under the age of 6 years by persons, other than the Authority, required to register under section 164(1) (b).
- (2) A review under subsection (1) shall be conducted:
- (a) together with the appropriate local Education Authority; and
  - (b) at least once every review period.
- (3) The State Government shall, at least once in every review period, review:
- (a) the provisions made for day care within the State made for children under the age of 6 years by the appropriate authority and by persons required to register under section 164(1)(b);
  - (b) the extent to which the services of child minders are available within the State with respect to children under the age of 6 years.
- (4) In conducting a review under this section, the State Government shall have regard to the provisions made with respect to the children under the age of 6 years in relevant establishments within the State.
- (5) Where the State Government conducts a review under this section, it shall publish the result of the review:
- (a) as soon as is reasonably practicable;
  - (b) in such form as it considers appropriate; and
  - (c) together with any proposals it may have with respect to the matters reviewed.
- (6) The State Government, in conducting a review under this section, shall have regard to:
- (i) any representations made to it by the Health Authority or Health Board; and
  - (ii) any other representations which it considers to be relevant.

**Review of provisions for children in S. 176, day care, child minding,**

**175. (1) The State Government shall provide accommodation for a child in need within the State who appears to it to require accommodation where:**

**Provision of accommodation for children in general**

- (a) there is no person having parental responsibility for the child; or
  - (b) the child is lost or has been abandoned or runs away from home; or
  - (c) the person who has care for the child is prevented, for any reason whatsoever, from providing the child with accommodation or care.
- (2) Where the State Government provides accommodation under subsection (1) for a child who is ordinarily resident in another State, that other State may take over the provision of accommodation for the child within:
  - (a) 3 months of being notified in writing that the child is being provided accommodation; or
  - (b) such other longer period as may be prescribed.
- (3) The State Government shall provide accommodation for a child within the State:
  - (a) whose welfare the appropriate authority considers is likely to be seriously prejudiced if the State Government does not provide the child with accommodation; or
  - (b) if the State Government considers that to provide the child accommodation would safeguard or promote the welfare of the child notwithstanding that the person who has parental responsibility for the child is able to provide the child with accommodation.
- (4) Before deciding to provide accommodation under this section, the State Government shall, so far as is reasonably practicable and consistent with the welfare of the child:
  - (a) ascertain the wishes of the child regarding the provision of accommodation; and
  - (b) give due consideration, having regard to the child's age and understanding, to such wishes of the child as it has been able to ascertain.
- (5) The State Government shall not provide accommodation under this section for a child if a person who:
  - (a) has parental responsibility for the child; and
  - (b) is willing and able to:
    - (i) provide accommodation for the child; or
    - (ii) arrange for accommodation to be provided for the child, objects.
- (6) A person who has parental responsibility for a child may at any time remove the child from the accommodation provided by or on behalf of the State Government under this section.
- (7) Subsection (5) and (6) do not apply where a person:
  - (a) in whose favour a Residence Order is in force with respect to the child; or
  - (b) who has care of the child by virtue of an Order made in the exercise of the jurisdiction of the Court at the High Court level with respect to children,

agrees that the child be cared for in an accommodation provided by or on behalf of the State Government.

- (8) Where there is more than one such person as is mentioned in subsection (7), all of those persons shall agree.
- 176.** (1) The State Government shall make provision for the reception and accommodation of children who are removed or kept away from home:
- (a) under Part IV;
- (b) under police protection;
- (c) on Remand or a Supervision Order; or
- (d) for any other reason, by the appropriate authority.
- (2) Where a child who has been removed, received or detained under subsection (1) is not being provided with accommodation by the State Government or in a Government Hospital, any reasonable expenses of accommodation of the child shall be recoverable from the State Government in whose State the child is ordinarily resident.
- 177.** Where, in this Part of this Law, a reference is made to a child who is cared for by the State Government, that reference is to a child who is:
- (a) in the care of the State Government; or
- (b) provided with accommodation by the State Government in the exercise of any functions under this Part of this Law.
- 178.** (1) The State Government taking care of a child shall:
- (a) safeguard and promote the welfare of the child; and
- (b) make such use of services available for children cared for by their own parent as appears to the State Government reasonable in each case.
- (2) In making a decision referred to in subsection (3), the State Government shall give due consideration:
- (a) having regard to the age and understanding of the child, to such wishes and feelings of the child as it has been able to ascertain
- (b) to such wishes and feelings of any person mentioned in subsection (3)(b) to (d) as it has been able to ascertain; and
- (c) to the religious persuasion, racial origin, ethnic, cultural and linguistic background of the child.
- (3) The State Government, before making any decision with respect to a child being cared for or proposed to be cared for by it, shall so far as it is reasonably practicable, ascertain the wishes and feelings of:
- (a) the child;
- (b) the parents of the child;
- (c) a person who, though not a parent of a child, has parental responsibility for the child; or

**Provision of accommodation for children in police protection, detention, remand, etc.**

**Reference to child cared for by the State Government**

**Duty of the State Government to provide for the welfare of children in its care**

- (d) any other person whose wishes and feelings the State Government considers to be relevant; regarding the matter to be decided.
  - (4) If it appears to the State Government that it is necessary, for the purpose of protecting members of the public from serious injury, to exercise its powers with respect to a child whom it is caring for in a manner which may not be consistent with its duties under this section, it may do so.
  - (5) Where the Commissioner considers it necessary, for the purpose of protecting members of the public from serious injury, to give directions to an appropriate authority with respect to the exercise of its power with respect to a child whom it is caring for, the Commissioner may give such directions to the appropriate authority.
  - (6) An appropriate authority shall comply with a direction given to it under this section, notwithstanding that doing so is inconsistent with its duties under this section.
- 179.** (1) The State Government caring for a child shall:
- (a) when the child is in its care, provide accommodation for the child; and
  - (b) maintain the child in other respects in addition to providing accommodation for such child.
- (2) The State Government shall provide accommodation and maintenance for a child under this section by:
- (a) placing the child, subject to subsection (5) and any regulations made by the Commissioner, with:
    - (i) a family;
    - (ii) a relative of the child; or
    - (iii) any other suitable person, on such terms as to payment by the State Government and otherwise as the State Government may determine; or
  - (b) maintaining the child in:
    - (i) a community home,
    - (ii) a voluntary home;
    - (iii) a registered children home; or
    - (iv) a home provided by the Commissioner under subsection (5), on any term as the Commissioner may, determine; or
  - (c) making such other arrangements which:
    - (i) may seem appropriate to it and
    - (ii) comply with regulations made by the Commissioner.
- (3) A person with whom a child has been placed under subsection (2)(a) shall be referred to in this Law as the State Government foster parent unless the person falls within subsection (4).
- (4) A person falls within this section if the person is:
- (a) a parent of the child;

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and maintenance  
by the State  
Government for  
children in its  
care**

- (b) a person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child; or
  - (c) where the child is in care and there was a Residence Order in force with respect to the child immediately before the Care Order was made, a person in whose favour the Residence Order was made.
- (5) Where a child is in the care of the State Government, the State Government may only allow him/her to live with a person who falls within subsection (4), in accordance with regulations made by the Commissioner.
- (6) Subject to any regulations made by the Commissioner for the purposes of this subsection, the State Government caring for a child shall make arrangements to enable the child to live with a person falling within subsection (4); or a relative, friend or other person(s) connected with the child, unless that would not be reasonably practicable or consistent with the welfare of the child.
- (7) Where the State Government provides accommodation for a child whom it is caring for, it shall, subject to the provisions of this Part of this Law and so far as is reasonably practicable and consistent with the welfare of the child, ensure that:
  - (a) the accommodation is near the home of the child;
  - (b) where the State Government is also providing accommodation for any sibling of the child, they are accommodated together.
- (8) Where the State Government provides accommodation for a physically challenged child under its care, it shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure that the accommodation is suitable for the child's peculiar needs.
- (9) Part II of the Seventh Schedule to this Law has effect for the purposes of making further provisions as to children cared for by the State Government and in particular as to the regulations that may be made under subsections (2)(a), (2)(c) and (5). **Schedule VII**
- 180.** (1) Where a child is being cared for by the State Government, the State Government shall advise, assist and befriend the child with a view to promoting the child's welfare when the child ceases to be cared for by the State Government. **Advice, assistance etc. for certain children and young persons to promote welfare**
- (2) A person qualifies for advice and assistance under this section, if that person is under the age of 21 years and was, at any time after attaining the age of eighteen years, but while still a child, the person was:
  - (a) cared for by the State Government;
  - (b) accommodated by or on behalf of a voluntary organisation;
  - (c) accommodated in a registered children home;
  - (d) accommodated:
    - (i) by the Health Authority or Education Authority; or

- (ii) in any residential care home, nursing home or mental nursing home, for a consecutive period of at least 3 months; or
- (e) fostered privately, but has ceased to be so cared for, accommodated or fostered.
- (3) Subsection (2)(d) applies if the period of 3 months mentioned in that subsection began before the child attained the age of 18 years.
- (4) Where the State Government knows that:
  - (a) there is, within the State, a person qualified for advice and assistance;
  - (b) conditions in subsection (5) satisfied; and
  - (c) a person has asked for help of a kind which the State Government can give under this section;
 the State Government shall, if the person was being cared for by the State Government or was accommodated by or on behalf of a voluntary organization and, may in any other case, advise and befriend the child.
- (5) The conditions which shall be satisfied under subsection (4) are that:
  - (a) it appears to the State Government that the person concerned is in need of advice and being befriended; and
  - (b) where the person was not being cared for by the State Government; but the State Government is satisfied that the person's carer does not have the necessary facilities to advise or befriend the person.
- (6) Where, as a result of this section, the State Government is under a duty or is empowered to advise and befriend a person, it may also give that person assistance.
- (7) Assistance given under subsections (1) and (6) may be in kind or, in exceptional circumstances, in cash.
- (8) The State Government may give assistance to a person who qualifies for advice and assistance by virtue of subsection (2)(a) by:
  - (a) contributing to expenses incurred by the person in living near the place he is, or will be:
    - (i) employed or seeking employment; or
    - (ii) receiving education or training;
  - (b) making a grant to enable the person to meet expenses connected with the person's education or training.
- (9) Where the State Government is assisting a person under subsection (8) by making a contribution or grant with respect to a course of education or training, it may:
  - (a) continue to do so notwithstanding that the person attains the age of 21 years before completing the course; and
  - (b) disregard any interruption in the person's attendance in the course of training if the person resumes it as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

- (10) Subsections (7) and (9) of section 179 shall apply in relation to assistance given under this section as they apply in relation to assistance given under that section.
  - (11) Where it appears to the State Government that a person it had been advising and befriending under this section, is a person who qualifies for advice and assistance but proposes to live, or is living in another State, it shall inform that other State.
  - (12) Where a child who is accommodated by:
    - (a) a voluntary organization or in a registered children home; or
    - (b) Health Authority or Education Authority; or
    - (c) any residential care home; nursing home or mental nursing home,
 ceases to be so accommodated, after attaining the age of 18 years, the organization, authority or as the case may be, person managing the home shall inform the State Government in whose State the child proposes to live.
  - (13) Subsection (12) only applies, by virtue of paragraph (b) or (c) of that subsection, if the accommodation has been provided for a consecutive period of at least 3 months.
- 181.** (1) Subject to the following provisions of this section, a child under the care of the State Government shall not be placed, and if placed, may not be kept in accommodation provided for the purpose of restricting liberty, known as secure accommodation, unless it appears that:
- (a) the child:
    - (i) has a history of absconding and is likely to abscond from accommodation of any other description; and
    - (ii) is likely to suffer significant harm if he or she absconds;
  - (b) if the child is kept in accommodation of any other description, the child is likely to injure himself or herself or any other person.
- (2) The Court hearing an application under this section shall determine whether any relevant criteria for keeping a child in secure accommodation as specified under subsection (1) are satisfied in each case.
  - (3) Where the Court determines that the relevant criteria are satisfied, it shall make an Order authorizing the child to be kept in secure accommodation and specifying the maximum period for which the child may be so kept.
  - (4) On any adjournment of the hearing of an application under this section, the Court may make an Interim Order permitting the child to be kept during the period of the adjournment in secure accommodation.
  - (5) No Court shall exercise the powers conferred by this section in respect of a child who is not legally represented in the Court by a legal practitioner, unless:
    - (a) the child, having regard to the child's age and understanding; and

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accommodation  
to restrict  
liberty

- (b) the parents of the child; or
  - (c) the person who, though not a parent of a child, has parental responsibility for the child; or
  - (d) any other person it considers relevant, having been informed of the right of the child to apply for legal aid and having had the opportunity to do so, had refused or failed to apply.
- (6) The giving of an authorisation under this section shall not prejudice any other Court to give directions relating to the child to whom the authorisation relates.
- (7) The Commissioner may, by regulations:
- (a) specify a maximum period:
    - (i) beyond which a child shall not be kept in secure accommodation without the authority of the Court, or
    - (ii) for which the Court may authorize a child to be kept in secure accommodation;
  - (b) empower the Court, from time to time, to authorise a child to be kept in secure accommodation for such further period as the regulations may specify;
  - (c) provide that applications to the Court under this section shall be made only by the State Government and
  - (d) provide that:
    - (i) this section shall or shall not apply to any description of children specified in the regulations,
    - (ii) this section shall apply in relation to children of a description specified in the regulation subject to such modifications as may be specified, and
    - (iii) such other provisions, as may be so specified, shall have effect for the purpose of determining whether a child of a description specified in the regulations may be placed or kept in secure accommodation.
- (8) This section is subject to section 179 (6).

- 182.** (1) The Commissioner may make regulations requiring the case of each child who is under the care of the State Government to be reviewed in accordance with the provisions of the regulations.
- (2) The regulations may, in particular, make provisions:
- (a) as to the manner in which each case is to be reviewed;
  - (b) as to the considerations to which the State Government is to have regard in reviewing each case;
  - (c) as to the time when each case is first to be reviewed and the frequency of subsequent reviews;
  - (d) requiring the State Government, before conducting any review, to seek the views of:
    - (i) the child, having regard to the child's age and understanding,

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representatives**

- (ii) the parents of the child,
    - (iii) a person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child; and
    - (iv) any other person it considers relevant, including in particular, the views of those persons in relation to any particular matter which is to be considered in the course of the review.
  - (e) requiring the State Government to consider, in the case of a child who is in its care, whether an application should be for a Care Order;
  - (f) requiring the State Government to consider, in the case of a child in accommodation provided by the State Government, whether the accommodation accords with the requirements of this Part of this Law;
  - (g) requiring the State Government to inform:
    - (i) the child, so far as is reasonably practicable,
    - (ii) the parents of the child,
    - (iii) a person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child; and
    - (iv) any other person it considers relevant, of any steps he may take under this Law.
  - (h) requiring the State Government to make arrangements, including arrangements with such other bodies providing services as it considers appropriate, to implement any decision which it proposes to take in the course, or as a result of the reviews;
  - (i) requiring the State Government to monitor the arrangements which it has made with a view to ensuring that it complies with the regulations;
  - (j) requiring the State Government to notify details of the result of the review and of any decision taken by it in consequence of the review to:
    - (i) the child,
    - (ii) the parents of the child,
    - (iii) a person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child; and
    - (iv) any other person whom it considers ought to be notified.
- (3) The State Government shall establish a procedure for considering a representation including a complaint, made to it by:
- (a) a child who is being cared for by the State Government or who is not being cared for by it, but is in need,
  - (b) the parents of the child,
  - (c) a person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child;
  - (d) the State Government foster parents.
  - (e) any other person as the State Government considers has sufficient interest in the child's welfare to warrant his representations being considered by it, about the discharge by the State Government of any of its functions under this Part of this Law in relation to the child.

- (4) The procedure established pursuant to subsection (3) shall ensure that it includes one person, who is not a member or officer of the State Government, to take part in the:
    - (a) considerations; and
    - (b) discussions which are held by the State Government about the action, if any, to be taken in relation to the child in the light of the considerations.
  - (5) In carrying out any consideration of representations under this section, the State Government shall comply with any regulations made by the Commissioner for the purpose of regulating the procedure to be followed.
  - (6) The Commissioner may make regulations requiring the State Government to monitor the arrangement that they have made with a view to ensuring that they comply with regulations made, for the purposes of subsection (5).
  - (7) Where a representation has been considered under the procedure established by the State Government under this section, the State Government shall:
    - (a) have due regard to the findings of those considering the representation;
    - (b) take such steps as are reasonably practicable to notify, in writing:
      - (i) the person making the representation,
      - (ii) the child, if the State Government considers that he/she has sufficient understanding, and
      - (iii) the parent of the child, or
      - (iv) such other persons, if any, as appear to the State Government to be likely to be affected by the State Government's decision in the matter and its reasons for taking that decision and of any action which it has taken or proposes to take.
  - (8) The State Government shall give such publicity to its procedure for considering representations under this section as it considers appropriate.
- 183.** (1) Where it appears to the State Government that any authority or other person mentioned in subsection (3) could, by taking any specified action, help in the exercise of any of its functions under this Part, it may request the help of that other authority or person, specifying the action in question.
- (2) An authority or person whose help is requested under subsection (1) shall comply with the request if it is compatible with the authority's or person's own statutory or other duties and obligations and does not unduly prejudice the discharge of any of the authority's or person's functions.
- (3) Subsection (2) refers to:
- (a) the State Government
  - (b) the Ministry of Education
  - (c) the Ministry of Works

- (d) the Ministry of Housing
  - (e) the Ministry of Health; and
  - (f) any authority or person authorized by the Commissioner for the purposes of this section.
- (4) The State Government shall assist the Education Authority with the provision of services for a child within the State who has special educational needs.
- 184.** (1) Where:
- (a) a child is being cared for by the State Government; and
  - (b) the State Government proposes to provide accommodation for a child in an establishment at which education is provided for children who are accommodated there,
- the State Government shall, so far as is reasonable practicable, consult the appropriate Education Authority before doing so.
- (2) Where a proposal under subsection (1)(b) is carried out, the State Government shall, as soon as is reasonably practicable, inform the appropriate Education Authority of the arrangements that have been made for the child's accommodation.
- (3) Where the child ceases to be accommodated as mentioned in subsection (1)(b), the State Government shall inform the appropriate Education Authority, accordingly.
- 185.** (1) Where the State Government provides any service under section 176 or 178, other than advice, guidance or counseling, it may recover from a person specified in subsection (4), such charges for the service as may be considered reasonable.
- (2) Where the State Government is satisfied that the means of the person specified in subsection (4) are insufficient for it to be reasonably practicable for the person to pay the charges under subsection (1), it shall not require the person to pay more than he can reasonably be expected to pay.
- (3) No person shall be liable to pay any charge under subsection (1) at any time when he is in receipt of income support or family credit under any Law.
- (4) The persons referred to in subsection (1), (2) and (3) are, where the service is provided for:
- (a) a child under the age of 18 years who is not gainfully employed, each of the child's parents;
  - (b) a child who has attained the age of 18 years and gainfully employed, the child himself or herself, and
  - (c) a member of the child's family, that member.
- (5) Any charge under subsection (1) may, without prejudice to any other method of recovery, be recovered summarily as a civil debt.

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with the  
Education  
Authorities**

**Recoupment of  
cost for  
providing  
services etc.**

- (6) Where the State Government provides accommodation under section 179 (1) for a child who was, immediately before it began to care for the child, ordinarily resident within the area of another State Government, the State Government may recover from that other State Government any reasonable expenses incurred by it in providing the accommodation and maintaining the child.
- (7) Where the State Government provides accommodation under section 179 (1) and (2)(a) for a child who is ordinarily resident in another State and it is not maintaining the child in:
- (a) a community home provided by it;
  - (b) a controlled community home; or
  - (c) a government hospital,
- it may recover from that other State Government any reasonable expenses incurred by it in providing the accommodation and maintaining the child.
- (8) Where the State Government complies with any request under sections 179(2) and 187(1) in relation to a child or other person who is not ordinarily resident in the State, it may recover from the State Government in whose State the child or person is ordinarily resident, any expenses reasonably incurred by it in respect of that child or person.
- (9) Part III of the Eighth Schedule contains provisions for Eighth Schedule contributions towards the maintenance of children who are being cared for by the State Government. **Schedule  
viii**
- 186.** (1) Nothing in this Part of this Law shall affect any duty imposed on the State Government by or under any other enactment not inconsistent with this Law. **Miscellaneous**
- (2) Any question arising under sections 179(2), 180(2) or 189(6) to (8) as to the ordinary residence of a child shall be determined by agreement between the State Governments concerned or, in default of agreement, by the Commissioner.
- (3) Where the functions conferred on the State Government by this Part of this Law and the functions of the Education Authority are concurrent, the Commissioner may by regulations specify which of them is to perform the functions.
- (4) The Commissioner may make regulations for determining, in respect of any functions of any Education Authority specified in the regulations, whether a child who is being cared for by the State Government is to be treated, for purposes so specified, as a child of parents of sufficient resources or as a child of parents without resources.
- PART XVI**  
**COMMUNITY HOMES**
- 187.** (1) The State Government shall make such arrangements as it considers appropriate for securing homes to be known as community homes, for: **Securing  
community  
homes**

- (a) the care and accommodation of children cared for by it; and
  - (b) purposes connected with the welfare of children, whether or not cared for by it.
- (2) In making such arrangements, the State Government shall have regard to the need for securing the availability of accommodation.
- (3) A community home may be:
  - (a) provided, managed, equipped and maintained by the State Government; or
  - (b) provided by a voluntary organization but in respect of which the State Government and the organization:
    - (i) propose that, in accordance with an instrument of management, the management, equipment and maintenance of the home shall be the responsibility of the State Government; or
    - (ii) propose that the management, equipment and maintenance of the home shall be the responsibility of the voluntary organization.
- (4) Where the State Government is to be responsible for the management of a community home provided by a voluntary organization, the State Government shall designate the home as a “controlled community home”.
- (5) Where a voluntary organization is to be responsible for the management of a community home provided by the voluntary organization, the State Government shall designate the home as an “assisted community home”.
- (6) The Eighth Schedule to this Law shall have effect for the purpose of supplementing the provisions of this Part of this Law.

**Schedule  
viii**

**188. (1) Where it appears to the Commissioner that:**

- (a) any premises used for the purposes of a community home is unsuitable for those purposes; or
- (b) the conduct of a community home:
  - (i) is not in accordance with regulations made by the Commissioner under paragraph 4 of the Eighth Schedule, or
  - (ii) is otherwise unsatisfactory,

**Directives by  
Commissioner  
to discontinue  
the use of  
premises as  
community  
home**

he may, by notice in writing served on the body concerned, direct that as from such date as may be specified in the notice, the premises shall not be used for the purposes of a community home.

- (2) Where:
  - (a) the Commissioner has given a direction under subsection (1); and
  - (b) the direction has not been revoked,
 he may at any time by Order revoke the instrument of management for the community home concerned.
- (3) For the purposes of subsection (1), the body concerned shall in relation to:

- (a) a community home provided by the State Government, be the State Government;
- (b) a controlled community home, be the State Government as specified in the instrument of management of the community home; and
- (c) an assisted community home, be the voluntary organization which provided the community home.

**189.** (1) Where a dispute relating to a controlled community home arises between the State Government, as specified in the instrument of management of the community home and:

- (a) the voluntary organisation which provided the community home; or
  - (b) any other State Government that has placed, desires or is required to place, in the community home, a child who is cared for by it,
- the dispute may be referred by either party to the Commissioner for determination.

(2) Where a dispute relating to an assisted community home arises between the voluntary organization which provided the community home and the State Government which has placed or desires to place in the community home, a child who is cared for by it, the dispute may be referred by either party to the Commissioner for determination.

(3) Where a dispute is referred to the Commissioner under this section, the Commissioner may, in order to give effect to the determination of the dispute, give any direction he deems fit to the State Government or voluntary organization concerned.

(4) This section applies notwithstanding that the matter in dispute may be one which, under or by virtue of Part II of the Eighth Schedule, is reserved for the decision or is the responsibility, of:

- (a) the State Government, as specified in the instrument of management of the community home; or
- (b) the voluntary organization which provided the community home, as the case may be.

**190.** (1) A voluntary organization which has provided or is managing a controlled or an assisted community home shall not cease to provide or manage the home unless it has given to the Commissioner and the appropriate authority specified in the instrument of management of the community home, not less than one year's notice in writing of its intention to do so.

(2) A notice given under subsection (1) shall specify the date from which the voluntary organization intends to cease to provide or manage the community home.

**Determination of disputes relating to controlled and assisted community homes**

**Schedule viii**

**Discontinuance of controlled or assisted community homes**

- (3) Where a notice given under subsection (1) is not withdrawn before the date specified in it, the instrument of management of the community home shall cease to have effect on that date and the community home shall then cease to be a controlled or an assisted community home, as the case may be.
  - (4) Where a notice is given under subsection (1) and the voluntary organization gives notice in writing to the Commissioner that it is unable or unwilling to continue to provide or manage the community home until the date specified in the notice given under subsection (1), the Commissioner may, by Order:
    - (a) revoke the instrument of management of the community home; or
    - (b) require that the State Government, as specified in the instrument of management, manage the home until:
      - (i) the date specified in the notice given under subsection (1); or
      - (ii) such earlier date, if any, as may be specified for the purposes of this paragraph in the Order, as if it were a community home provided by the State Government.
  - (5) Where the Commissioner imposes a requirement under subsection (4)(b):
    - (a) nothing in the instrument of management of the community home shall affect the management of the community home by the State Government;
    - (b) the Commissioner may by Order, direct that for the purposes of any provision specified in the direction made by or under any enactment relating to community homes, other than this section, the community home shall, until the date or earlier date referred to in subsection (4)(b), be treated as a controlled or an assisted community home;
    - (c) except in so far as the Commissioner so directs, the community home shall, until the date or earlier date referred to in subsection (4)(b), be treated for the purposes of any enactment relating to community homes, other than this section, as a community home provided by the State Government; and
    - (d) the community home shall on the date or earlier date referred to in subsection (4)(b)(i) or (ii), cease to be a community home.
- 191.** (1) The State Government, as specified in the instrument of management of a controlled or assisted community home, may give to:
- (a) the Commissioner; and
  - (b) the voluntary organization which provided the home, notice in writing of its intention to withdraw its designation of the home as a controlled or an assisted community home and such notice shall not be less than 2 years.
- (2) A notice given under subsection (1) shall specify the date to be known as the specified date on which the designation is to be withdrawn.
- (3) Where:
- (a) a notice is given under subsection (1) in respect of a controlled or an assisted community home; and
  - (b) the appropriate authority managing the community home:

**Closure by State Government of controlled or assisted community homes**

- (i) gives notice in writing to the Commissioner that it is unable or unwilling to continue to manage the community home until the specified date; and
  - (ii) does not withdraw the notice, the Commissioner may, by Order, revoke the instrument of management of the community home from

such date earlier than the date specified in the notice given under subsection (1) as may be specified in the Order.
- (4) The Commissioner shall, before making an Order under subsection (3), consult the State Government and the voluntary organization concerned.
- (5) Where a notice has been given under subsection (1) and is not withdrawn, the instrument of management of the community home shall cease to have effect:
  - (a) on the date specified in the notice; or
  - (b) where an earlier date has been specified under subsection (3), on the earlier date and the community home shall then cease to be a controlled or an assisted community home.

## PART XVII

### VOLUNTARY HOMES AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

- 192.** (1) Where a voluntary organization provides accommodation for a child, it shall do so by:
- (a) placing the child, subject to subsection (2), with:
    - (i) a family; or
    - (ii) a relative of the child; or
    - (iii) any other suitable person, on such terms as to payment by the voluntary organization and otherwise as the voluntary organization may determine; or
  - (b) maintaining the child in:
    - (i) a voluntary home, or
    - (ii) a community home, or
    - (iii) a registered children's home, or
    - (iv) a home provided by the Commissioner under section 202 (4), on such terms as the Commissioners may from time to time, determine; or
  - (c) making such other arrangements, subject to subsection (2)(b) as seem appropriate to it.
- (2) The Commissioner may make regulations:
- (a) as to the placing of children with foster parents by voluntary organizations and the regulations may, in particular, make provisions, which, with any necessary modifications are similar to the provisions that may be made under section 182(2)(b);
  - (b) as to the arrangements which may be made under subsection (1)(c) of this section and the regulations may, in particular, make provisions which, with

**Provision of accommodation by voluntary organizations**

any necessary modifications are similar to the provisions that may be made under section 182(2)(c);

- (c) requiring any voluntary organization which is providing accommodation for a child to:
  - (i) review the child's case; and
  - (ii) consider any representation, including any complaints, made to it by any person falling within a prescribed class of person, in accordance with the provisions of the regulations.

**193.** (1) No person shall establish or manage a voluntary home unless the home is registered in a register to be kept for the purposes of this section by the Commissioner.

**Registration  
and regulation  
of voluntary  
homes**

- (2) The register shall be kept in such form as the Commissioner may, from time to time, specify.

**194.** (1) Where a child is accommodated by or on behalf of a voluntary organization, the voluntary organization shall:

**Duties of  
voluntary  
organizations**

- (a) safeguard and promote the welfare of the child;
- (b) make such use of the services and facilities available for children cared for by their own parent as appears to the voluntary organization reasonable in the case of the child; and
- (c) advise, assist and befriend the child with a view to promoting the welfare of the child when the child ceases to be so accommodated.

- (2) Before making any decision with respect to a child under subsection (1) of this section, the voluntary organization shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, ascertain the wishes and feelings of:

- (a) the child;
- (b) the parent of the child

- (c) a person, who though not a parent of a child has parental responsibility for the child; and

- (d) any other person whose wishes and feeling the voluntary organization considers to be relevant, regarding the matter to be decided.

- (3) A voluntary organization shall, in making a decision under this section give due consideration to:

- (a) such wishes and feelings of the child as it has been able to ascertain, having regard to the age and understanding of the child;
- (b) such other wishes and feelings mentioned in subsection (2) as it has been able to ascertain; and
- (c) the religious persuasion, ethnic or racial origin, cultural and linguistic background of the child.

**Duties of the  
State  
Government**

- 195.** (1) The State Government shall satisfy itself that any voluntary organization which provides accommodation for a child:
- (a) within the State; or
  - (b) outside the State on behalf of the State Government, satisfactorily safeguards and promotes the welfare of the child which it provides with accommodation.
- (2) The State Government shall arrange for children who are accommodated within its State by or on behalf of voluntary organizations to be visited, from time to time, in the interest of the welfare of the children.
- (3) Subsection (2) does not apply in relation to community homes.
- (4) Where the State Government is not satisfied that the welfare of a child who is accommodated by or on behalf of a voluntary organization is being satisfactorily safeguarded or promoted, it shall:
- (a) unless it considers that it would not be in the best interest of the child, take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that the care and accommodation of the child is undertaken by:
    - (i) a parent of the child,
    - (ii) a person who, though not a parent of a child, has parental responsibility for the child, or
  - (b) consider the extent to which, if at all, it could exercise any of its powers with respect to the child.
- (5) A person authorised by the State Government may for the purpose of enabling the State Government to discharge its duties under this section:
- (a) enter, at any reasonable time, and inspect any premises in which children are being accommodated as mentioned in subsection (1) or (2);
  - (b) inspect the children in those premises; and
  - (c) require any person to furnish him with records of a kind required to be kept by regulations made under paragraph 7 of the Ninth Schedule, in whatever form they are held, or allow him to inspect such records, as the Commissioner may, from time to time, direct.
- (6) A person exercising the power conferred on subsection (5) shall, if asked to do so, produce some duly authorized documents showing his authority to do so.
- (7) A person authorised to exercise the power conferred by subsection (5) of this section to inspect records:
- (a) shall be entitled, at any reasonable time, to have access to, and inspect and check the operation of any computer and associated apparatus or material which is or has been in use in connection with the records in question; and
  - (b) may require:
    - (i) the person by whom or on whose behalf the computer is or has been so used, or

- (ii) a person having charge of, or otherwise concerned with the operation of, the computer, apparatus or material, to afford him assistance as he may reasonably require.
- (8) A person who intentionally obstructs any other person in the exercise of any power conferred by subsection (5) or (7) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦100,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or to both fine and imprisonment.
- (9) The Commissioner may make regulations:
  - (a) requiring every child who is accommodated within the State, by or on behalf of a voluntary organization, to be visited by an officer of the State Government.
  - (b) imposing requirements which shall be met by the State Government, or officer of the State Government, carrying out functions under this section.

## PART XVIII

### REGISTERED CHILDREN'S HOME

- 196.** (1) No child shall be cared for or provided with accommodation in a children's home unless the home is registered under this Part of this Law.
- (2) The Commissioner shall cause a register to be kept for the purpose of subsection (1) in a form as he may, from time to time, specify, including by means of a computer.
- (3) Subject to any exemption by or under this section and regulations made by the Commissioner for the purpose of this subsection, **a home is a children's home if it provides, or usually provides or is intended to provide care and accommodation wholly or mainly for more than three children at any one time.**
- (4) An independent school is a children's home if:
  - (a) it provides accommodation for not more than 50 children; and
  - (b) it is not approved by the Education authority or other education authority established under the appropriate laws on education applicable in the State.
- (5) A home is not a **children's home** for the purpose of this Part of this Law if it is:
  - (a) a **community** home;
  - (b) a **voluntary** home;
  - (c) a **residential care** home, **nursing** home or **mental nursing** home;
  - (d) a **health services** hospital;
  - (e) a **home** provided, equipped and maintained by the **Commissioner**; or
  - (f) a **school**, but subject to subsection (4).
- (6) A child is not cared for and accommodated in a children's home when:
  - (a) the child is cared for and accommodated by:
    - (i) the child's parents,

**Registration and regulation of children's homes.**

- (ii) a person who, though not a parent of a child, has parental responsibility for the child, or
    - (b) a person mentioned in paragraph (a)(i) or (ii) is living in the home; or
    - (c) the person caring for the child is doing so in his personal capacity and not in the course of carrying out his duties in relation to the home.
  - (7) A person who, without reasonable excuse, cares for and accommodates a child in children's home or who manages a children's home which is not a registered children's home, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.
  - (8) The provisions of:
    - (a) the Tenth Schedule to this Law shall have effect with respect to children's homes; and
    - (b) Part 1 on the Fourth Schedule sets out the circumstances in which a person may foster more than three children without being treated as managing a children's home.
- 197.** (1) Where a child is accommodated in a children's home, the person managing the children's home shall:
- (a) safeguard and promote the welfare of the child;
  - (b) make such use of the services and facilities available for children cared for by their own parents as appear to that person reasonable in the case of the child; and
  - (c) advise, assist and befriend the child with a view to promoting the child's welfare when the child ceases to be so accommodated.
- (2) Before making any decision with respect to a child accommodated in a children's home, the person managing the children's home shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, ascertain the wishes and feelings of the child.
- (3) In making the decision, the person concerned shall give due consideration:
- (a) having regard to the child's age and understanding, to such wishes and feelings of the child as a person has been able to ascertain;
  - (b) to other wishes and feelings mentioned in subsection (2) as the person has been able to ascertain; and
  - (c) to the religious persuasion, racial origin, ethnic origin, cultural and linguistic background of the child.
- (4) Section 199, except subsection (4), shall apply in relation to any person who is managing a children's home as it applies in relation to a voluntary organisation.

**Schedule  
x**

**Schedule  
iv**

**Duties of  
Manager of  
children's  
homes**

- 198.** (1) A person who is disqualified from fostering a child privately shall not manage or be concerned in the management of, or have any financial interest in a children's home unless the person has:
- (a) disclosed to the responsible authority the fact that he is so disqualified; and
  - (b) obtained the written consent of the responsible authority.
- (2) No person shall employ in a children's home a person who is disqualified from fostering a child privately unless the person has:
- (a) disclosed to the responsible authority the fact that he is so disqualified;
  - (b) obtained the written consent of the responsible authority.
- (3) Where a responsible authority refuses to give its consent under this section, it shall inform the applicant by a written notice which states:
- (a) the reason for the refusal;
  - (b) the applicant's right to appeal against the refusal to the Court under paragraph 8 of Schedule 10 to this Law; and
  - (c) the time within which the applicant may appeal.
- (4) A person who contravenes subsection (1) or (2) of this section commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 1 year or to both such fine and imprisonment.

**Persons  
disqualified  
from managing  
or being  
employed in  
children's  
homes**

## **PART XIX**

### **SUPERVISORY FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSIONER**

- 199.** (1) The Commissioner may cause to be inspected, from time to time, any:
- (a) children's home;
  - (b) premises in which a child who is being cared for by an appropriate authority is living;
  - (c) premises in which a child who is being accommodated by or on behalf of an Education Authority, Health Authority or voluntary organization is living;
  - (d) premises in which a child is living with a person with whom he/she has been placed pending an Adoption Order;
  - (e) premises in which a protected child is in or will be living in;
  - (f) premises in which a privately fostered child or a child who is treated as a fostered child by virtue of paragraph 9 of Part III of the Fourth Schedule, is in or will be living in;
  - (g) premises on which a person is acting as a child minder;
  - (h) premises with respect to which a person is registered under section 164 (1)(b);
  - (i) a residential care home, nursing home or mental nursing home;

**Inspection of  
children's home  
by authorized  
persons**

**Schedule  
iv**

- (j) premises, which are provided by the State Government and in which any service is provided by the State Government under Part XV;
  - (k) independent school providing accommodation for a child.
- (2) An inspection under this section shall be conducted by a person authorized to do so by the Commissioner.
- (3) An officer of the State Government shall not be authorized as provided in subsection (2) except with the consent of the State Government.
- (4) The Commissioner may require a person specified in subsection (5) to furnish him with such information, or allow him to inspect such records, in whatever form they are held, relating to:
- (a) any premises to which subsection (1) applies; or
  - (b) a child who is living in any of the premises to which subsection (1) applies; or
  - (c) the discharge by the Commissioner of any functions under this Law; or
  - (d) the discharge by the State Government of any of its functions under this Law, as the Commissioner may, from time to time, direct.
- (5) The persons referred to in subsection (4) are:
- (a) the State Government,
  - (b) a voluntary organisation,
  - (c) a person managing a children's home,
  - (d) the proprietor of an independent school,
  - (e) a person fostering a child or providing accommodation for a child on behalf of the State Government, Education Authority, Health Authority or voluntary organization,
  - (f) an Education Authority providing accommodation for a child,
  - (g) a person employed in a teaching or administrative capacity,
  - (h) a person who occupies any premises in which a person acts as a child minder, within the meaning of Part XIV, or provides day care for young children, within the meaning of that Part, and
  - (i) a person managing any home of a kind mentioned in subsection (1)(j).
- (6) A person inspecting any home or other premises under this section may:
- (a) inspect the children kept in the home or premises; and
  - (b) make such examination, into the state and management of the home or premises and the treatment of the children kept in the home or premises as the person deems fit.
- (7) A person authorised by the Commissioner to exercise the power to inspect records conferred by subsection (4) of this section:

- (a) shall be entitled to any reasonable time to have access to inspect and check the operation of any computer, any associated apparatus or material which is or has been in use in connection with the records in question and
  - (b) may require:
    - (i) the person by whom or on whose behalf the computer is or has been so used, or
    - (ii) any person having charge of or otherwise concerned with the operation of the computer, apparatus or material, to afford him such reasonable assistance as he requires.
  - (8) A person authorised to inspect any premises under this section shall have a right to enter the premises for that purpose, and for any purpose specified in subsection (4), at any reasonable time and if so required, shall produce some authenticated document showing the authority to do so.
  - (9) A person who willfully obstructs another person in the exercise of a power conferred by this section commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦100,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.
  - (10) The Commissioner may by Order provide that subsections (1), (4) and (6), would not apply in relation to such homes or other premises as may be specified in the Order and the Order may make different provisions with respect to each of those subsections.
- 200.** (1) The Commissioner may cause an inquiry to be held into any matter connected with:
- (a) the functions of the supervision inspection service in the State Government;
  - (b) the functions of an adoption service;
  - (c) the functions of a voluntary organization, in so far as those functions relate to children;
  - (d) a registered children's home or voluntary home;
  - (e) a residential care home, nursing home or mental nursing home, so far as it provides accommodation for children;
  - (f) the detention of a child under this Law.
- (2) In this section, "functions" includes powers and duties which a person has, otherwise than by virtue of any enactment.
- 201.** (1) The Commissioner may direct that an inquiry under section 204 shall be held in camera.
- (2) Where no direction has been given, the person holding the inquiry may, if he thinks fit, hold it or any part of it, in private.
- 202.** (1) The Commissioner may, with the necessary consent, defray or contribute towards:

**Inquiries**

**Inquires may  
be held in  
camera**

**Financial  
support by  
Commissioner**

- (a) any fees or expenses incurred by a person undergoing approved child care training;
    - (b) any fees charged and expenses incurred, by a person providing approved child care training or preparing material for use in connection with the training; and
    - (c) the cost of maintaining a person undergoing approved child care training.
  - (2) The Commissioner may make grants to the State Government in respect of any secure accommodation, but if the grant is not used for the purpose for which it was made or the accommodation, the Commissioner may, require the State Government concerned to repay the grant, in whole or in part.
  - (3) The Commissioner may make grants to a voluntary organization towards:
    - (a) expenditure incurred by it in connection with the establishment, maintenance or improvement of voluntary homes which, at the time when expenditure was incurred:
      - (i) were assisted community home;
      - (ii) were designated as assisted community homes.
    - (b) expenses incurred in respect of the borrowing of money to defray any of those expenditure.
  - (4) The Commissioner may arrange for the provision, equipment and maintenance of homes for the accommodation of children who are in need of particular facilities and services which:
    - (a) are or will be provided in those homes; and
    - (b) in the opinion of the Commissioner, are unlikely to be readily available in community homes.
  - (5) Any grant made under this section shall be of such amount and shall be subject to such conditions, as the Commissioner may determine.
- 203.** (1) The Commissioner may conduct, or assist other persons in conducting research into any matter connected with his functions or the function of the State Government under this Law, including:
- (a) adoption; and
  - (b) the accommodation of children in residential care homes, nursing homes or mental nursing homes.
- (2) The State Government may conduct, or assist other persons in conducting research into any matter connected with its functions under the enactments mentioned in subsection (7).
- (3) The State Government shall, at such times and in such form as the Commissioner may require with respect to:
- (a) the performance by the State Government of all or any of its functions:
    - (i) under this Law; or
    - (ii) in connection with the accommodation of children in a resident care home, nursing home or mental nursing home; and

**Research and  
return of  
information**

(b) the children in relation to whom the State

Government has exercised the functions referred to in paragraph (a).

- (4) Every voluntary organisation shall, at any time and in any form that the Commissioner may direct, transmit to the Commissioner such particulars as he may require with respect to children accommodated by it or in its behalf.
- (5) The Commissioner may institute research designed to provide information on which request for information under this section may be based.
- (6) The Commissioner shall keep under review the adequacy of the provision of child care training and for that purpose shall receive and consider any information from or representations made by:
- (a) the State Ministry of Education and training in social works; and
  - (b) the State Ministry of the appropriate authority responsible for matter relating to children;
  - (c) such other persons or organizations as may appear to him/her to be appropriate, concerning the provision of such training.
- (7) The enactments referred to in subsection (2) are:
- (a) this Law;
  - (b) the codes of Criminal Law and Procedure; and
  - (c) the relevant legislation on mental health relating to children cared for by the appropriate authority of the State Government.
- 204.** (1) Where the Commissioner is satisfied that the State Government, or an appropriate authority has failed without reasonable excuse, to comply with any of the duties imposed on it by or under this Law, the Commissioner may make an Order declaring that the State Government or authority to be in default with respect to that duty.
- (2) An Order under subsection (1) shall state the Commissioner's reasons for making it.
- (3) An Order under subsection (1) may contain such direction for the purpose of ensuring that the duty is complied with, within such period as may be specified in the Order, as appears to the Commissioner to be necessary.
- (4) Any direction given by the Commissioner under subsection (3) shall, on the application of the Commissioner, be enforceable by an Order of Mandamus.

**Power of  
Commissioner to  
declare State  
Government etc.  
to be in default**

## **PART XX**

### **CHILD JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION - GENERAL**

- 205.** No child shall be subjected to the criminal justice process or to criminal sanctions, but a child alleged to have committed an act which would constitute a criminal offence if the child were an adult shall be subjected only to the child justice system and in accordance with the processes set out in this Law.
- The child to be subject only to child justice system**
- 206.** (1) The right of the child to privacy specified in section 8 shall be respected at all stages of child justice administration in order to avoid harm being caused to the child by undue publicity or by the process of labeling.
- (2) Accordingly, no information that may lead to the identification of a child offender shall be published.
- (3) Records of a child offender shall:
- (a) be kept strictly confidential and closed to third parties;
  - (b) made accessible only to persons directly concerned with the disposition of the case at hand or other duly authorized persons; and
  - (c) not to be used in adult proceedings in subsequent cases involving the same child offender.
- Protection of the child's privacy**
- 207.** (1) Professional education, in-service training, refresher courses and other appropriate mode of instructions shall be utilized to establish and maintain the officers of the Specialized Children Police Unit, supervisors and child development officers, dealing with child offenders.
- (2) Every Judge, Magistrate and other Judicial Officer, appointed to the Court shall be trained in sociology and behavioural sciences to ensure effective administration of the child justice system.
- (3) Persons employed in the child justice system shall reflect the diversity of children who come into contact with the child justice system and efforts shall be made by those concerned with the appointment of those persons to ensure the fair representation of women and minorities in the appointment.
- (4) Subject to subsection (2), political, social, sexual, racial, religious, cultural or any kind of discrimination in the selection, appointment and promotion of persons employed in the child justice system shall be avoided in order to achieve impartiality in the administration of the child justice system.
- Professional Education and Training**
- 208.** (1) There shall be established, in the Nigeria Police Force, a specialized unit of the Force, to be known as the Specialized Children Police Unit (in this Law referred to as the "Unit") which shall consist of Police Officers who:
- (a) frequently or exclusively deal with children; or
  - (b) are primarily engaged in the prevention of child offences.
- (2) The unit shall be charged with the following functions, that is:
- (a) the prevention and control of child offences;
  - (b) the apprehension of child offenders;
- Specialized Children Police Unit within the Nigeria Police Force**

- (c) the investigation of child offences; and
  - (d) such other functions as may be referred to the Unit by this Law or by regulations made under this Law or by any other enactment.
- (3) Members of this Unit shall be continually trained and instructed specially for the functions conferred on the Unit under subsection (2) of this section.
- 209.** (1) In view of the varying special needs of children and the variety of measures available, a person who makes determination on child offenders shall exercise such discretion, as deems most appropriate in each case, at all stages of the proceedings and at the different levels of child justice administration, including investigation, prosecution, adjudication and the follow-up of dispositions. **Use of discretion**
- (2) Every person who exercises discretion shall be specially qualified or trained to exercise the discretion judiciously and in accordance with his/her functions and powers.
- 210.** (1) The Police, Prosecutor or any other person dealing with a case involving a child offender shall: **Disposal of non-serious and reconcilable cases without resort to formal trial**
- (a) have the power to dispose of the case without resorting to formal trial by using other means of settlement, including supervision, guidance, restitution and compensation of victims; and
  - (b) encourage the parties involved in the case to settle the case, as provided in paragraph (a) of this section.
- (2) The Police, Prosecutor or other person referred to in subsection (1) may exercise the power conferred under this subsection if the offence involved is of a non-serious nature and:
- (a) there is need for reconciliation; or
  - (b) the family, the school or other institution involved has reacted or is likely to react in an appropriate or constructive manner; or
  - (c) where, in any other circumstance, the Police, Prosecutor or other person deems it necessary or appropriate in the interest of the child offender and parties involved to exercise the power.
- (3) Police investigation and adjudication before the Court shall be used only as measures of last resort.
- 211.** The legal status and fundamental rights of the child, set out in Part II and in particular, the:
- (a) presumption of innocence
  - (b) right to be notified of the charges;
  - (c) right to remain silent;
  - (d) right to the presence of a parent or guardian;
  - (e) right to legal representation and free legal aid, shall be respected in the administration of the child justice system set out in this law. **Respect for the legal status and rights of the child in the child justice system**

## INVESTIGATION

### 212. (1) On the apprehension of a child:

**Initial contact  
with the child on  
apprehension**

- (a) the parents or guardian of the child shall:
  - (i) be immediately notified, or
  - (ii) where immediate notification is not possible, be notified within the shortest time possible after the apprehension of the child.
- (b) the Court or Police as the case may be, shall without delay, consider the issue of release;
- (c) contacts between the Police and the child shall be managed in such a way as to:
  - (i) respect the legal status of the child,
  - (ii) promote the best interest and well-being of the child, and
  - (iii) avoid harm to the child, having due regard to the situation of the child and the circumstances of the case.

### (2) In this section:

“harm” includes the use of harsh language, physical violence, exposure to the environment and any consequential, physical, psychological or emotional injury or hurt.

### 213. (1) Detention pending trial shall:

**Detention  
pending trial**

- (a) be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest possible period of time;
  - (b) wherever possible, be replaced by alternative measures, including close supervision, care by and placement with a family or in an educational setting or home.
- (2) While in detention, a child shall be given care, protection and all necessary individual assistance, including social, educational, vocational, psychological, medical and physical assistance that the child may require, having regard to the child’s age, gender and personality.
- (3) Before the Court authorizes an apprehended child to be kept in police detention, the Court shall be satisfied that:
- (a) by reason of such circumstances as specified in the certificate, it is impracticable for the child to be detained in any other facility; or
  - (b) in the case of an apprehended child who has attained the age of 15 years, no secure accommodation is available and that keeping the child in some other authority’s accommodation would not be adequate to protect the public from serious harm from the child. Hence, ensure that the apprehended child is moved to the State Government accommodation.
- (4) Classification in the place of detention pending trial shall take account of the social, educational, medical and physical characteristics and condition of the child, including the child’s age, gender and personality.

## ADJUDICATION

- 214.** (1) A child who is accused of having committed an act such as is contemplated in section 209 shall be tried in the Court. **Jurisdiction of Court to try alleged child offenders**
- (2) The terms “conviction” and “sentence” shall not be used in relation to a child dealt with in the Court and any reference in any enactment or other law to a person convicted, a conviction or a sentence shall, in the case of a child, be construed as including a reference to a person found guilty of an offence, or to a finding of guilt or to an order made upon such a finding, as the case may be.
- 215.** (1) In the trial of a child under this Law, the observance of the child’s rights to fair hearing and compliance with due process shall be observed. **Right to fair hearing and compliance with due process**
- (2) The procedures established by the child justice system under this Law shall, in relation to the trial of the child offender and during the initial contact with the child under Section 216 including the following:
- (a) respect the legal status of the child;
  - (b) promote the best interest and well-being of the child; and
  - (c) avoid harm to the child, having due regard to the situation of the child and the circumstances of the case.
- 216.** (1) Where a child offender is brought before the Court, the Court shall ensure that: **Guiding principles in adjudication**
- (a) the proceedings is conducive to the best interests of the child and is conducted in an atmosphere of understanding which allows the child to participate in the proceedings and express himself or herself freely;
  - (b) the reaction taken is always in proportion not only to the circumstances and gravity of the offence but also to the circumstances and needs of the child and the needs of the society.
  - (c) the personal liberty of the child is restricted only after careful consideration of the case, including the use of alternative methods of dealing with the child, and the restriction is limited to the possible minimum;
  - (d) the child is not deprived of his or her personal liberty unless the child is found guilty of:
    - (i) a serious offence involving violence against another person, or
    - (ii) persistence in committing other serious offences and there is no other appropriate response that will protect the public safety.
  - (e) the well-being of the child is the guiding factor in the consideration of the child’s case.
- (2) The Court has the power to discontinue any proceedings at any time if circumstances arise which make discontinuation of the proceedings the best way to dispose of the case.

- (3) The Court shall handle each case brought before it expeditiously without unnecessary delay.
- 217.** (1) The parents or guardians of an alleged child offender charged before the Court for an act, which constitutes a criminal offence, shall attend all stages of the proceedings and shall be entitled to participate in the proceedings.
- (2) The Court may, where necessary, make an Order to enforce the attendance of parents or guardians before it.
- (3) Notwithstanding subsection (1) where in the opinion of the Court, it is not in the interest of a child that the child's parents or guardians should attend, the Court shall, by Order, exclude the parents or guardians from so attending.
- 218.** (1) Where a child is brought before the Court, the Court shall, as soon as possible, explain to the child and the child's parents or guardians in a language the child and the child's parents or guardians understand, the substance of the alleged offence.
- (2) Subject to the provisions of sections 153(4)(b)(i), where a child is brought before the Court for an offence, the case shall be finally disposed of in the Court, and it shall not be necessary to ask the parents or guardians of the child whether they consent that the child be dealt with in the Court.
- (3) If the child does not admit the facts of an alleged offence, the Court shall proceed to hear the evidence of the witnesses in support of the facts and at the close of the evidence of each witness, the Court shall ask the child or if the Court sees fit, the parents or guardians of the child, whether they wish to put any questions to the witnesses.
- (4) If the child, instead of asking questions, wishes to make a statement, the child shall be allowed to do so and it shall be the duty of the Court to put to the witnesses, such questions as appear to be necessary and the Court may put to the child such questions as may be necessary to explain anything in the statement of the child.
- (5) If it appears to the Court that a prima facie case is made out against the child, the evidence of the witnesses for the defence shall be heard and the child shall be allowed to give evidence or to make any statement.
- (6) If the child admits the offence or the Court is satisfied that the offence is proved, the Court shall then ask the child if he or she desires to say anything in explanation of the reasons for the conduct, and before deciding on how to deal with the child, the Court:
- (a) shall obtain such information as to his or her general conduct, home surroundings, school record, including the social inquiry reports referred to in section 220 and medical history, as may enable it deal with the case in the best interest of the child; and
- (b) may put to the child any question arising out of such information.

**Attendance of  
parents or  
guardians in  
Court.**

**Child justice  
procedure in  
Court**

- (7) For the purposes of obtaining an information under subsection (6) or for special medical examination or observation, the Court may from time to time, remand the child on bail or to a place of detention.
  - (8) If a child admits the offence or the Court is satisfied that the offence is proved and the Court decides that a remand is necessary for purposes of inquiry or observation, the Court may cause an entry to be made in the court records that the charge is proved and that the child has been remanded for enquiry or observation.
  - (9) The Court before which a child who has been remanded is brought may, without further proof of the commission of the offence, make any order in respect of the child which could have been made by the Court which remanded the child.
- 219.** (1) Where the Court does not release on bail a child who admits to committing one or more offences charged against the child, the Court shall remand the child to the State Government accommodation.
- Remand and  
committal to  
State  
Government  
accommodation**
- (2) A Court remanding a child to the State Government accommodation shall designate the authority, which is to receive the child, and the State Government shall:
    - (a) in the case of a child who is already being looked after by the State Government, and
    - (b) in any other case, by the Government of the State within which it appears to the Court that the child resides or in which the offence or one of the offences was committed.
  - (3) Where a child is remanded to the State Government accommodation, it shall be lawful for any person acting on behalf of the State to detain the child.
  - (4) Subject to subsection (5), the Court remanding a child to the State Government accommodation may, after consultation with the State Government, require that the State Government complies with a security requirement, which is that the person in question be placed and kept in secure accommodation.
  - (5) A Court shall not impose a security requirement except in respect of a child who has attained the age of 15 years, and then only if:
    - (a) the child is charged with or has been found to have committed a violent or sexual offence, or an offence punishable in the case of an adult with imprisonment for a term of 14 years or more; or
    - (b) the child has a recent history of absconding while remanded to the State Government accommodation and is charged with or has been found to have committed an offence punishable with imprisonment while the child was so remanded; and
    - (c) the Court is of the opinion that only such a requirement would be adequate to protect the public from serious harm from the child.

- (6) Where a Court imposes a security requirement in respect of a child, it shall:
  - (a) state that it is of such opinion as is mentioned in subsection (5); and
  - (b) explain to the child in ordinary language the reason the Court is of that opinion, and the Court shall cause a reason stated by it under paragraph (b) to be specified in the warrant of commitment and to be entered in the court register.
- (7) A Court remanding a child to the State Government accommodation without imposing a security requirement may, after consultation with the State Government, require that the child complies with any such conditions as could be imposed if the child were being granted bail.
- (8) Where a Court imposes on a child any condition as is mentioned in subsection (7), it shall explain to the child in ordinary language the reason it is imposing the condition and the Court shall cause the reason stated by it under this subsection to be specified in the warrant of commitment and to be entered in the court register.
- (9) A Court remanding a child to the State Government accommodation without imposing a security requirement may, after consultation with the State Government impose on the State Government requirements:
  - (a) for security compliance with any condition imposed on that person under subsection (7); or
  - (b) stipulating that he/she shall not be placed with a named person
- (10) Where a child is remanded to the State Government accommodation, the Court may:
  - (a) on the application to the State Government, impose on that child any condition as could be imposed under subsection (7), as if the Court were then remanding the child to such accommodation; and
  - (b) impose on the State Government any requirement for securing compliance with the condition so imposed.
- (11) Where a child is remanded to the State Government accommodation, the Court may, on the application of the State Government, vary or revoke any condition or requirement imposed under subsection (7), (9) or (10).

- 220.** (1) The appropriate Officer shall, before a case other than that involving a minor offence is finally disposed of by the Court:
- (a) properly investigate:
    - (i) the background of the child
    - (ii) the circumstances in which the child is living, and
    - (iii) the conditions under which the offences have been committed.
  - (b) inform the Court of all relevant facts relating to the child, including the child's social and family background, school, career and educational

**Social inquiry  
report**

experience, arising out of the investigation under paragraph (a) of this subsection.

- 221.** (1) Where a child is charged before the Court with an offence and the Court decides that the case would be best disposed of by the imposition of a fine, damages, compensation or costs, whether with or without any other measure, the Court shall order that the fine, damages, compensation or costs awarded, be paid by the parents or guardians of the child instead of the child, unless the Court is satisfied that:
- Power of Court to order parent or guardian to pay fine, etc.**
- (a) the parents or guardians of the child cannot be found; or
  - (b) the parents or guardians has not condoned to the commission of the offence by neglecting to exercise due care, guidance of and control over the child.
- (2) Where a child is charged with an offence, the Court may order the child's parents or guardians to give security for the child's good behaviour.
- (3) Where the Court thinks that a charge against a child is proved, the Court may make an Order on the parents or guardians under this section for payment of damages or costs or requiring them to give security for good behaviour, without proceeding to find that the child committed that act.
- (4) An Order under this section may be made by the Court against the parents or guardians who, having been required to attend the Court failed to do so, but the Order shall not be made without the Court giving the parents or guardians an opportunity of being heard.
- (5) A sum imposed and ordered to be paid by a parent or guardian under this section or any forfeiture or any security as given under this section, may be recovered from the parents or guardians by distress in like manner as if the Order has been made on the conviction of the parents or guardians of the offence with which the child was charged.
- (6) The parents or guardians may appeal against an Order under this section, to the Court at the High Court level or the Court of Appeal, as the case may be.
- 222.** (1) No child shall be ordered to be:
- Restrictions on punishment**
- (a) imprisoned; or
  - (b) subjected to corporal punishment; or
  - (c) subjected to the death penalty or have the death penalty recorded against the child.
- (2) No pregnant woman or nursing mother shall be subjected to the death penalty or have the death penalty recorded against her.
- (3) A Court shall, on sentencing a pregnant woman or a nursing mother, consider the imposition of a non-institutional sentence as an alternative measure to imprisonment.

- (4) Where institutional sentence is mandatory or desirable, a pregnant woman or a nursing mother shall be committed to and be held or detained at a Special Mothers Centre.
  - (5) No mother and child shall be held or detained at a Special Mothers Centre for a period longer than the time the child would have attained the age of 6 years.
  - (6) Where:
    - (a) a mother is released from a Special Mothers Centre due to the age of her child being 6 years before she had completed her sentence; or
    - (b) a child dies while with the mother at a Special Mothers Centre, the mother shall be brought before the Court which passed the original sentence to review the case and deal with her as appropriate, having regard to all the circumstances of the case.
  - (7) Where a mother is further given a sentence of imprisonment as a result of a review under subsection (6), the child shall be treated as a child in need for purposes for section 179 and may be committed to the care of either:
    - (a) the child's father; or
    - (b) a fit and proper person, by a Committal Order
- 223.** (1) Notwithstanding anything in this Law to the contrary, where a child is found to have attempted to commit treason, murder, robbery or manslaughter, or wounded another person with intent to do grievous harm, the Court may order the child to be detained for such period as may be specified in the Order. **Detention in case of certain crimes**
- (2) Where an Order is made under subsection (1), the child shall, during that period, notwithstanding anything in the other provisions of this Law, be liable to be detained in such place and on such conditions as the Court may direct and the child whilst so detained shall be deemed to be in legal custody.
- 224.** (1) Where a child charged with an offence is tried by a Court and the Court is satisfied that the child actually committed the offence, the Court shall take into consideration the manner in which, under this Law, the case should be dealt with by: **Methods of dealing with child offender**
- (a) dismissing the charge; or
  - (b) discharging the child offender on the child entering into recognizance; or
  - (c) placing the child under a Care Order, Guidance Order and Supervision Order, including:
    - (i) discharging the child offender and placing the child under the supervision of a Supervision Officer, or
    - (ii) committing the child offender by means of a Corrective Order to the care of a guardian and supervision of a relative or any other fit person, or
    - (iii) sending the child offender by means of a Corrective Order to an approved accommodation or approved institution; or
  - (d) ordering the child offender to:

- (i) participate in group counseling and similar activities,
    - (ii) pay a fine, damages, compensation or costs, or
    - (iii) undertake community service under supervision; or
  - (e) ordering the parents or guardians of the child offender to:
    - (i) pay a fine, damages, compensation or costs,
    - (ii) give security of the child's good behavior, or
    - (iii) enter into a recognizance to take proper care of the child and exercise proper control over him or her; or
  - (f) committing the child offender to custody in a place of detention provided under this Law; or
  - (g) making a Hospital Order or an Order prescribing some other form of intermediate treatment; or
  - (h) making an Order concerning foster care, guardianship, living in a community or other educational setting; or
  - (i) dealing with the case in any other manner in which it may be legally dealt with under this Law.
- (2) The placement of a child in an approved accommodation or Government institution shall:
- (a) be a disposition of last resort; and
  - (b) not be ordered unless there is no other way of dealing with the child and the Court shall state in writing, the reason or reasons for making the Order.
- (3) Where an Order under this section is made by the Court, the Order shall, for the purpose of:
- (a) reverting or restoring stolen property, and
  - (b) enabling the Court to make orders as to the restitution or delivery of property to the owner and as to the payment of money upon or in connection with the restitution or delivery, have the like effect as a Restitution Order upon a conviction of an adult offender, subject however to any protection provided for the child offender under this Law.
- (4) A Court shall not make an Institution Order in respect of a child unless it is satisfied that there is a vacancy in the approved institution to which it intends to commit the child.
- (5) An approved institution may refuse to accept or admit a child where there is no vacancy in the institution for the child notwithstanding an Order of a Court committing the child to that institution.
- 225.** (1) The State Government shall secure that it is in a position to comply with any security requirement, which may be imposed on it under this Law.

**Government to  
provide  
accommodation**

- (2) The State Government may discharge its duty under subsection (1) by providing secure accommodation itself for or making arrangements with any other Authority of the State Government for the provision of the accommodation.
- (3) The Commissioner may by regulations, make provision as to the co-operation required of the State Government in the provision of secure accommodation.
- 226.** (1) If the Court before which a child offender is bound by the child's recognizance to appear to be further dealt with, is satisfied by information on oath that the child offender has failed to observe any of the conditions of his or her recognizance, it may issue:
- (a) a warrant for the apprehension of the child; or
  - (b) a summons to the child and the child's sureties, if any, requiring the child and the sureties to be present at the Court and at such time as may be specified in the summons.
- (2) A child offender, when apprehended, shall, if not brought forthwith before the Court before whom the child offender is bound by his or her recognizance to appear to be further dealt with, be brought before another Court.
- (3) The Court before which a child offender on apprehension is brought, or before which the child offender appears in pursuance of a summons may, if it is not the Court in which the child offender is bound by his or her recognizance to appear to be further dealt with, remand the child in custody or on bail until the child can be brought before the Court in which he or she is bound by the recognizance to appear.
- (4) The Court before which a child is bound by his or her recognizance to appear to be further dealt with shall, on being satisfied that the child has failed to observe any condition of the recognizance, forthwith without any further proof of the child having violated the law or otherwise, deal with the child as for the original offence.
- 227.** (1) Where a child is found to have committed an offence, the powers conferred by this section shall be exercisable by the Court before which the case is brought and the Court shall:
- (a) exercise those powers if it is satisfied, having regard to the circumstances of the case, that their exercise would be desirable in the interest of preventing the commission by the child of any further offence, and
  - (b) where it does not exercise those powers, state that it is not satisfied as mentioned in paragraph (a) and why it is not so satisfied.
- (2) The powers conferred by this section on the Court are as follows:
- (a) with the consent of the parents or guardians of the child, to order the parents or guardians to enter into a recognizance to take proper care of the child and exercise proper control over the child; and

**Procedure on failure to observe condition of recognizance**

**Binding over a parent or guardian**

- (b) if the parents or guardians of the child refuses to give consent and the Court considers the refusal unreasonable, to order the parents or guardians to pay a fine not exceeding ₦100,000.
- (3) An Order under this section shall not require the parents or guardians to enter into a recognizance:
  - (a) for the amount exceeding ₦300,000, or
  - (b) for a period exceeding 3 years, or, where the child will attain the age of 18 years in a period shorter than 3 years, for a period not exceeding that shorter period.
- (4) The Court has the power to declare the recognizance entered into by virtue of subsection (2) to be forfeited, and adjudge the parents or guardians for the child to pay the whole sum in which is bound or part of the sum and the payment of the sum so adjudged to be forfeited shall be enforced by means of a warrant of distress to be levied against the property of the parents or guardians.
- (5) Section 226 shall apply for the purposes of subsection (2)(b) of this section, as if the refusal to enter into a recognizance were a summary offence punishable by a fine not exceeding ₦100,000 and a fine imposed under that subsection shall be deemed for the purpose of any enactment to be a sum adjudged to be paid by virtue of a conviction.
- (6) In fixing the amount of a recognizance under this section, the Court shall consider, among other things, the means of the parents or guardians of the child so far as they appear or are known to the Court and this subsection applies whether or not the means of the parents or guardians has the effect of increasing or reducing the amount of the recognizance.
- (7) A parent or guardian may appeal to:
  - (a) the Court at the High Court level against an Order under this section made by the Court at the Magistrates' Court level, and
  - (b) the Court of Appeal against an Order under this section made by the Court at the High Court level.
- (8) A Court may vary or revoke an Order made by it under this section if, on the application of the parents or guardians, it appears to the Court, having regard to any change in the circumstances since the Order was made, to be in the interest of justice to do so.

- 228.** (1) A Corrective Order under this Law shall be in a form as may be prescribed.
- (2) One copy of the Corrective Order duly completed, shall be kept by the Court which issued the Corrective Order, the second copy shall be sent to the appropriate State Commissioner and the third copy is to be sent with the child named in it to the approved institution to which or to the person to whom the child is to be sent under the Corrective Order.

**Forms for  
Corrective  
Orders**

- 229.** The operation of a Corrective Order may be suspended:
- (a) pending completion of arrangements for the reception of the child into an approved institution; or
  - (b) on account of ill-health of the child; or
  - (c) for any other good and sufficient reasons and in such case, the Court may:
    - (i) remand the child in custody;
    - (ii) order the child to be committed to the care of fit and proper person willing to undertake the child's custody; or
    - (iii) release the child on bail.
- Suspension of operation of Corrective Order**
- 230.** (1) The Court which issued a Corrective Order may:
- (a) if satisfied that the Corrective Order is about to expire and that the child would benefit by further care or training, extend the period of the Corrective Order subject to the provisions of this Law;
  - (b) order the child:
    - (i) whose period of detention has exceeded 12 months to be discharged.
    - (ii) to be released from an approved institution on the condition that the child shall be of good behavior and live under the charge of any trustworthy and respectable person named in the Order of Release who is willing to receive and take charge of the child and keep the child at school or employed at some trade, occupation or calling.
    - (iii) to be released from one approved institution or person to another institution or persons
- (2) An Order made under this section may, in the discretion of the Court making the Order, be revoked and thereupon the original Corrective Order shall remain in full force and effect.
- Power to vary a Corrective Order in certain cases**
- 231.** (1) At any time during the period of a child's detention in an approved institution, the Manager of the approved institution may grant leave to the child to be absent from the approved institution and the Manager may, at any time require the child to return to the approved institution.
- (2) During the period of leave granted a child under subsection (1), the child shall, for the purposes of this Law, be deemed to be under the care of the Manager of the approved institution and the Manager may, at any time require the child to return to the approved institution.
- Grant of leave of absence to child in detention by Manager of an approved institution**
- 232.** A child shall, whilst the child is detained in or on leave from an approved institution in accordance with the provisions of this Law and also being conveyed to or from the institution, be deemed to be in legal custody and if the child escapes, the child may be apprehended without warrant and brought back to the approved institution.
- Apprehension without warrant**
- 233.** If the Manager of an approved institution is satisfied that a child committed to the approved institution is of such unruly or depraved character that it is undesirable for
- Procedure in case of unruly or depraved persons**

the child to remain at that institution, the Manager may cause the child to be brought before:

- (a) the Court which made the Committal Order, and that Court may make such further Order which it has power to make under this Law; or
- (b) the Court having jurisdiction in the place where the institution is situated and the Court may, in respect of the child, make an Order or further Order which could have been legally made by the Court which made the Committal Order under the provisions of this Law.

### **NON-INSTITUTIONAL TREATMENT**

- 234.** (1) The authority responsible for child matters shall:
- (a) have the authority for ensuring the implementation of every non institutional Order of the Court; and
  - (b) make quarterly reports to the Court having jurisdiction in the area on how the Order is to be implemented, on the progress of the implementation of the non-institutional Order, including the response of the child offender to the treatment specified in the Order.
- (2) The Court to which a report is made under subsection (1) has the power to modify the non-institutional Order, from time to time, as it deems fit, having regard to the circumstances of the case.
- 235.** A child in respect of whom an Order referred to in section 228 is made, shall be provided, where appropriate, with necessary assistance, including accommodation, education or vocational training, employment and any other helpful and practical assistance, during the period the Order is in force.
- 236.** Voluntary and other organizations and agencies, individuals and communities shall be encouraged by the Government Departments and Agencies responsible for child welfare to contribute effectively to the rehabilitation and development programmes for child offenders.

**Effective  
implementation  
of non-  
institutional  
Orders**

**Assistance  
during  
rehabilitation**

**Mobilization of  
voluntary  
services**

### **INSTITUTIONAL TREATMENT**

- 237.** (1) The objective of training and treatment of a child offender placed in an institution shall be to provide care, protection, education and vocational skill with a view to assisting the child to assume socially constructive and productive roles in the society.
- (2) A child offender in an institution shall be given care, protection and every necessary assistance, including social, educational, vocational, psychological, medical and physical assistance, that the child may require, having regard to the child's age, gender, personality and in the interest of the child's development.
- (3) A female child offender placed in an institution shall:
- (a) be treated fairly;

**Objectives of  
institutional  
treatment**

- (b) receive no less care, protection, assistance, treatment and training than a male child; and
  - (c) be given special attention to meet her peculiar needs and problems as a female child.
- (4) The parents and guardian of a child offender placed in an institution shall have the right of access to the child in the interest and well-being of the child.
  - (5) Inter-Ministerial and Inter-Departmental co-operation shall be encouraged for the purpose of providing adequate academic or vocational training for any child offender placed in an institution or ensure that the child does not leave the institution at an educational disadvantage.
- 238.** (1) The Court shall use conditional release from an institution to the greatest possible extent and grant it at the earliest possible time.
- (2) A child granted a conditional release from an institution shall be assisted and supervised as provided under Part XXI.

**Recourse to conditional release**

## **RESEARCH, PLANNING, POLICY FORMULATION AND EVALUATION**

- 239.** (1) Without prejudice to section 208, the State Government and all Local Governments in Rivers State shall:
- (a) organize and promote necessary research as a basis for effective planning and policy formulation on child justice administration;
  - (b) review and appraise periodically the trends, problems and causes of child delinquency and crime and the varying particular needs of children in custody.
  - (c) establish a regular evaluation research mechanism built into the child justice administration system;
  - (d) collect and analyze relevant data and information for appropriate assessment and future improvement and reform of the child justice administration system; and
  - (e) systematically plan and implement, as an integral part of national development efforts, the delivery of services in child justice administration.

**Government's organization of research for effective planning, policy formulation, etc.**

## **PART XXI SUPERVISION**

- 240.** (1) The Commissioner may appoint:
- (a) fit and proper persons designated“ ex-officios” as Supervision Officers for such areas as may be specified in each letter of appointment;

**Appointment of Supervision Officers, Deputies and Assistants**

- (b) Deputy Supervision Officers to assist and also act in the absence or during the illness or incapacity of Supervision Officers; and
    - (c) Assistant Supervision Officers to assist Supervision Officers in the performance of their functions.
  - (2) A Supervision Officer shall, when acting under a Supervision Order, be subject to the control of the Family Court in the relevant Division or District in the State.
- 241.** (1) The Commissioner may appoint such number of Supervision Inspectors, as he/she may, with the approval of the Governor of the State, determine for all purposes of this Part of this Law.
- (2) The Supervision Inspectors appointed under subsection (1), together with the Supervision Officers appointed under section 244, shall constitute the State Supervision Inspection Service (in this Part of this Law referred to as “the Supervision Service”).
  - (3) The Commissioner shall appoint one of the Supervision Inspectors to be the Chief Supervision Inspector of the Supervision Service.
  - (4) The Supervision Inspector shall:
    - (a) inspect and report to the Commissioner on the activities of Supervision Service and the activities carried out by or on behalf of Supervision Service; and
    - (b) discharge such other functions in connection with the provision of supervision or related service, whether or not provided by or on behalf of the Supervision Service for any area, as the Commissioner may from time to time direct.
  - (5) The Commissioner shall make to or in respect of Supervision Inspectors such payments by way of remuneration, allowances or otherwise as he/she may, with the approval of the Governor, determine.
- 242.** (1) The Commissioner may make an Order under this section if he is of the opinion that, without reasonable excuse, the Supervision Service:
- (a) has failed to discharge any of its duties under this Law or any other enactment; or
  - (b) has so failed and is likely to do so again
- (2) An Order under subsection (1) shall:
- (a) state that the Commissioner is of the opinion referred to in subsection (1); and
  - (b) make such provision as is considered requisite for the purpose of securing that the duty is properly discharged by the Supervision Service.
- (3) The Supervision Service shall comply with the provisions of any Order made under subsection (1).

**Supervision  
Inspectors and  
supervision  
inspection  
service**

**Default power  
where the  
supervision  
service fails to  
discharge its  
statutory duty**

- 243.** (1) Where a child is charged with an offence, other than homicide and the Court is satisfied that the charge is proved, the Court may make an Order discharging the child offender conditionally on the child entering into recognizance with or without sureties to:
- (a) be of good behavior; and
  - (b) appear to be further dealt with when called upon at any time during such period, not exceeding 3 years, as may be specified in the Order.
- (2) A recognizance entered into under subsection (1) shall, if the Court so orders, contain:
- (a) a condition that the child offender be under the supervision of a person as may be named in the Order during the period specified in the Order; and
  - (b) such other conditions for securing such supervision as may be in the Order.
- (3) An Order containing a condition that a child offender be under supervision in the child's recognizance shall in this Law be referred to as a Supervision Order.
- 244.** The person named in the Supervision Order shall be:
- (a) a Supervision Officer appointed by the appropriate Commissioner of the State in or for which the Court acts; or
  - (b) if the Court considers it expedient on account of the place of residence of the offender or for any other special reason, a Supervision Officer appointed by the Commissioner, or
  - (c) if the Court considers that the special circumstances of the case render it desirable, or if no person has been appointed Supervision Officer, any other person who has not been appointed Supervision Officer for the State.
- 245.** The person named in a Supervision Order may at any time be relieved of his duties as specified in Section 251 and where the person is relieved of his duties or he dies, another person may be substituted by the Court before which the offender is bound by his recognizance to appear to be further dealt with.
- 246.** A Supervision Officer shall, subject to the discretion of Court:
- (a) visit or receive reports from the child under supervision at such reasonable intervals as may be specified in the Supervision Order or, subject thereto, as the supervision officer may think fit,
  - (b) see that the child observes the conditions of the child's recognizance.
  - (c) make a report to the Court on the behavior of the child; and
  - (d) advise, assist and befriend the child and when necessary, endeavor to find the child suitable employment.
- 247.** The Court before which a child is bound by the child's recognizance under this Law to appear to be further dealt with may, on the application of the Supervision Officer and after notice to the child offender, vary the conditions of the recognizance and may,

**Power of Court to make conditional Discharge Order and Supervision Order**

**Person named in the Supervision Order**

**Supervision Officer may be relieved of duties**

**Duties of Supervision Officer**

**Power of Court to vary Supervision Order**

on being satisfied that the conduct of that child has been such as to make it necessary that the child should not remain under supervision, discharge the recognizance.

**PART XXII**  
**APPROVED INSTITUTIONS AND POST RELEASE**  
**SUPERVISION, ETC.**

**248.** Approved Institutions consist of approved children institutions and Special Mothers Centres, all of which shall be established as provided in this Part of this Law.

**Approved  
Institutions**

**249.** (1) The Commissioner shall:

**Establishment  
of approved  
institutions**

(a) establish, in any part of the State, the following Institutions to be known as approved children institutions:

- (i) a Children Attendance Centre,
- (ii) a Children Centre,
- (iii) a Children Residential Centre,
- (iv) a Children Correctional Centre,
- (v) a Special Children Correction Centre, and
- (vi) such other institutions as the Commissioner may, from time to time establish; and

(b) make rules for the management, upkeep and inspection of the approved children institutions.

(2) The Commissioner responsible for matters relating to women shall:

- (a) establish in any part of the State, Institutions to be known as Special Mothers Centres; and
- (b) make rules for the management, upkeep and inspection of the Special Mothers Centres.

(3) The supplementary provisions contained in the Eleventh Schedule to this Law shall have effect with respect to approved Institutions established by the appropriate Commissioner under subsection (1) and (2).

**Schedule  
xi**

**250.** (1) The Commissioner may by Order declare any building, place or land within the State, as the case may be to be:

**Declaration of  
building, etc as  
an approved  
institution**

- (a) a Children Attendance Centre;
- (b) a Children Centre;
- (c) a Children Residential Centre;
- (d) a Children Corrective Centre;
- (e) an Emergency Protection Centre;
- (f) a Special Children Correctional Centre, or
- (g) such other children institutions as may be established by the Commissioner.

(2) The Commissioner responsible for matters relating to women may by Order declare any building, place or land within the State, to be a Special Mothers Centre

**Children  
attendance  
centres, etc.**

- 251.** (1) A Children attendance Centre shall be a non-residential place at which children shall attend:
- (a) on a daily basis or on such days only as may be prescribed, on the Order of the Court which dealt with the case of the child concerned; and
  - (b) for the removal or reduction, in terms of their tendency to commit anti-social acts and such other acts which violate the criminal law.
- (2) A Children Center shall be a place for the detention of children who are remanded in or committed to custody for trial or for the making of a Disposition Order after trial, or awaiting adoption or fostering.
- (3) A Children Residential Centre shall be a place in which child offenders may be detained and given regular school education and such other training and instructions as may be conducive to their reformation and re-socialization and the removal or reduction of their tendency to commit anti-social acts and such other acts which violate the Criminal Law.
- (4) A Children Correctional Centre shall be a place in which child offenders may be detained and given such training and instructions as will be conducive to their formation and re-socialization and the removal or reduction, in terms of their tendency to commit anti-social acts and such other acts which violate the Criminal Law.
- (5) An Emergency Protection Centre shall be a place in which a child taken into police protection or in respect of whom an Emergency Protection Order is made shall be accommodated until the expiration of the Order.
- (6) A Special Children Correction Centre shall be a place to which children, who are found to be incorrigible or to be exercising bad influence on other inmates detained in a Children Correctional Centre may be detained.
- (7) A Special Mothers Centre shall be a place in which pregnant women and nursing mothers are held for purposes of remand, re-socialization and rehabilitation in the society in an atmosphere devoid of the regime of institutional confinement which may be damaging for the proper development of their children.
- (8) The appropriate Commissioner may, by regulations, prescribe or provide for:
- (a) the regulation and governance of the approved institutions,
  - (b) the appointment, powers, duties, conduct and disciplinary control of the Officers and other persons employed in approved institutions,
  - (c) the functions and duties of visitors, visiting committees and voluntary visitors to approved institutions,
  - (d) the classification, treatment, diet, clothing, maintenance, employment, discharge, discipline, institutions and control of inmates of approved institutions.
  - (e) the release of inmates on parole,

- (f) the establishment of after-care associations, for the welfare and reformation of children discharged from approved institutions;
- (g) the form in which any Order shall be made, and
- (h) such other matters as are required for the better carrying out of the purposes of this section.

- 252.** (1) The State Director responsible for child development in the Ministry or any other Officer as the Commissioner may designate, shall have the general charge and superintendence of all approved children institution within the State. **Responsibility for approved institutions,**
- (2) The State Comptroller of Prisons shall have the general charge and superintendence of all approved youth institutions in the State.
- 253.** (1) Child Development Officers shall be appointed to carry out duties in relation to approved children institutions situate within their areas of jurisdiction. **Officers of approved institutions**
- (2) Women Affairs Officers shall be appointed to carry out duties in relation to Special Mothers Centers.
- (3) All Officers appointed to all the approved institutions defined in section 253 and specified in this section shall be persons with background training in criminology, criminal justice, sociology, psychology, social psychology, guidance and counseling, or social work.
- 254.** (1) The Commissioner may, by notice in the Gazette, appoint any persons as he may think fit to be visitors in relation to any approved institutions specified in the notice. **Visitors and visiting committees**
- (2) In addition to persons appointed under subsection (1), the following persons shall be ex-officio visitors to all approved children institutions:
- (a) the Chief Judge of the State;
  - (b) Judges of the Family Court at the High Court level; and
  - (c) members of the Family Court at the Magistrates' Court level.
- (3) The Commissioner may, where necessary, by notice in the Gazette, appoint such number of visitors to constitute a visiting committee in relation to such approved institutions as may be specified in the notice without prejudice to the general right of visitation on the part of the other visitors.
- (4) Visitors and the visiting committees shall perform functions and duties in relation to approved institutions as may be prescribed.
- (5) The Commissioner may, by notice in the Gazette, delegate the powers conferred by this section to appoint visitors and visiting committees in respect of State approved institutions in the State, to any Officer of the State Government.

- (6) The provisions of this section which give the Commissioner power to appoint persons as visitors shall not come into operation in the State until the Commissioner has signified in the Gazette, the consent of the Governor of the State to the appointment.
- 255.** The Director may authorize any person as he may think fit as voluntary visitors to carry out any function and duty in relation to approved institutions as may be prescribed. **Appointment of voluntary visitors**
- 256.** The Commissioner shall cause to be provided in approved institutions, facilities for the observation of any child or youth detained in the institution, on whose physical or mental condition a medical report is required for the assistance of a Court in determining the most suitable method of dealing with the child's case. **Facilities for observation of children in approved institutions.**
- 257.** (1) If the Director reports to the Commissioner that a child detained in a Children Correctional Centre is incorrigible or is exercising a bad influence on the other of the inmates of the institution, the Commissioner may direct that the child be committed to a Special Children Correctional Centre for such term, not exceeding the unexpired portion of the term for which the child is then liable to be detained in the Children Correctional Centre as the Court may determine. **Transfer from Children Correctional Center to Special Children Center**
- (2) A child committed to a Special Children Correctional Centre under subsection (1) shall, for the purposes of this Law be treated as if the child has been ordered to be committed to the Children Correctional Centre for that term.
- (3) No report made under subsection (1) by the Director to the Commissioner, as the case may be, shall be made earlier than 6 months following the date of the Order committing the child concerned to the Children Correctional Centre.
- 258.** (1) A child detained in a Children Attendance Centre of a Children Correctional Centre shall, on attaining the age of 18 years, be released, unless the child is considered to require further training and instruction in a Youth Correctional Centre, in which case, the child shall be transferred to a Youth Correctional Centre. **Release from approved institution etc.**
- (2) Where the Director reports to the Commissioner that a child detained in a Special Children Correctional Centre is attaining the age of 18 years, is still incorrigible or is still exercising an influence on other inmates, the Commissioner may direct that the child be committed to a Special Youth Correctional Centre.

## **RELEASE AND POST - RELEASE SUPERVISION**

- 259.** Subject to the provisions of section 258 of this Law, a child ordered to be detained in a Children Correctional Centre shall, after the child's release from the Children Centre, be subject to supervision in accordance with the provisions of section 260. **Release and supervision after training at the Children Correctional Centre**
- 260.** (1) A child shall: **Post-release supervision and recall to an approved institution of child offenders**

- (a) after the child's release from an approved institution and until the expiration of 4 years from the date of the Order committing him or her to the approved institution, be under the supervision of such after-care association or persons as may be specified in a notice to be given the child by the Director or State Comptroller of Prisons on the child's release; and
  - (b) while under that supervision, comply with such requirements as may be so specified, so however, that the Director or State Comptroller of Prisons may at any time modify or cancel any of those requirements, or order that the child shall cease to be under supervision.
- (2) If, before the expiration of 4 years from the date of the Order committing a child to an approved institution, the Director or State Comptroller of Prisons is satisfied that the child, after the child's release from the approved institution under section 258, has failed to comply with any requirement for the time being specified in the notice given to the child under subsection (1), the Director or State Comptroller of Prisons may direct the child to be recalled to an approved institution.
- (3) A child who is recalled into an approved institution is liable to be detained in the approved institution until the expiration of:
  - (a) 3 years from the date of the Order committing the child to the approved institution; or.
  - (b) 6 months from the date of the child being taken into custody under the direction, whichever is the later, and, if at large, shall be deemed to be unlawfully at large.
- (4) A direction by the Director recalling a child to an approved institution shall at the expiration of 4 years from the date of the order committing the child to the approved institution, cease to have effect unless the child to whom it relates is then in custody thereunder.
- (5) The Director or State Comptroller of Prisons may, at any time, release a child who is detained in an approved institution under this section and the provisions of this section shall apply in the case of a child so released as they apply in the case of a child released under section 258.
- (6) If a child while under supervision, or after recall to an approved institution is ordered to be committed to an approved institution or is sentenced by the Court to an approved institution for training, the original Order or sentence:
  - (a) shall cease to have effect; and
  - (b) if imprisonment, any period for which the child is so imprisoned under that sentence shall count as part of the period for which the child is liable to be detained in an approved institution under the original sentence.
- (7) The Director or State Comptroller of Prisons shall, in exercising his functions under this section, act in accordance with any general or special directions of the

Commissioner or Commission, as the case may be, in whether it is advisable to release a child from an approved institution.

- (8) In this section any reference to the date of an Order committing a child to an approved institution for training shall in relation to a child who has appealed against his or her Order or sentence, be construed as a reference to the date on which the date on which the Order or sentence was finally affirmed.

## **PART XXIII**

### **THE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHILD RIGHTS IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEES**

#### **STATE CHILD RIGHTS IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**

- 261.** (1) There is established a Committee to be known as the State Child Rights Implementation Committee (“The State Committee”).
- (2) The State Committee consists of:
- (a) the Permanent Secretary of the State Ministry of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation as Chairman;
  - (b) one person to represent each of the following State Ministries and Governmental Bodies:
    - (i) Ministry of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation
    - (ii) Women Affairs,
    - (iii) Youth, Employment and Economic Empowerment,
    - (iv) Education,
    - (v) Information,
    - (vi) Health,
    - (vii) Justice,
    - (viii) Sports,
    - (ix) Labor and Productivity,
    - (x) Nigeria Immigration Service,
    - (xi) Nigeria Police Force,
    - (xii) Nigeria Prison Service,
    - (xiii) State Agency for Mass Literacy,
    - (xiv) Family Court Judges and
    - (xv) Family Court Magistrates;
  - (c) two persons to represent Non-Governmental Organizations concerned with the rights and welfare of children;
  - (d) one childcare expert;
  - (e) one person to represent each of the following media (i) radio (ii) TV (iii) Print;
  - (f) one person to represent State approved children institution;
  - (g) one person to represent the State community homes;
  - (h) one person to represent the State branch of the Nigeria Union of Journalist;
  - (i) one person each to represent the National Council of Women Society;
  - (j) one person to represent the State Council of Chiefs;

**Establishment  
and membership  
of the State  
Child’s Rights  
Implementation  
Committee**

- (k) one person to represent market men association;
- (l) one person to represent market women association;
- (m) one person to represent the State Branch of the Christian Women Organization;
- (n) one person to represent the Parents/Teachers Association in the State;
- (o) two persons to represent organizations involved in the protection of the rights of the child in the State;
- (p) one person to represent the State Branch of the National Union of Teachers;
- (q) three persons to represent the broad spectrum of the relevant disciplines in the academic institutions and
- (r) such other persons or bodies as the Commissioner may, from time to time, appoint.

**262. (1)** The functions of the State Committee are to:

- (a) initiate actions that shall ensure the observance and popularization of the rights and welfare of the child as provided for in:
  - (i) this Law,
  - (ii) the United Nations Convention on the Rights and Welfare of the Child,
  - (iii) the Organization of African Unity Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child,
  - (iv) the Declaration of the World Summit for Children,
  - (v) the Dakar Consensus and National Programme of Action and
  - (vi) such other International Convention, Charters and Declarations relating to children to which Nigeria is or becomes a signatory;
- (b) continuously keep under review, the State of implementation of the rights of the child;
- (c) develop and recommend to the State and Local Governments through their respective Committees, specific programmes and projects that shall enhance the implementation of the rights of the child;
- (d) collect and document information on all matters relating to the rights and welfare of the child;
- (e) commission inter-disciplinary assessments of the problems relating to the rights and welfare of the child in the State;
- (f) encourage and co-ordinate the activities of State and Local Government institutions, organizations and other bodies concerned with the right and welfare of the child;
- (g) organize meetings, conferences, symposia, and any other enlightenment forum on the rights and welfare of the child;
- (h) coordinate the activities of and collaborate with the Local Government Child Rights Implementation Committees;
- (i) prepare and submit periodic reports on the state of implementation of the rights of the child for the submission to the State Government Child Rights Implementation Committee; and

**Functions of  
the State  
Committee**

- (j) perform any other function relating to the rights of the child as may be assigned to it.

- 263.** The State Committee shall determine its own quorum and regulate its own proceedings at any of the meetings.
- 264.** The Secretariat of the State Committee is the State Ministry responsible for Social Welfare and Rehabilitation.

**Quorum,  
procedure etc.  
at State  
Committee  
meetings**  
**Secretariat of  
the State  
Committee**

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHILD RIGHTS IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE**

- 265.** (1) There is established a Committee to be known as the Local Government Child Rights Implementation Committee ( “the Local Government Committee).
- (2) The Local Government Committee may comprise:
- (a) the Secretary of the Local Government as Chairman;
  - (b) the Supervisor for Health and Social Welfare in the Local Government;
  - (c) the Supervisor for Education in the Local Government;
  - (d) the information Officer in the Local Government;
  - (e) the Children Development Officer in the Local Government Area;
  - (f) one person to represent District or Village Heads in the Local Government Area;
  - (g) a Community Development Officer in the Local Government Area;
  - (h) the representative of the National Union of Teachers in the Local Government Area;
  - (i) the representative of the Parents and Teachers Association in the Local Government Area;
  - (j) one person to represent the Head of Market Men;
  - (k) one person to represent the Head of Market Women;
  - (l) one Person to represent the opinion leaders in the Local Government Area;
  - (m) two persons to represent two community based or organizations; and
  - (n) one person to represent the National Council of Women Societies in the Local Government Are
- 266.** The functions of the Local Government Committee are to:
- (a) initiate actions that shall ensure the observance and popularization of the rights and welfare of the child as provided for in:
    - (i) this Law,
    - (ii) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,
    - (iii) the Organization of African Unity Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child,
    - (iv) the Declaration of the World Summit for Children,
    - (v) the Dakar Consensus and National Programme of Action and
    - (v) such other International Conventions, Charters and Declarations relating to children to which Nigeria is or becomes a signatory;

**Establishment  
and  
membership of  
the Local  
Government  
Child Rights  
Implementation  
Committee**

**Functions of  
the Local  
Government  
Committee**

- (b) continuously keep under review, the state of implementation of the rights of the child;
  - (c) develop and recommend to the Local Government, specific programmes and projects that shall enhance the implementation of the rights of the child;
  - (d) collect and document information on all matters relating to the rights and welfare of the child;
  - (e) commission inter-disciplinary assessments of the problems relating to the rights and welfare of the child in the Local Government Area;
  - (f) encourage and coordinate the activities of Local Government institutions, organization and bodies concerned with the rights and welfare of the child;
  - (g) organize meetings, conferences, symposia and other enlightenment for the rights and welfare of the child;
  - (h) prepare and submit periodic reports on the state of implementation of the rights of the child for submission to the State Committee; and
  - (i) perform any other functions relating to the rights of the child as may from time to time be assigned to it.
- 267.** The Local Government Committee shall determine its own quorum and regulate its own proceedings at any of its meetings.
- 268.** The Secretariat of the Local Government Committee shall be the office of the Chairman of the Local Government.
- Quorum, procedure, etc. at Local Government Committee meetings**  
**Secretariat of the Local Government Committee**
- ### **PART XXIV**
- ### **MISCELLANEOUS**
- 269.** If an offence under this Law is proved to have been committed with the consent or connivance of or to be attributable to any neglect on the part of any Director, Manager, Secretary or other similar Officer of a Body Corporate, or any person who was purporting to act in that capacity, he as well as the Body Corporate, commits an offence and are liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.
- 270.** (1) Any notice or other documents required under this Law to be served on any person may be served on that person by being delivered personally to the person, or being sent by registered post to him or by the recorded delivery service at his proper address or by electronic means.
- (2) Any notice or other documents required to be served on a Body Corporate or a Firm shall be duly served if it is served on the Secretary or Clerk of that body or a Partner of that Firm or sent by registered post to its address or by electronic means.
- (3) The notices or other documents referred to in subsections (1) and (2) include court processes, which in addition to the mode of services mentioned in the preceding subsections shall also be validly served vide electronic means which include emails, text messages, WhatsApp, word, e-text or pictorial messages.
- (4) For the purposes of this Section, the proper address of a person shall:
- Offences by bodies corporate**  
**Service of notices and documents**

- (a) in the case of a Secretary or Clerk of a Body Corporate, be that of the registered or Principal Officer of that Body or any of her branches;
  - (b) in the case of a Partner of a Firm, be that of the principal office of the Firm or any of her branches;
  - (c) in the case of electronic service, the electronic address, telephone number or other electronic portals belonging to the party to be served; and
  - (d) in any other case, be the last known address of the person to be served.
- 271.** (1) This Law supercedes every other enactment relating to:
- (a) children;
  - (b) adoption, fostering, guardianship and wardship;
  - (c) approved Institutions, Remand Centers and Borstal/Custodial Institutions; and
  - (d) any other matter pertaining to children already provided for in this Law.
- (2) Accordingly, where any provision of this Law is inconsistent with that of the enactments specified in subsection (1), the provision of this Law shall prevail and that other provision shall, to the extent of its inconsistency, be void.
- 272.** The Commissioner may, by Order published in the Gazette, delegate any of the powers under this Law, other than the power to make regulations, to the appropriate Officers in the State.
- 273.** The Forms set out in Part 1 of the Eleventh Schedule shall have effect with respect to the matter specified therein.
- 274.** (1) In this Law:
- “Accommodation”** means an accommodation that is provided for a continuous period of more than 24 hours;
- “an act”** includes an omission;
- “Adoption service”** means an adoption service established under Section 126;
- “Age of majority”** means the age at which a person attains the age of 18 years;
- “A person authorised to seek access”** means:
- (a) in the case of an application by a State Government:
    - (i) an Officer of the State Government; and
    - (ii) a person authorized by the State Government to act on its behalf in connection with the enquiries; or
  - (b) in the case of an application by an appropriate Authority, a person authorized by the appropriate Authority; or
  - (c) the State Government or other Officer in whose care it is proposed to foster the child concerned;
- “Appropriate Authority”** means:

**Suspension  
and  
inconsistency**

**Delegation of  
powers by the  
Commissioner**

**Forms in the  
Eleventh  
Schedule**

**Interpretation**

- (a) the Commissioner or Officer or any other Body charged with the responsibility for matters relating to education or the Authority in charge of an approved Institution for the treatment and training of children;
- (b) a person who is an appropriate Authority for the purpose of Section 54, as defined in Section 62 (1) (c);
- (c) the State Government, other Officer or Body, in whose care it is proposed to foster any particular child or children;
- (d) the Rivers State Government or any other Body having responsibility for the welfare of children cared for by the Rivers State Government;
- (e) the State Government or any Voluntary Organisation responsible for the management of a Community Home;
- (f) in the case of a child who is being provided with accommodation by, or on behalf of another State Government, that State Government or
- (g) in any other case, the Government of the other State in which the child concerned lives, or will live.

**“Appropriate Education Authority”** means the Ministry of Education of the State;

**“Appropriate Officers”** means such Officers as may be assigned by the Ministry with the responsibility for carrying out the investigation referred to in section 220;

**“Approved accommodation”** includes:

- (a) a community home as provided for;
- (b) a voluntary home as provided for;
- (c) a registered children’s home as provided for;
- (d) an educational institution to which a child is committed by an Order;  
and
- (iv) any other form of accommodation which the State Government may provide for children within its boundaries;

**“Approved child care training”** means child care training which is approved by the Commissioner;

**“Approved Institution”** has the meaning assigned to it in Section 248;

**“Care Order”** has the meaning given by Section 54 (1)(a) and also includes any Order which by or under any enactment has the effect of, or is deemed to be, a Care Order for the purposes of this Law and any reference to a child who is in the care of an authority is a reference to a child who is in its care by virtue of a Care Order;

**“Child”** means, a person under the age of 18 years;

**“Child Assessment Order”** means an Order made under Section 42 (1);

**“Child care training”** means training undergone by any person with a view to, in the course of;

- (a) his employment for the purposes of any of the functions mentioned in Section 206 or in connection with the adoption of children or with the accommodation of children in a residential care home, nursing home or mental nursing home; or
- (b) his employment by a voluntary organization or similar purposes;

**“Child fostered privately”** and **“to foster a child privately”** have the same meaning as in Section 121;

**“Child in need of special protection measures”** includes a child who is mentally or physically challenged and a street child;

**“Child minder”** has the meaning given by Section 164;

**“Child of the family”** in relation to the parties to a marriage, means:

- (a) a child of both of those parties; or
- (b) any other child, not being a child who is placed with those parties as foster parents by a local authority or voluntary organization who has been treated by both of those parties as a child of their family;

**“Children’s home”** means a children’s home registered under Section 196;

**“Commission”** means the National Population Commission established under the National Population Commission Act;

**“Commissioner”** means the Commissioner charged with the responsibility for matters relating to children in the State and **“Ministry”** shall be construed accordingly;

**“Community home”** has the meaning assigned to it under Section 187;

**“Comptroller-General”** means the Comptroller-General of the Nigeria Prison Service;

**“Contact Order”**:

- (a) means an Order requiring the person with whom a child lives, or is to live, to allow the child visit or stay with the person named in the Order, or for that person and the child concerned to have contact with each other;
- (b) as the meaning assigned to it under Section 57;

**“Court”** means the Family Court established under Section 150;

**“Day care”** means any form of care or supervised activity provided for children during the day, whether or not it is provided on a regular basis;

**“Development”** means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioral development;

**“Director”** means the State Director responsible for matters relating to children in the Ministry;

**“Domestic premises”**:

- (a) means any premises which is wholly or mainly used as a private dwelling;
- (b) has the meaning assigned to it under Section 169 (1);

**“Education Authority”** means the Ministry of Education of the State;

**“Education Supervision Order”** means an Order under Section 59 (1);

**“Emergency Protection Order”** means an Order under Section 43 (1);

**“Family”** in relation to a child, includes a person who has parental responsibility for the child and a person, with whom the child is living or has been living;

**“Family proceedings”** means proceedings under the jurisdiction of a Court under this Law with respect to children;

**“Fit and proper person”** includes an appropriate authority;

**“Foster parent”** means a person:

- (a) with whom children are placed from time to time for fostering, by an appropriate authority or a voluntary organization;
- (b) appointed by the State Government to foster a child; or
- (c) with whom a child has been placed to be fostered privately;

**“Function”** includes powers and duties;

**“Government Hospital”** means a Hospital established or managed by the Rivers State Government;

**“Governor”** means the Governor of Rivers State;

**“Guardian”** means a person who is the guardian of a child by virtue of the provisions of this Law or a person lawfully appointed to be guardian of the child by deed or will or by an Order of a Court of competent jurisdiction or by operation of law;

**“Guardian of a child”** means a guardian (other than a guardian of the Estate of a child) appointed in accordance with the provisions of this Law;

**“Harm”** means ill-treatment or the impairment of physical, mental, intellectual emotional or behavioral health or development;

**“Harmful publication”** means any book, magazine, film, picture, video or audio tape or print or other medium which is a kind targeted at or likely to fall into the hands of children and which consists wholly or mainly of stories told in picture, with or without the addition of written matter or video film and cassette tape, electronic gadgets or platforms which contains pictures or stories that portray harmful information, such as:

- (a) the commission of crimes;
- (b) acts of violence or cruelty;
- (c) incidents of repulsive or horrible nature;
- (d) acts or words of an immoral character; or
- (e) obscene and indecent representation, in such a way that the work as a whole would tend to corrupt or deprave a child into whose hands it may fall.

**“Health”** means physical, emotional or mental health;

**“Health Authority”** means the Ministry of Health of Rivers State;

**“Home”** includes an Institution;

**“Ill treatment”** has the meaning assigned to it under Section 51 (1) (b);

**“Imprisonable offence”** means an offence punishable, in the case of an adult, with the death penalty or imprisonment only, without the option of fine;

**“Independent School”** means a privately owned School;

**“Manager”** means the supervisor, principal or person in charge of an approved institution;

**“Non-Institutional Order”** means an Order made by the Court on the disposal of a case, which does not involve a child offender being placed in an institution;

**“Nursing mother”** means a mother whose child is not more than 2 years old;

**“Parental responsibility”** means:

- (a) all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property; and
- (b) the rights, powers and duties which a guardian of the Estate of the child appointed before the commencement of this Law to act generally would have had in relation to the child and his property and includes, in particular, the rights of the guardian to recover or receive in his own name, or the benefit of the child, property of whatever description and wherever situated which the child is entitled to receive or recover;

**“Parental responsibility agreement”** has the meaning assigned to it under Section 69;

**“Photographic film”** includes photographic plate;

**“Photographic plate”** means any plate treated as to reproduce or be intended to reproduce an image of a subject when photographed;

**“Physically challenged”** in relation to a child has the same meaning as in Section 179 (8), meaning a child living with disability;

**“Premises”** includes vehicle, caravan and cabin;

**“Prescribed”** means prescribed by regulations made under this Law;

**“Prohibited Steps Order”** means an Order that no step, which could be taken by a parent in meeting his parental responsibility for a child and which is of a kind specified in the Order, shall be taken by any person without the consent of the Court;

**“Protected child”** has the same meaning as in Part IV;

**“Registered children’s home”** has the meaning assigned to it under Section 197;

**“Register of Births”** means the Register of Births kept by the Commission;

**“Relative”** in relation to a child, means a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, cousin, niece or nephew, whether of the full blood or half blood or by affinity or step parent;

**“Relevant establishment”** means any establishment which is mentioned in paragraph 3 and 4 of Schedule 6 and includes a Hospital, School and other establishments, exempted from the registration requirements which apply in relation to the provision of day care;

**“Residence Order”** means an Order setting out the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom a child is to live;

**“Responsible person”** in relation to a child who is the subject of a Supervision Order has the meaning assigned to it under paragraph 1 of the Second Schedule;

**“Review period”** means the period of 1 year beginning with the commencement of this Law and each subsequent period of 3 years beginning with the anniversary of that commencement;

**“School”** has the meaning assigned to it in the Education (National Minimum Standards and Establishment of Institution) Law;

**“Scientific or bodily sample”** means any blood, tissue or any other sample taken for the purpose of conducting a scientific test;

**“Scientific test”** means any test carried out under this Part of this Law, and includes any test made with the object of ascertaining the inheritable characteristics of blood, tissue or any other bodily sample;

**“Secure accommodation”** means accommodation which is provided, whether or not in a community home, for the purpose of restricting the liberty of children;

**“Service”** in relation to any provision made under Part XV, includes a facility;

**“Sexual offence”** and **“violent offence”** have the meanings assigned to them in the Rivers State Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law 2020;

**“Signed”** in relation to any person, includes the making by the person of his mark;

**“Skin mark”** means any ethnic or ritual cuts on the skin, which leaves permanent marks and also includes the insertion into the skin of colouring material designed to leave permanent marks, otherwise called a **tattoo**;

**“Special education”** means a range of educational and social services provided by the public school system and other educational institutions to individuals who are physically challenged or living with disabilities who are under 21 years old;

**“Special education needs”** means the needs of children who are receiving special education;

**“Specific Issue Order”** means an Order giving directions for the purpose of determining a specific question which has arisen, or which may arise, in connection with any aspect of parental responsibility for a child;

**“Specified proceedings”** means any proceedings:

- (a) on an application for a Care Order or Supervision Order;
- (b) in which the Court has given a direction under Section 59 (1) and has made, or is considering whether to make, an Interim Care Order;
- (c) on an application for the discharge of a Care Order or the variation or discharge of a Supervision Order;
- (d) on an application under Section 62;
- (e) in which the Court is considering whether to make a Residence Order with respect to a child who is the subject of a Care Order;
- (f) with respect to a contract between a child who is the subject of a Care Order and any other person;
- (g) under Part VIII;
- (h) on an appeal against:

- (i) the making of, or refusal to make a Care Order, Supervision Order or any Order under Section 59;
- (ii) the making of or refusal to make a Residence Order with respect to a child who is the subject of a Care Order;
- (iii) the variation or discharge, or refusal of an application to vary or discharge an Order of a kind mentioned in sub-paragraph (i) or (ii);
- (iv) the refusal of an application under Section 63; or
- (v) the making of or refusal to make an Order under Part III which are specified for the time being for the purposes of this paragraph, by Rules of Court;

**“State Government accommodation”** means accommodation provided by or on behalf of a State Government within the meaning of Part XV;

**“State Government foster parent”** has the same meaning assigned to it under Part XI of this Law;

**“Street child”** includes:

- (a) a child who is homeless and forced to live on the streets; in market places and under bridges; and
- (b) a child who, though not homeless, is on the streets engaged in begging for alms, child labour, prostitution and other criminal activities which are detrimental to the well-being of the child;

**“Supervised child”** and **“Supervisor”** in relation to a Supervision Order or an Education Supervision Order, means respectively, a child who is, or is to be under supervision and the person under whose supervision he/she is, or is to be, by virtue of the Order;

**“Supervision”** consists of such supervision as is provided for in Part XXI;

**“Supervision Inspection Service”** has the meaning assigned to it under Section 241;

**“Supervision Order”** has the meaning assigned to it under Section 54(1)(b);

**“The person responsible for the child”** means a person who, for the time being, has care of the child by virtue of a Care Order, or under Section 59, as the case may be;

**“The relevant period”** means:

- (a) the period of 6 weeks beginning with the date on which the Order in question is made; or
- (b) the period of 10 weeks beginning with the date on which the first Order was made if that period ends, other than the period mentioned in paragraph (a) of this subsection;

**“Upbringing”** in relation to any child, includes the care of the child but not the child’s maintenance;

**“Voluntary home”** means any home or other institution providing care and accommodation for children which is managed by a voluntary organization but does not include;

- (a) a nursing home, mental nursing home or residential care home;
- (b) a school;
- (c) a health service hospital;

- (d) a community home;
- (e) any home or other institution provided, equipped and maintained by the Commissioner and
- (f) any home which the Commissioner may, from time to time, by regulations, exempt for the purposes of this section;

**“Voluntary organization”** means a body other than Public or State Authority whose activities are not carried on for profit.

- (2) Reference in this Law to:
  - (a) “a person with whom a child lives, or is to live, as the result of a Residence Order”; or
  - (b) “a person in whose favour a Residence Order is in force”,
 shall be construed as references to the person named in the Order as the person with whom the child is to live.
- (3) References in this Law to a **“child who is cared for by the State Government”** has the same meaning as they have by virtue of Section 181 of this Law.
- (4) References in this Law to **“accommodation provided by or on behalf of the State Government”** are references to accommodation so provided in the exercise of functions assigned to the relevant Ministry concerning children.
- (5) In determining the **“ordinary residence”** of a child for any purpose of this Law, there shall be disregarded any period in which the child lives in a place:
  - (a) which is School or other situation;
  - (b) in accordance with the requirement of a Supervision Order under this Law or any other enactment; or
  - (c) while he/she is being provided with accommodation by or on behalf of the State Government.
- (6) References in this Law to **“children who are in need”** shall be construed in accordance with Sections 175, 176 and 177.
- (7) Pursuant to section 40 of the Interpretation Law, Cap 70, Vol. 4, Laws of Rivers State of Nigeria, 1999, words importing the masculine gender shall include feminine gender.”

**275** The Rivers State Child’s Rights Law, No. 10 of 2009 and Rivers State Child’s Rights (Amendment) Law, No. 2 of 2021 are repealed. **Repeal**

**276** This Law may be cited as the Rivers State Child’s Rights Law, 2022.

*Citation*

## **SCHEDULE I**

*Section 56 (14)*

### **FINANCIAL PROVISION FOR CHILDREN**

#### **ORDER FOR FINANCIAL RELIEF AGAINST PARENTS**

1. (1) On an application made by a parent or guardian of a child, or by any person in whose favour a Residence Order is in force with respect to a child, the Court may:
  - (a) in the case of an application to the Court at the High Court level, make one or more of the Orders mentioned in sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph;
  - (b) in the case of an application to the Court at the Magistrates' Court level, make one or both of the Orders mentioned in paragraphs (a) and (c) of that subparagraph.
- (2) The Orders referred to in sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph are:
  - (a) an Order requiring either or both parents of a child to make to the:
    - (i) applicant for the benefit of the child; or
    - (ii) child, such periodical payments, for such term, as may be specified in the Order;
  - (b) an Order requiring either or both parents of a child to:
    - (i) secure to the applicant for the benefit of the child, or
    - (ii) secure to the child, such periodical payments, for such terms as may be so specified;
  - (c) an Order requiring either or both parents of a child to pay to the:
    - (i) applicant for the benefit of the child; or
    - (ii) child such lump sum as may be so specified;
  - (d) an Order requiring a settlement to be made for the benefit of the child and to the satisfaction of the Court, of property:
    - (i) to which either parent is entitled, either in possession or in reversion, and
    - (ii) which is specified in the Order;
  - (e) an Order requiring either or both parents of a child to:
    - (i) transfer to the applicant, for the benefit of the child, or
    - (ii) transfer to the child,such property to which the parent is, or the parents are, entitled. either in possession or in reversion, as may be specified in the Order.
- (3) The powers conferred by this paragraph may be exercised at any time.
- (4) An Order under sub-paragraph (2)(a) or (b) may be varied or discharged by a subsequent Order made on the application of any person by or to whom payments were required to be made under the previous Order.
- (5) Where the Court makes an Order under this paragraph, it may:
  - (a) at any time, make such further Order under sub-paragraph (2)(a), (b) or (c) with respect to the child concerned if the child has not attained the age of 18 years;
  - (b) not make more than one Order under sub-paragraph (2)(d) or (e) of this paragraph against the same person in respect of the same child.

- (6) On making, varying or discharging a Residence Order, the Court may exercise any of its powers under this Schedule notwithstanding that no application has been made to it under this Schedule.
2. (1) If on an application by a person who has attained the age of 18 years, it appears to the Court that:
- (a) the applicant is, will be or (if an Order were made under this paragraph) would be receiving instruction at an educational establishment or undergoing training for a trade, profession or vocation, whether or not while in gainful employment; or
  - (b) there are special circumstances which justify the making of an Order under this paragraph;
- the Court may make one or both of the Orders mentioned in sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph.
- (2) The Orders referred to in sub-paragraph (1) are an Order:
    - (a) requiring either or both of the applicant's parents to pay to the applicant such periodical payments for such terms as may be specified in the Order.
    - (b) requiring either or both of the applicant's parents to pay to the applicant such periodical payments, for such term, as may be specified in the Order.
  - (3) An application may not be made under this paragraph by any person if, immediately before the child attained the age of 16 years, a Periodical Payments Order was in force with respect to the child.
  - (4) No Order shall be made under this paragraph at a time when the parents of the applicant are living with each other in the same household.
  - (5) An Order under sub-paragraph (2)(a) of this paragraph may be varied or discharged by a subsequent Order made on the application of any person by or to whom payments were required to be made under the previous Order.
  - (6) The powers conferred by this paragraph shall be exercisable at any time.
  - (7) Where the Court makes an Order under this paragraph, it may from time to time while that Order remains in force, make any further orders as it deems fit.
  - (8) In sub-paragraph (3) "**Periodical Payments Order**" means an Order made under this Schedule for the making or securing of periodical payments.

### **DURATION OF ORDERS FOR FINANCIAL RELIEF**

- 3. (1) The term to be specified in an Order for periodical payments made under paragraph 1 (2) (a) or (b) of this Schedule in favour of a child may begin with the date of the making of an application for the Order in question or any later date but shall not:
  - (a) in the first instance extend beyond the child's 17<sup>th</sup> birthday unless the Court thinks it right in the circumstances of the case to specify a later date; and
  - (b) shall not in any event extend beyond the child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday unless the Court thinks it right in the circumstances of the case to specify a later date.

- (2) Sub-paragraph (1)(b) shall not apply in the case of a child if it appears to the Court that:
  - (a) the child is, or will be, or if an Order were made without complying with that sub-paragraph, would be receiving instruction at an educational establishment or undergoing training for a trade, profession or vocation, whether or not while in gainful employment; or
  - (b) there are special circumstances which justify the making of an Order without complying with that paragraph.
- (3) An Order for periodical payments made under paragraph 1(2) (a) or 2(2)(a) of this Schedule shall, notwithstanding anything in the Order, cease to have effect on the death of the person liable to make payments under the Order.
- (4) Where an Order is made under paragraph 1(2)(a) or (b) of this Schedule requiring periodical payments to be made or secured to the parent of a child, the Order shall cease to have effect if the parent making or securing the payments and the parent to whom the payments are made or secured, live together for a period of more than 6 months.

#### **MATTERS TO WHICH THE COURT IS TO HAVE REGARD IN MAKING ORDERS FOR FINANCIAL RELIEF**

- 4.** (1) In deciding whether to exercise its powers under paragraph 1 or 2 of this Schedule and if so, in what manner, the Court shall have regard to all the circumstances of the case, including:
- (a) the income, earning capacity, property and other financial resources which each person mentioned in sub-paragraph (4) of this paragraph has or is likely to have in the foreseeable future.
  - (b) the financial needs, obligations and responsibilities which each person mentioned in sub-paragraph (4) of this paragraph has or is likely to have in the foreseeable future;
  - (c) the financial needs of the child.
  - (d) the income, earning capacity, if any, property and other financial resources of the child;
  - (e) any physical or mental disability of the child;
  - (f) the manner in which the child was being, or was expected to be educated or trained.
- (2) In deciding whether to exercise its powers under paragraph 1 of this Schedule against a person who is not the mother or father of the child, and if so in what manner, the Court shall in addition, have regard to:
- (a) whether that person had assumed responsibility for the maintenance of the child and if so, the extent to which and the basis on which the person assumed that responsibility and the length of the period during which the person met that responsibility.
  - (b) whether the person did so knowing that the child was not his child; and
  - (c) the liability of any other person to maintain the child.

- (3) Where the Court makes an order under paragraph 1 of this Schedule against a person who is not the father of the child, it shall record in the Order that the Order is made on the basis that the person against whom the order is made is not the child's father.
- (4) The persons mentioned in sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph are:
  - (a) in relation to a decision whether to exercise its powers under paragraph 1 of this Schedule, any parent of the child;
  - (b) in relation to a decision whether to exercise its powers under paragraph 2 of this Schedule, the mother and father of the child;
  - (c) the applicant for the Order; and
  - (d) any other person in whose favour the Court proposes to make the Order.

### **PROVISIONS RELATING TO LUMP SUMS**

5. (1) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph 1 of this Schedule, an Order under that paragraph for the payment of a lump sum may be made for the purpose of enabling any liabilities or expenses:
  - (a) incurred in connection with the birth of the child or in maintaining the child; and
  - (b) reasonably incurred before the making of the Order to be met.
- (2) The amount of any lump sum required to be paid by an Order made by the Court at the Magistrates' Court level under paragraph 1 or 2 of this Schedule shall not exceed ₦100,000 or such larger amount as the Commissioner may from time to time, by order fix for the purpose of this sub-paragraph.
- (3) The power of the Court under paragraph 1 or 2 of this Schedule to vary or discharge an Order for the making or securing of periodical payments by a parent, shall include power to make an Order under that provision for the payment of a lump sum by that parent.
- (4) The amount of any lump sum which a parent may be required to pay by virtue of sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph shall not, in the case of an Order made by the Court at the Magistrates' Court level, exceed the maximum amount that may, at the time of the making of the Order, be required to be paid under sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph, but the Court at the Magistrates' Court level may make an Order for the payment of a lump sum not exceeding that amount even if the parent was required to pay a lump sum by a previous Order under this Law.
- (5) An Order made under paragraph 1 or 2 of this Schedule for the payment of a lump sum may provide for the payment of that sum by installments.
- (6) Where the Court provides for the payment of a lump sum by installments, the Court shall, on an application made either by the person liable to pay or the person entitled to receive that sum, have power to vary that order by varying:
  - (a) the number of installments payable;
  - (b) the amount of any installment payable;
  - (c) the date on which any installment becomes payable.

6. (1) In exercising its powers under paragraph 1 or 2 of this Schedule to vary or discharge an Order for the making or securing of periodical payments, the Court shall have regard to all the circumstances of the case, including any change in any of the matters to which the Court was required to have regard when making the Order.
- (2) The power of the Court under paragraph 1 or 2 of this Schedule to vary an Order for the making or securing of periodical payments shall include power to suspend any provision of the Order temporarily and to revive any provision so suspended.
- (3) Where, on an application under paragraph 1 or 2 of this Schedule for the variation or discharge of an Order for the making or securing of periodical payments, the Court varies the payments required to be made under that Order, the Court may provide that the payments so varied shall be made from such date as the Court may specify, not being earlier than the date of the making of the application.
- (4) An application for the variation of an order made under paragraph 1 of this Schedule for the making or securing of periodical payments to or for the benefit of a child may, if the child has attained the age of 16 years, be made by the child himself or herself.
- (5) Where an Order for the making or securing of periodical payments made under paragraph 1 of this Schedule ceases to have effect on the date on which the child attains the age of 16 years, or at any time after that date, on or before the date on which the child attains the age of 18 years, the child may apply to the Court which made the Order for an Order for its revival.
- (6) If on an application under sub-paragraph (5) of the paragraph it appears to the Court that:
- (a) the child is, will be or (if an order were made under this sub-paragraph) would be receiving instruction at an educational establishment or undergoing training for a trade, profession or vocation, whether or not while in gainful employment; or
  - (b) there are special circumstances which justify the making of an Order under this paragraph;
- the Court shall have power to revive the Order from such date as the Court may specify, not being earlier than the date of the making of the application.
- (7) An Order which is revived by an Order under sub-paragraph (5) of this paragraph may be varied or discharged under that sub-paragraph, on the application of any person by whom or to whom payments are required to be made under the revived Order.
- (8) An Order for the making or securing of periodical payments made under paragraph (1) of this schedule may be varied or discharged after the death of either parents, on the application of a guardian of the child concerned.

#### **VARIATION OF ORDERS FOR SECURED PERIODICAL PAYMENTS AFTER DEATH OF A PARENT**

7. (1) Where the parent liable to make payments under a secured periodical payments Order has died, the persons who may apply for the variation or discharge of the Order includes the personal representatives of the deceased parent.

- (2) An application for the variation of the Order shall, except with the leave of the Court, be made after the end of the period of 6 months from the date on which representation in regard to the Estate of that parent is first taken out.
- (3) The personal representatives of a deceased person against whom a secured periodical payments Order was made, shall not be liable for having distributed any part of the Estate of the deceased person after the end of the period of 6 months referred to in sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph on the ground that they ought to have taken into account the possibility that the Court might permit an application for variation to be made after that period by the person entitled to payments under the Order.
- (4) Sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph shall not prejudice any power to recover any part of the Estate so distributed arising by virtue of the variation of an order in accordance with this paragraph.
- (5) Where an application to vary a secured periodical payments Order is made after the death of the parent liable to make payments under this Order, the circumstances to which the Court is required to have regard under paragraph 6(1) of this Schedule include the changed circumstances resulting from the death of the parent.
- (6) In considering for the purposes of sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph the question when representation was first taken out, a grant limited to settled land or to trust property shall be left out of account and a grant limited to real estate or to personal estate shall be left out of account unless a grant limited to the remainder of the state has previously been made or is made at the same time.
- (7) In this paragraph, “**secured periodical payments order**” means an Order for secured periodical payments under paragraph 1(2) (b) of this Schedule.

#### **FINANCIAL RELIEF UNDER OTHER ENACTMENTS**

8. (1) This paragraph applies where a Residence Order is made with respect to a child at a time when there is in force an Order (“the Financial Relief Order”) made under any Enactment other than this Law and requiring a person to contribute to the child’s maintenance.
- (2) Where this paragraph applies, the Court may, on the application of: –
  - (a) any person required by the Financial Relief Order to contribute to the child’s maintenance or;
  - (b) any person in whose favour a Residence Order with respect to the child is in force; make an Order revoking the Financial Relief Order, or varying it by altering the amount of any sum payable under that Order or by substituting the applicant for the person to whom any such sum is otherwise payable under that Order.

#### **INTERIM ORDERS**

9. (1) Where an application is made under paragraph 1 or 2 of this Schedule, the Court may, at any time before it disposes of the application, make an Interim Order:
- (a) requiring either or both parents of a child to make such periodical payments, at such time and for such term as the Court deems fit; and
  - (b) giving any direction which the Court deems fit.
- (2) An Interim Order made under this paragraph may provide for payments to be made from such date as the Court may specify, not being earlier than the date of the making of the application under paragraph 1 or 2 of this Schedule.
- (3) An Interim Order made under this paragraph shall cease to have effect when the application is disposed of or, if earlier, on the date specified for the purpose of this paragraph in the Interim Order.
- (4) An Interim Order in which a date has been specified for the purpose of sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph may be varied by substituting a later date.

#### **ALTERATION OF MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS**

10. (1) In this paragraph and in paragraph 11 of this Schedule, “**maintenance agreement**” means any agreement in writing made with respect to a child, whether before or after the commencement of this paragraph which:
- (a) is or was made between the father and mother of the child; and
  - (b) contains provisions with respect to the making or securing of payments, or the disposition or use of any property, for the maintenance or education of the child and any such provisions are in this paragraph and paragraph 11 of this Schedule, referred to
  - (c) as “financial arrangement”.
- (2) Where a maintenance agreement is for the time being subsisting and each of the parties to the maintenance agreement is for the time being either domiciled or resident in the State, either party may apply to the Court for an order under this paragraph.
- (3) If the Court to which the application is made is satisfied that:
- (a) by reason of a change in the circumstances in the light of which any financial arrangements contained in the maintenance agreement were made (including a change foreseen by the parties when making the maintenance agreement), the maintenance agreement shall be altered so as to make different financial arrangements; or
  - (b) the agreement does not contain proper financial arrangements with respect to the child;
- that Court may by order make such alterations in the maintenance agreement by varying or revoking any financial arrangement contained in it as may appear to it to be just, having regard to all the circumstance of the case.

- (4) If the maintenance agreement is altered by an Order under this paragraph, the maintenance agreement shall have effect thereafter as if the alteration had been made by agreement between the parties and for valuable consideration.
  - (5) Where a Court decides to make an Order under this paragraph altering the maintenance agreement:
    - (a) by inserting provision for the making or securing by one of the parties to the maintenance agreement of periodical payments for the maintenance of the child; or
    - (b) by increasing the rate of periodical payments required to be made or secured by one of the parties for the maintenance of the child,the Court, in deciding the term for which under the agreement as altered by the Order the payments or the additional payments attributable to the increase are to be made or secured for the benefit of the child, shall apply the provisions of paragraphs 3 (1) and (2) of this Schedule as if the Order were an Order under paragraph 1(2)(a) or (b) of this Schedule.
  - (6) The Court at the Magistrates' Court level shall not entertain an application under sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph unless both parties to the maintenance agreement are resident in the State and shall not have power to make any Order on such an application except:
    - (a) in a case where the maintenance agreement contains no provision for periodical payments by either of the parties, an Order inserting provision for the making by one of the parties of periodical payments for the maintenance of the child; and
    - (b) in a case where the maintenance agreement includes provisions for the making by one of the parties of periodical payments, an Order increasing or reducing the rate of, or terminating any of those payments.
  - (7) For the avoidance of doubt, it is hereby declared that nothing in this paragraph affects any power of a Court before which any proceedings between the parties to a maintenance agreement are brought under any other enactment to make an Order containing financial arrangements or the right of either party to apply for such an Order in the proceedings.
- 11.** (1) Where a maintenance agreement provides for the continuation after the death of one of the parties, of payments for the maintenance of a child, the surviving party or the personal representatives of the deceased party may apply to the Court for an Order under paragraph 10 of this Schedule.
- (2) If a maintenance agreement is altered by a Court on an application under this paragraph, the maintenance agreement shall have effect thereafter as if the alteration had been made immediately before the death, by agreement between the parties and for valuable consideration.
  - (3) An application under this paragraph shall not, except with leave of the Court, be made after the end of the period of 6 months beginning with the day on which representation in regard to the Estate of the deceased is first taken out.
  - (4) In considering for the purposes of sub-paragraph (3), the question when representation was first taken out, a grant limited to settled land or to trust property shall be left out of

account unless a grant limited to the remainder of the Estate has previously been made or is made at the same time.

- (5) The provisions of this paragraph shall not render the personal representative of the deceased liable for having distributed any part of the Estate of the deceased after the expiry of the period of 6 months referred to in sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph on the ground that he/she ought to have taken into account the possibility that a Court might grant leave for an application by virtue of this paragraph to be made by the surviving party after that period.
- (6) Sub-paragraph (5) of this paragraph shall not prejudice any power to recover any part of the Estate so distributed arising by virtue of the making of an Order in pursuance of this paragraph.
- (7) In this paragraph, “**maintenance agreement**” and “**financial arrangements**” have the meaning assigned to them in paragraph 10(1) of this Schedule.

#### **ENFORCEMENT OF ORDERS FOR MAINTENANCE**

12. (1) Any person for the time being under an obligation to make payments in pursuance of any Order for the payment of money made by a Court at the Magistrates’ Court level under this Law shall give notice of any change of address to any person as may be specified in the Order.
- (2) A person who fails without reasonable excuse to give notice commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦150,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or to both fine and imprisonment.
- (3) An Order for the payment of money made by the Court under this Law shall be enforceable as Magistrates’ Court Maintenance Order.

#### **DIRECTION FOR SETTLEMENT OF INSTRUMENT BY REGISTRAR**

13. Where the Court decides to make an Order under this Law for the securing of periodical payments or for the transfer or settlement of property, it may direct that the matter be referred to one of the Registrars of the Court to settle a proper instrument to be executed by all necessary parties.

#### **FINANCIAL PROVISIONS FOR A CHILD RESIDENT IN ANOTHER STATE IN NIGERIA OR OUTSIDE OF NIGERIA**

- 14.(1) Where one parent of a child lives in Rivers State and the child lives outside the State with:
  - (a) his or her other parent; or
  - (b) his or her guardian; or
  - (c) a person in whose favour a Residence Order is in force with respect to the child,the Court shall have power, on an application made by the parent, guardian or such person, to make one or both of the Orders mentioned in paragraph 1 (2) (a) and (b) of this Schedule against the parent living within the State.
- (2) Any reference in this Law to the powers of the Court under paragraph 1 (2) of this Schedule or to an Order made under paragraph 1 (2) of this Schedule and include a

reference to powers which the Court has by virtue of sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph or to an Order made by virtue of the sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph.

- (3) The Court shall have powers to make Orders for financial provisions in favour of a child who may be resident outside of Rivers State and Nigeria provided that one of the parents of the child at the time of the application resides in the State.

#### **STATE GOVERNMENT'S CONTRIBUTION TO CHILD'S MAINTENANCE**

- 15. (1) Where a child lives, or is to live with a person as the result of a Residence Order, the State Government may make contributions to that person towards the cost of the accommodation and maintenance of the child.
- (2) Sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph does not apply where the person with whom the child lives, or is to live, is a parent of the child or the husband or wife of a parent of the child.

#### **Schedule I Interpretation**

- 16. (1) In this Schedule:
  - (a) “**child**” includes, in any case where an application is made under paragraph 2 or 6 of this Schedule, a person who has attained the age of 18 years;
  - (b) Except paragraphs 2 and 15 of this Schedule, “**parent**” includes any party to a marriage, whether or not subsisting, in relation to whom the child concerned is a child of the family and for this purpose any reference to either parent or both parents shall be construed as a reference to any parent of the child and to all of his parents.

## **SCHEDULE II**

*Section 58 (2), 59 (8), 61 (9)*

### **SUPERVISION ORDERS**

#### **PART I – GENERAL**

##### **MEANING OF “RESPONSIBLE PERSON”**

1. For the purposes of this Schedule, a responsible person, in relation to a supervised child is:
  - (a) a person who has parental responsibility for the child; and
  - (b) any other person with whom the child is living.

##### **POWER OF SUPERVISOR TO GIVE DIRECTIONS TO SUPERVISED CHILD**

2. (1) A Supervision Order may require the supervised child to comply with any direction given by the Supervisor which requires the supervised child to:
  - (a) live at a place or places specified in the direction for the period or periods so specified;
  - (b) present himself or herself to a person or persons specified in the direction at a place or places and on a day or days so specified;
  - (c) participate in activities specified in the direction on a day or days so specified.(2) It shall be for the Supervisor to decide whether and to what extent, he exercises his power to give directions and to decide the form of any direction which he gives.  
(3) Sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph does not confer on a Supervisor, power to give directions in respect of any medical or psychiatric examination or treatment which are matters dealt with in paragraph 4 and 5 of this schedule.

##### **IMPOSITION OF OBLIGATIONS ON RESPONSIBLE PERSON**

3. (1) With the consent of any responsible person, a Supervision Order may include a requirement that he:
  - (a) takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the supervised child complies with any direction given by the Supervisor under paragraph 2 of this Schedule;
  - (b) takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the supervised child complies with any requirement included in the Order under paragraph 4 and 5 of this Schedule;
  - (c) complies with any direction given by the Supervisor requiring him/her to attend at a place specified in the direction for the purpose of taking part in the activities so specified.(2) A direction given under sub-paragraph (1) (c) of this paragraph may specify the time at which the responsible person is to attend and whether or not the supervised child is required to attend with him.  
(3) A Supervision Order may require a person who is a responsible person in relation to the supervised child, to keep the Supervisor informed of his address, if it differs from that of the child.

## **PSYCHIATRIC AND MEDICAL EXAMINATION**

4. (1) A Supervision Order may require the supervised child to:
- (a) submit to a medical or psychiatric examination; or
  - (b) submit to any such examination from time to time as directed by the Supervisor;
- (2) An examination under sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph shall be required to be conducted:
- (a) by or under the direction of such Medical Practitioner as may be specified in the Order;
  - (b) at a place specified in the Order and at which the supervised child is to attend as a non-resident patient; or
  - (c) at :
    - (i) a Health-Service Hospital; or
    - (ii) in the case of a psychiatric examination, a hospital or a mental nursing home at which the supervised child is, or is to attend as a resident patient.
- (3) A requirement of a kind mentioned in sub-paragraph (2) (c) of this paragraph shall not be included unless the Court is satisfied, on the evidence of a Medical Practitioner that:
- (a) the child may be suffering from a physical or mental condition that requires and may be susceptible to treatment; and
  - (b) a period as a resident patient is necessary if the examination is to be carried out properly.
- (4) No Court shall include a requirement under this paragraph in a Supervision Order unless it is satisfied that:
- (a) where the child has sufficient understanding to make an informed decision, the child consents to its inclusion; and
  - (b) satisfactory arrangements have been, or can be made for the examination.

### **Schedule II Interpretation**

- (5) In this paragraph and in paragraph 5 of this Schedule, “**Medical Practitioner**” means a Medical Practitioner registered under the Medical and Dental Practitioners Act Cap. M8, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004..

## **PSYCHIATRIC AND MEDICAL TREATMENT**

5. (1) Where a Court which proposes to make or vary a Supervision Order is satisfied, on the evidence of a Medical Practitioner that the mental condition of the supervised child:
- (a) is such as requires and may be susceptible to treatment; but
  - (b) is not such as to warrant the child’s detention in pursuance of a Hospital Order; the Court may include in the Order a requirement that the supervised child shall, for a period specified in the Order; submit to such treatment as is so specified.
- (2) The treatment specified in accordance with sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph shall be:

- (a) by, or under the direction of such Medical Practitioner as may be specified in the Order; and
  - (b) as a non-resident patient at such a place as may be so specified; or
  - (c) as a resident patient in a hospital or mental nursing home.
- (3) Where a Court which proposes to make or vary a Supervision Order is satisfied on the evidence of a Medical Practitioner; that the physical condition of the supervised child is such as requires and may be susceptible to treatment, the Court may include in the Order a requirement that the supervised child shall, for a period specified in the Order, submit to such treatment as is so specified.
- (4) The treatment specified in accordance with sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph shall be:
  - (a) by, or under the direction of, the Medical Practitioner as may be specified in the order; and
  - (b) as a non-resident patient at such place as may be so specified, or
  - (c) as a resident patient in a Government hospital.
- (5) No Court shall include a requirement under this paragraph in a Supervision Order unless it is satisfied:
  - (a) where the child has sufficient understanding to make an informed decision, that the child consents to its inclusion; and
  - (b) that satisfactory arrangement has been or can be made for the treatment.
- (6) If a Medical Practitioner by whom or under whose direction a supervised person is being treated in pursuance of the requirements included in a Supervision Order by virtue of this paragraph is unwilling to continue to treat or direct the treatment of the supervised child or is of the opinion that:
  - (a) the treatment should be continued beyond the period specified in the Order, or
  - (b) the supervised child needs different treatment, or
  - (c) the supervised child is not susceptible to treatment; or
  - (d) the supervised child does not require further treatment,
 the Medical Practitioner shall make a report in writing to that effect to the Supervisor.
- (7) On receiving a report under this paragraph, the Supervisor shall refer it to the Court and on such a reference, the Court may make an Order canceling or varying the requirement.
- (8) In this paragraph, “**Medical Practitioner**” has the same meaning assigned to it under paragraph 4 (5) of this Schedule.

## **PART II – MISCELLANEOUS**

### **LIFESPAN OF SUPERVISION ORDER**

- 6. (1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph and section 55 of this Law, a Supervision Order shall cease to have effect at the end of the period of 1 year beginning with the date on which it was made.
- (2) Where the Supervisor applies to the Court to extend or further extend a Supervision Order, the Court may extend the Order, for such period as it may specify.

- (3) A Supervision Order may not be extended so as to run beyond the end of the period of 3 years beginning with the date on which it was made.

#### **LIMITED LIFESPAN OF DIRECTIONS**

- 7. (1) The total number of days in respect of which a supervised child or a responsible person may be required to comply with directions given under paragraph 2 or 3 of this Schedule shall not exceed 90 days or any lesser number as the Supervision Order may specify.
- (2) For the purpose of calculating the total number of days, the Supervisor may disregard any day in respect of which directions previously given in pursuance of the Order was not complied with.

#### **INFORMATION TO BE GIVEN TO SUPERVISOR, ETC.**

- 8. (1) A Supervision Order may require the supervised child:
  - (a) to keep the Supervisor informed of any change in his or her address; and
  - (b) to allow the Supervisor to visit him or her at the place where the child is living
- (2) The responsible person in relation to any child with respect to whom a Supervision Order is made shall:
  - (a) if asked by the Supervisor, inform him of the child's address, if it is known to him; and
  - (b) if he is living with the child, allow the Supervisor reasonable contact with the child.

#### **SELECTION OF SUPERVISOR**

- 9. (1) A Supervision Order shall not designate the State Government as the Supervisor unless:
  - (a) the State Government agrees; or
  - (b) the supervised child lives or will live within the State
- (2) A Court shall not place a child under the supervision of a Supervision Officer unless:
  - (a) the State Government so requests; and
  - (b) a Supervision Officer is already exercising or has exercised, in relation to another member of the household to which the child belongs, duties imposed on Supervision Officers under this Law.
- (3) Where a Supervision Order places a person under the supervision of a Supervision Officer, the Supervision Officer shall be selected in accordance with arrangements made by the Supervision Service for the area in question.
- (4) If the selected Supervision Officer is unable to carry out his duties, or dies, another Supervision Officer shall be selected in the same manner.

## **EFFECT OF SUPERVISION ORDER ON EARLIER ORDERS**

- 10.** The making of a Supervision Order with respect to a child brings to an end any earlier Care Order or Supervision Order:
- (a) which was made with respect to that child; and
  - (b) which would otherwise continue to be in force.

## **STATE GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS AND EXPENDITURE**

- 11.** (1) The Commissioner may make regulations with respect to the exercise by the State Government of its functions where a child has been placed under its supervision by a Supervision Order.
- (2) Where a Supervision Order requires compliance with directions given by virtue of this Part of this Schedule, any expenditure incurred by the Supervisor for the purposes of the directions shall be defrayed by the State Government designated in the Order.

## **PART III – EDUCATION SUPERVISION ORDERS**

### **EFFECT OF ORDERS**

- 12.** (1) Where an Education Supervision Order is in force with respect to a child, the Supervisor shall:
- (a) advise, assist, be friend and give directions to:
    - (i) the supervised child; and
    - (ii) the parents of the supervised child;in such a way as may, in the opinion of the Supervisor, secure that the child is properly educated;
  - (b) where any direction given to the:
    - (i) supervised child; or
    - (ii) parents of the supervised childhas not been complied with, consider further steps to take in the exercise of the Supervisor's power under this Law.
- (2) Before giving any directions under sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph, the Supervisor shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, ascertain the wishes and feelings of the:
- (a) supervised child; and
  - (b) parents of the supervised child
- including, in particular, their wishes as to the place at which the child should be educated.
- (3) When settling the terms of any direction, the Supervisor shall give due consideration:
- (a) having regard to the child's age and understanding, to the child's wishes and feelings; and
  - (b) to the wishes and feelings of the child's parents, as the Supervisor has been able to ascertain.

- (4) Directions may be given under this paragraph at any time while the Education Supervision Order is in force.
- 13.** (1) Where an Education Supervision Order is in force with respect to a child, the duties of the child's parents under this Law to secure education for the child and to secure regular school attendance at school shall be superceded by their duty to comply with any directions in force under the Education Supervision Order.
- (2) Where an Education Supervision Order is made with respect to a child:
- (a) any School Attendance Order in force immediately before the making of the Education Supervision Order shall cease to have effect;
- (b) a Supervision Order made with respect to the child in criminal proceedings while the Education Supervision Order is in force, shall not include an education requirement of the kind which could otherwise be required under this Law; and
- (c) any education requirement of a kind mentioned in sub-paragraph (2) (b) of this paragraph which was in force with respect to the child immediately before the making of the Education Supervision Order, shall cease to have effect.

#### **EFFECT WHERE A CHILD IS ALSO SUBJECT TO SUPERVISION ORDER**

- 14.** Where an Education Supervision Order and a Supervision Order, are in force at the same time with respect to the same child, any failure to comply with a direction given by the Supervisor under the Education Supervision Order shall be disregarded if it would not have been reasonably practicable to comply with it without failing to comply with a direction given under the other Order.

#### **DURATION OF ORDERS**

- 15.** (1) An Education Supervision Order shall have effect for a period of one year, beginning with the date on which it is made.
- (2) An Education Supervision Order shall not expire if, before it would otherwise have expired, the Court has, on the application of the State Government in whose favour the Order was made, extended the period during which it was in force.
- (3) The application shall not be made earlier than 3 months before the date on which the Order would otherwise expire.
- (4) The period during which an Education Supervision Order is in force may be extended under sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph, on more than one occasion.
- (5) No single extension may be made for a period of more than 3 years.
- (6) An Education Supervision Order shall cease to have effect on:
- (a) the child ceasing to be of compulsory school age; or
- (b) the making of a Care Order with respect to the child;
- and sub-paragraphs (1) to (4) of this paragraph are subject to this sub-paragraph.

## **INFORMATION TO BE GIVEN TO SUPERVISOR, ETC.**

- 16.** (1) An Education Supervision Order may require the child:
- (a) to keep the Supervisor informed of any change in his or her address; and
  - (b) to allow the Supervisor to visit him or her at the place where the child lives.
- (2) A person who is the parent of a child with respect to whom an Education Supervision Order has been made shall if:
- (a) asked by the Supervisor, inform him of the child's address if it is known to him; and
  - (b) he is living with the child, allow the Supervisor reasonable contact with the child.

## **DISCHARGE OF ORDERS**

- 17.** (1) The Court may discharge an Education Supervision Order on the application of:
- (a) the child concerned; or
  - (b) a parent of the child concerned, or
  - (c) the Education Authority concerned.
- (2) On discharging an Education Supervision Order, the Court may direct the State Government within which area the child lives or will live, to investigate the circumstances of the child.
- 18.** (1) If a parent of a child with respect to whom an Education Supervision Order is in force persistently fails to comply with a direction given under the Order, he commits an offence.
- (2) It is a defence for any person charged with such an offence to prove that:
- (a) he took all reasonable steps to ensure that the direction was complied with;
  - (b) the direction was unreasonable; or
  - (c) he had complied with:
    - (i) a requirement included in a Supervision Order made with respect to the child, or
    - (ii) directions given under the requirement and that it was not reasonably practicable to comply both with the direction and with the requirement or directions mentioned in this paragraph.
- (3) A person who commits an offence under this paragraph is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦100,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.

## **PERSISTENT FAILURE OF A CHILD TO COMPLY WITH DIRECTIONS**

- 19.** (1) Where a child with respect to whom an Education Supervision Order is in force persistently fails to comply with a direction given under the Order, the Education Authority concerned shall notify the State Government.
- (2) Where a State Government has been notified under sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph, it shall investigate the circumstances of the child.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

- 20.** The Commissioner may by regulations, make provisions modifying or displacing the provisions of any enactment about education in relation to any child with respect to whom an Education Supervision Order is in force, to such extent as appears to the Commissioner to be necessary or expedient in consequence of the provisions made by this Law with respect to such Orders.

## **SCHEDULE III**

*Section 100*

### **APPLICATION FOR WARDSHIP**

Application for wardship shall:

- (a) be by originating summons; and
- (b) state the relationship of the plaintiff to the ward.

## **SCHEDULE IV**

*Section 113(2), 121(3), 123(5)*

### **PART I-FOSTER PARENTS:LIMITS ON NUMBER OF FOSTER CHILDREN**

#### **FOSTERING CHILDREN**

1. For the purpose of this Schedule, a person fosters a child if he:
  - (a) is a State Government foster parent in relation to the child;
  - (b) is a foster parent with whom the child has been placed by a voluntary organization; or
  - (c) fosters the child privately.

#### **THE USUAL CHILD FOSTERING LIMIT**

2. Subject to the following paragraphs of this Schedule, a person may not foster more than 3 children, which is the usual fostering limit.

#### **SIBLINGS**

3. A person may exceed the usual child fostering limit if the children concerned are all siblings with respect to each other.
4. (1) A person may exceed the usual child fostering limit if he is exempted from it by the State Government.  
(2) In considering whether to exempt a person, a State Government shall have regard, in particular, to:
  - (a) the number of children who the person proposes to foster;
  - (b) the arrangements which the person proposes for the care and accommodation of the fostered children;
  - (c) the intended and likely relationship between the person and the fostered children;
  - (d) the period of time for which the person proposes to foster the children; and
  - (e) whether the welfare of the fostered children, and of any other child who is or will be living in the accommodation, will be safeguarded and promoted.(3) Where a State Government exempts a person, it shall inform the person by notice in writing:
  - (a) that he is so exempted.
  - (b) of the children, described by name, whom he may foster, and
  - (c) of any condition to which the exemption is subject.(4) A State Government may at any time by notice in writing:

- (a) vary or cancel an exemption; or
  - (b) impose, vary or cancel a condition to which the exemption is subject, and in considering whether to do so, it shall have regard in particular to the considerations mentioned in sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph.
- (5) The Commissioner may make regulations amplifying or modifying the provisions of this paragraph in order to provide for cases where children need to be placed with foster parents as a matter of urgency.

### **EFFECT OF EXCEEDING FOSTERING LIMIT**

5. (1) A person shall cease to be treated as fostering children and shall be treated as carrying on a children's home if:
- (a) the person exceeds the usual fostering limit; or
  - (b) where the person is exempted under paragraph 4 of this Schedule:
    - i) he fosters any child not named in the exemption, and
    - ii) in so doing, he exceeds the usual fostering limit.
- (2) Sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph does not apply if the children concerned are all siblings in respect of each other.

### **COMPLAINTS, ETC.**

6. (1) The State Government shall establish a procedure for considering any representations, including any complaint, made to it about the discharge of its functions under paragraph 4 of this Schedule by a person exempted or seeking to be exempted under that paragraph.
- (2) In carrying out any consideration of representations under sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph, the State Government shall comply with any regulations made by the Commissioner for the purposes of this paragraph.

## **PART II-SECTION 113**

### **FORMS OF FOSTERED CHILDREN REGISTER**

Registry.....Town.....LGA.....State

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. of entry	Date of entry	Name of fostered child (enter names as stated in Fostering Order)	Gender of fostered child (enter gender as stated in Adoption Order)	Name and surname, address and occupation of foster parents (enter name, address and occupation as stated in adoption)	Date of birth of child (enter date of birth if any, directed by the Adoption Order to be entered but other entry.	Date of Fostering Order and description of Court by which made (entry to be as appearing on the Fostering Order)	Signature of Officer deputed by Chief Registrar to attest entry.

## **PART III – CHILDREN FOSTERED PRIVATELY**

*Sections 121 and 122*

### **EXEMPTIONS**

1. A child is not fostered privately while the child is being cared for by the State Government.
2. (1) A child is not fostered privately while the child is in the care of any person:
  - (a) in premises in which:
    - (i) parent of the child, or
    - (ii) a person who, though not a parent of a child has parental responsibility for the child, or
    - (iii) a person who is a relative of the child and who has assumed responsibility for the child's care, is for the time being living;
  - (b) in a children's home
  - (c) in an accommodation provided by or on behalf of any voluntary organization;
  - (d) in a school in which the child is receiving full time education
  - (e) in a residential care home, nursing home or mental nursing home; or
  - (f) in any home or institution not specified in this paragraph but provided, equipped and maintained by the Government.
- (2) Sub-paragraph (1)(b) to (f) of this paragraph does not apply where the person caring for the child is doing so in his personal capacity and not in the course of carrying out his duties in relation to the establishment mentioned in the sub-paragraph in question.
3. A child is not fostered privately while the child is:
  - (a) laced in the care of a person who proposes to adopt the child under this Law; or
  - (b) a protected child.

### **POWER TO IMPOSE REQUIREMENTS**

4. (1) Where a person is fostering a child privately, or proposes to foster any child privately, the appropriate authority may impose on him any requirement as to the:
  - (a) number, age and gender of the children who may be fostered privately by him;
  - (b) standard of the accommodation and equipment to be provided for them;
  - (c) arrangement to be made with respect to their health and safety; and
  - (d) particular arrangements which shall be made with respect to the provision of care for them and it is his duty to comply with the requirement before the end of the period as the appropriate authority may specify, unless in the case of a proposal, the proposal is not carried out.
- (2) A requirement may be limited to a particular child, or class of children.
- (3) A requirement, other than one imposed under sub-paragraph (1)(a) of this paragraph, may be limited by the appropriate authority so as to apply only when the number of the children fostered by the person exceeds a specified number.
- (4) A requirement shall be imposed by notice in writing, addressed to the person on whom it is imposed and informing him of:
  - (a) the reason for imposing the requirement

- (b) his right under paragraph 6 of this Part of this Schedule to appeal against it; and
  - (c) the time within which he may do so.
- (5) A State Government may at any time vary a requirement, impose any additional requirement or remove any requirement.

#### **Schedule iv Interpretation**

- (6) In this paragraph and the other paragraphs of this Part of this Schedule:
- (a) **“the appropriate authority”** means:
    - (i) the State Government in whose State the child is being fostered; or
    - (ii) in the case of a proposal to foster a child, the State Government within which it is proposed that the child will be fostered; and
  - (b) **“requirement”** in relation to any person, means, a requirement imposed on the person under this paragraph.

#### **REGULATIONS REQUIRING NOTIFICATION OF FOSTERING, ETC.**

5. (1) The Commissioner may by regulations make provisions as to:
- (a) the circumstances in which notification is required to be given in connection with children who are, have been or are proposed to be fostered privately; and
  - (b) the manner and form in which such notification is to be given
- (2) The regulations may, in particular:
- (a) require any person who is, or proposes to be, involved, whether or not directly, in arranging for a child to be fostered privately to notify the appropriate authority.
  - (b) require any person who is a:
    - (i) parent of a child; or
    - (ii) person who, though not a parent of a child, has parental responsibility for the child and who knows that it is proposed that the child should be fostered privately, to notify the appropriate authority;
  - (c) require any parent of a child fostered privately, or person, who though not a parent of a child has parental responsibility for the child, to notify the appropriate authority of any change in his address;
  - (d) require any person who proposes to foster a child privately, to notify the appropriate authority of his proposal;
  - (e) require any person who is fostering a child privately, or proposes to do so, to notify the appropriate authority of:
    - i) any offence of which the person has been convicted;
    - ii) any disqualification imposed on the person under section 123 of this Law; or
    - iii) any prohibition imposed on or borne by the person under section 124 of this Law;
  - (f) require any person who is fostering a child privately to notify the appropriate authority of any change in his address.
  - (g) require any person who is fostering a child privately to notify the appropriate authority in writing of any person who begins, or ceases to be part of the person’s household;

- (h) require any person who has been fostering a child privately, but has ceased to do so, to notify the appropriate authority, indicating whether, when and where the child has died and the reason for the death.

## **APPEALS**

- 6. (1) A person aggrieved by:
  - (a) a requirement imposed under paragraph 4 of this Part of this Schedule; or
  - (b) a refusal of consent under section 123 of this Law;
  - (c) a prohibition imposed under section 124 of this Law;
  - (d) a refusal to cancel a prohibition imposed under section 124 of this Law;
  - (e) a refusal to make an exemption under paragraph 4 of Part 1 of this Schedule;
  - (f) a condition imposed in an exemption under paragraph 4 of Part 1 of this Schedule;or
- (g) a variation of cancellation of an exemption, may appeal to the Court.
- (2) The appeal shall be made within 14 days from the date on which the person appealing is notified of the requirement, refusal, prohibition, condition, variation or cancellation.
- (3) Where the appeal is against:
  - (a) a requirement imposed under paragraph 4 of this Schedule;
  - (b) a condition imposed in an exemption under paragraph 4 of Part 1 of this Schedule;or
- (c) a variation or cancellation of an exemption under paragraph 4 of Part 1 of this Schedule, the requirement, conditions, variation or cancellation shall not have effect while the appeal is pending.
- (4) Where the Court allows an appeal against a requirement or prohibition, it may, instead of canceling the requirement or prohibition:
  - (a) vary the requirement or allow more time for compliance with it; or
  - (b) if an absolute prohibition has been imposed, substitute for it a prohibition on using the premises after such time as the Court may specify unless such specified requirements as the State Government had power to impose under paragraph 4 of this Schedule are complied with.
- (5) A requirement or prohibition specified or substituted by a Court under this paragraph shall be deemed for the purposes of Part XI of this Law (other than this paragraph) to have been imposed by the State Government under paragraph 4 of this Schedule or section 124 of this Law.
- (6) Where the Court allows an appeal against a refusal to make an exemption, a condition imposed in the exemption or a variation or cancellation of the exemption, it may:
  - (a) make an exemption; or
  - (b) impose a condition; or
  - (c) vary the exemption.

- (7) An exemption made or varied under sub-paragraph (6) of this paragraph, or any condition imposed under that sub-paragraph, shall be deemed for the purposes of Part 1 of this Schedule, but not for the purposes of this paragraph, to have been made, varied or imposed under that Schedule.
- (8) Nothing in sub-paragraph (1)(e) to (g) of this paragraph confers any right of appeal on:
  - (a) a person who is, or would, if exempted under Part 1 of this Schedule, be the State Government foster parent, or
  - (b) a person who is, or would, if so exempted be, a person with whom a child is placed by a voluntary organization.

## **EXTENSION OF PART XI TO CERTAIN SCHOOL CHILDREN DURING HOLIDAYS**

- 7. (1) Where a child under the age of 16 years and a pupil at a school which is not maintained by the State Government lives at the school during school holidays for a period of more than 2 weeks, Part XI of this Act shall apply in relation to the child as if:
  - (a) while living at the school, the child were a child fostered privately; and
  - (b) paragraph 2(1)(d) and 4 of this Part of this Schedule were omitted.
- (2) Sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph applies to a person who proposes to care for and accommodate one or more children at a school in circumstances in which some or all of them will be treated as children fostered privately by virtue of this paragraph.
- (3) The person referred to in sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph shall, not less than 2 weeks before the first of those children is treated as a child fostered privately by virtue of this paragraph during the holiday in question, give written notice of his proposal to the State Government whose area the child is ordinarily resident, stating the estimated number of the children.
- (4) The State Government may exempt a person from the duty of giving notice under sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph.
- (5) An exemption may be granted for a special period or indefinitely and may be revoked at any time by notice in writing, given to the person exempted.
- (6) Where a child who is treated as a child fostered privately by virtue of this paragraph dies, the person caring for the child at the school shall, not later than 48 hours after the death, give written notice of the death:
  - (a) to the appropriate authority; and
  - (b) where reasonably practicable, to each parent of the child and to every person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child.
- (7) Where a child who is treated as a foster child by virtue of this paragraph ceases for any reason to be a fostered child, the person caring for the child at the school shall give written notice of the fact to the appropriate authority.

## PROHIBITION OF ADVERTISEMENTS RELATING TO FOSTERING

8. No advertisement indicating that a person will undertake or will arrange for a child to be fostered privately shall be published, unless it states that person's name and address.

## AVOIDANCE OF INSURANCE ON LIVES OF CHILDREN FOSTERED PRIVATELY

9. A person who fosters a child privately and for reward shall be deemed for the purposes of the Insurance Act 1991 to have no interest in the life of the child.

## PART IV – SECTION 121 – CHILD'S RIGHTS LAW No. 5 of 2022

IN THE HIGH COURT / MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

### DECLARATION REGARDING SUITABILITY TO FOSTER CHILDREN PRIVATELY (To be completed by all members of the household over 16 years)

FULL NAME: .....

DATE OF BIRTH: .....

GENDER: .....

ADDRESS: .....

HAVE YOU EVER:

	YES	NO
	Please	tick
1. Been convicted of any offence involving a child?	( )	( )
2. Has a child been removed from your care by an Order of any Court or State Government?	( )	( )
3. Has registration under Part XIV of the Rivers State Child's Rights Law been refused or cancelled (child minding)?	( )	( )
4. Have your rights and duties with respect to a child been vested in the State Government?	( )	( )
5. Has a prohibition been imposed on you at anytime?	( )	( )
6. Have you been disqualified from acting as a foster parent?	( )	( )

If you have answered "yes" to any of the above questions, please supply the dates and circumstances:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Signed.....Date:.....

Section 125(3) (a) of the Child's Rights Law, No. 5 of 2022, provides that a person who makes any statement in this notice or information which he knows to be false or misleading commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦100,000.

**PART V –ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO PRIVATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR FOSTERING**

*Section 121 (1) and (2)*

**GENERAL WELFARE OF CHILDREN**

1. (1) In carrying out functions under section 124 of this Law, as to the welfare of children who are fostered privately within the State, the State Government, including an officer of the State Government making a visit under paragraph 2 of this Part of this Schedule, shall satisfy itself on such matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph as are relevant in the particular circumstances.
- (2) The matters referred to in sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph are:
  - (a) the purpose and intended duration of the fostering arrangement;
  - (b) the child's physical, intellectual, emotional, social and behavioural development;
  - (c) whether the child's notice arising from the child's religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background are being met;
  - (d) the financial arrangements for the age and maintenance of the child;
  - (e) the suitability of the accommodation;
  - (f) the arrangement for the child's medical and dental care and treatment;
  - (g) the arrangements for the child's education and in particular, that the local education authority has been informed of the fostering arrangement;
  - (h) the standard of care which the child is being given;
  - (i) the suitability of the foster parent to look after the child and suitability of the foster parent's household;
  - (j) whether the foster parent is being given any necessary advice;
  - (k) whether the contact between the child and the child's parents, or any person with whom contact has been arranged, is satisfactory;
  - (l) whether the child's parent, or any other person are exercising parental responsibility for the child; and
  - (m) the ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child regarding the fostering arrangements.

**VISITS TO CHILDREN**

2. (1) The State Government shall make arrangement for each child who is fostered privately within the State to be visited by an Officer of the State Government from time to time as the State Government considers necessary in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child and when reasonably requested by the child or foster parent and in particular:
  - (a) in the first year of the fostering arrangement, within one week from its beginning and then at intervals of not more than 6 weeks;
  - (b) in any second or subsequent year, at intervals of not more than 3 months.
- (2) For the purpose of making visits under this paragraph, the Officer shall, if he considers it appropriate, arrange to see the child alone.
- (3) The Officer shall make a written report to the State Government after each visit.

### **NOTIFICATIONS BY PROSPECTIVE AND ACTUAL FOSTER PARENTS**

3. (1) A person who proposes to foster privately, a child for whom he is not already caring and providing accommodation, shall notify the appropriate authority not less than 6 weeks or more than 13 weeks before he receives the child, unless the person receives the child in an emergency.
- (2) A person who is fostering a child privately:
- (a) whom he received in an emergency; or
  - (b) for whom the person was already caring and providing accommodation, when the child became a foster child,
- shall notify the appropriate authority not more than 48 hours after the fostering arrangements begin.
- (3) A notice under sub-paragraph (1) or (2) of this paragraph shall specify:
- (a) the name, gender, date and place of birth, religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background of the child;
  - (b) the name and address of the person giving the notice and any previous address within the last 5 years
  - (c) the purpose and intended duration of the fostering arrangement;
  - (d) the name and address of any parent of the child and of any other person who has parental responsibility for the child and, if different, of any person from whom the child was or is to be received;
  - (e) the name and address of any person, other than a person specified in sub-paragraph (3)(d) of this paragraph, who is involved directly or indirectly in the fostering arrangement; and
  - (f) the intended date at the beginning of the fostering arrangement or, as the case may be, the date on which the arrangement actually began.
- (4) A person giving notice under sub-paragraph (1) or (2) of this paragraph shall include in the notice, particulars of:
- (a) any offence of which the person has been convicted;
  - (b) any disqualification or prohibition imposed on the person under section 123 or 124 of this Law, or under any previous enactment of either of those sections; and
  - (c) any such conviction, disqualification or prohibition imposed on any other person living in or employed at the same household.
- (5) A person who is fostering a child privately shall notify appropriate authority of:
- (a) any change in his address;
  - (b) any person who begins or ceases to be part of his household; and
  - (c) any further conviction, disqualification or prohibition as sub-paragraphs (3) (a), (b) and (c) of this paragraph.
- (6) A notice under sub-paragraph (5) of this paragraph shall be given:
- (a) in advance if practicable; and
  - (b) in any other case, not more than 48 hours after the change of circumstances, and if the new address is in another State the appropriate authority to whom the notice is

given shall inform the State Government of the there State of the new address and of the particulars given to it under sub-paragraphs (3)(a) and (d) of this paragraph.

#### **NOTIFICATIONS BY FORMER FOSTER PARENTS**

4. (1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2) and (3), of this paragraph, any person who has been fostering a child privately, but has ceased to do so, shall notify the appropriate authority within 48 hours and shall include in the notice the name and address of the person into whose care the child was received.
- (2) Where the reason for ending the fostering arrangement is the death of the child, the foster parent shall notify forthwith the State Government and also the person from whom the foster parent received the child.
- (3) Sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph shall not apply where the foster parent intends to resume the fostering arrangement after an interval of not more than 27 days, but if the:
  - (a) foster parent subsequently abandons his intention; or
  - (b) interval expires without the foster parent having given effect to this intention, the foster parent shall thereupon give notice to the State Government within 48 hours of abandoning his intention or the expiry of the interval.
5. (1) Any person who is, or proposes to be involved, whether or not directly, in arranging for a child to be fostered privately shall notify the appropriate authority not less than 6 weeks or more than 13 weeks before the fostering arrangement begins unless the fostering arrangement is made in an emergency in which case the notification shall be made within 48 hours after the fostering arrangement begins.
- (2) A parent of a child and any other person who has parental responsibility for the child, who knows that it is proposed that the child should be fostered privately shall notify the appropriate authority not less than 6 weeks or more than 13 weeks before the fostering arrangement begins unless the fostering arrangement is made in an emergency in which case notification shall be made within 48 hours thereafter.
- (3) Any notice under sub-paragraph (1) or (2) of this paragraph shall specify:
  - (a) the information mentioned in sub-paragraph (3)(a), (b) and (c) of paragraph 3 of this Schedule
  - (b) the arrangements for the care of any brother or sister of the child who is not included in the fostering arrangement;
  - (c) the name and address of any other person involved, whether or not directly, in the fostering arrangement;
  - (d) where the notice is given under sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph, the relationship to the child of the person giving the notice and also the information specified in sub-paragraph (3)(d) of paragraph 3 of this Schedule.
- (4) Any parent of a child fostered privately and any other person who has parental responsibility for the child, shall notify the appropriate authority of:
  - (a) the ending of the fostering arrangement; and
  - (b) any change in his/her own address
6. Any notice required under paragraph 3 to 5 shall be given in the same manner by which notices may be given under this Law.

## **PART VI – DISQUALIFICATION FROM CARING FOR CHILDREN.**

*Sections 123 and 198 (1) and (2)*

### **DISQUALIFICATION FROM FOSTERING A CHILD PRIVATELY OR REGISTRATION UNDER PART XI OF THIS LAW**

1. For the purpose of section 123 of this Law (person disqualified from being a private foster parent) and of paragraph 2 of the Sixth Schedule to this Law (disqualification from registration) a person is disqualified from fostering a child privately or registering under section 164 of this Law (registration for child minding and day care) if:
  - (a) the person is the parent of a child who at any time has been made the subject of an Order under section 56(1)(a) of this Law (Care Order);
  - (b) one of the following Orders has been made at any time with respect to a child so as to remove the child from the person's care or prevent the child from living with him:
    - (i) an Order under section 53 (1)(a) of this Law;
    - (ii) a Supervision Order which imposes a residence requirement under this Law that a child offender live in State Government accommodation;
    - (iii) an Approved School Order or a Fit Person Order under this Law;
  - (c) an Order has been made at any time, for the purposes of removing a protected child who was being kept, or was about to be received by the person under Part IV of this Law;
  - (d) an Order removing a child from the person's care has been made at any time under Part V of this Law;
  - (e) the person has been convicted of any sexual offence, any offence involving perjury or violence or such other offences as may be prescribed by the Commissioner;
  - (f) the person is a person who carried on, or was otherwise concerned with the management of or had any financial interest in a voluntary home which was removed from the register;
  - (g) there has been a refusal to register a voluntary home in relation to an application made by the person under this Law;
  - (h) there has been a refusal to register a registered children's home in relation to an application made by the person under paragraph 1 of the Tenth Schedule to this Law (application for registration);
  - (i) the person is a person who carried on, or was otherwise concerned with the management of or had any financial interest in a registered children's home and that home was removed from the register under paragraph 4 of the Tenth Schedule to this Law (cancellation of registration);
  - (j) the person is a person in respect of whom a prohibition has been imposed under section 124 of this Law (power to prohibit private fostering);
  - (k) the person is at any time been refused registration in respect of day care or child minding.

### **DISQUALIFICATION IN RELATION TO VOLUNTARY HOMES**

2. (1) A person who is disqualified under section 123 of this Law from fostering a child privately shall not carry on, or otherwise be concerned in the management of or have any financial interest in a voluntary home unless he has:
- (a) disclosed to the Commissioner the fact that he is so disqualified; and
  - (b) obtained the Commissioner's written consent.
- (2) No person shall employ a person who is disqualified in a voluntary home unless the person has:
- (a) disclosed to the Commissioner the fact that that person is so disqualified; and
  - (b) obtained the written consent of the Commissioner.
- (3) Where the Commissioner refuses to give his consent under this paragraph, the Commissioner shall inform the person carrying on or intending to carry on the voluntary home by a written notice stating the:
- (a) reason for the refusal;
  - (b) right to appeal against the refusal to the Court at the High Court level under paragraph 5 of Schedule 10 to this Law; and
  - (c) time within which the person may do so.
- (4) Any person who contravenes sub-paragraph (1) or (2) of this paragraph commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term of 3 months or to a fine not exceeding ₦100,000 or to both imprisonment and fine.

## SCHEDULE V

*Sections 131 (2) and 143 (2)*

### FORM OF ADOPTED CHILDREN'S REGISTER

Registry ..... Town ..... L.G.A ..... State.....

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. of Entry	Date of Entry	Name of foster child (Enter name as stated in Fostering Order)	Gender of Fostered child (enter gender as stated in Adoption Order)	Name and surname, address and occupation of foster parents (enter name, address and occupation as stated in Adoption Order)	Date of birth of child (enter date of birth if any, directed by the Adoption Order to be entered but other entry.	Date of Fostering Order and description of Court by which made (entry to be as appearing on the Fostering Order).	Signature of Officer deputed by Chief Registrar to attest entry.

## SCHEDULE VI

**PART I –CHILD MINDING AND DAY CARE FOR YOUNG CHILDREN**

**APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION**

1. (1) An application for registration under section 164 of this Law shall be of no effect unless it contains:
  - (a) a statement with respect to the applicant which complies with the requirements contained in Annex A to this Schedule and of regulations made for the purposes of this paragraph by the Commissioner; and
  - (b) a statement with respect to any person assisting or likely to be assisting in looking after children on the premises in question or living or likely to be living there, which complies with the requirements contained in Annex B to the Schedule and of such regulations.
- (2) Where a person provides day care for children under the age of 6 years on different premises situated within the State, that person shall make a separate application with respect to each of those premises.
- (3) An application under section 164 of this Law shall be accompanied by such fee as may be prescribed.
- (4) On receipt of an application for registration under section 164 of this Law from any person who is acting, or proposes to act, in any way which requires the person to be registered under that section, the State Government shall register the person if the application is properly made and it is not otherwise entitled to refuse to do so.

**DISQUALIFICATION FROM REGISTRATION**

2. (1) A person may not be registered under section 164 of this Law if the person is disqualified by regulations made by the Commissioner for the purposes of this paragraph.
- (2) The regulation may, in particular provide for a person to be disqualified where:
  - (a) an Order of a prescribed kind has been made at any time with respect to;
  - (b) an Order of a prescribed kind has been made at any time with respect to any child who has been in the person's care;
  - (c) a requirement of a prescribed kind has been imposed at any time with respect to such a child, under or by virtue of any enactment;
  - (d) the person has at any time been refused registration under Part XIV of this Law or any other prescribed enactment or had any such registration cancelled;
  - (e) the person has been convicted of any offence of a prescribed kind or has been placed on probation or discharged absolutely or conditionally for any such offence;
  - (f) the person has at any time been disqualified from fostering a child privately;
  - (g) a prohibition has been imposed on the person at any time under any prescribed enactment; or

- (h) the person's rights and powers with respect to a child have at any time been vested in a prescribed Authority under a prescribed Enactment.
- (3) A person who lives in:
  - (a) the same premises as a person who is disqualified by regulations made under this paragraph; or
  - (b) a premises which the disqualified person is employed, shall be disqualified unless he has disclosed the fact to the State Government and obtained its written consent.
- (4) A person who is disqualified shall not provide day care or be concerned in the management of, or have any financial interest in any provision of day care unless he has:
  - (a) disclosed the fact to the State Government; and
  - (b) obtained its written consent
- (5) No person shall employ, in connection with the provision of day care, a person who is disqualified unless he has:
  - (a) disclosed to the State Government the fact that the person is so disqualified; and
  - (b) obtained its written consent.

### **Schedule VI Interpretation**

- (6) In this paragraph “**Enactment**” means any Enactment having effect, at any time, in any part of Nigeria.

### **EXEMPTIONS OF CERTAIN SCHOOLS**

- 3. (1) Section 169 of this Law does not apply in relation to any child cared for in any:
  - (a) school maintained or assisted by the State Government;
  - (b) school under the management of an Education Authority; and
  - (c) independent school.
- (2) The exemption provided by sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph only applies where the child concerned is being cared for in accordance with provision for day care made by:
  - (a) the person carrying on the establishment in question as part of the establishment's activities; and
  - (b) a person employed to work at that establishment and authorized to make that provision as part of the establishment's activities.

### **EXEMPTION FOR OTHER ESTABLISHMENTS**

- 4. (1) Section 169 (1) (b) of this Law does not apply in relation to any child cared for in:
  - (a) a registered children's home;
  - (b) a voluntary home;
  - (c) a community home;
  - (d) a residential care home, nursing home or mental nursing home;
  - (e) a Government hospital; or
  - (f) any other home as may be prescribed for exemption under this paragraph.

- (2) The exemption provided by sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph only applies where the child concerned is being cared for in accordance with provisions for day care made by:
  - (a) the department, authority or other person carrying on the establishment in question as part of the establishment's activities; or
  - (b) a person employed to work at the establishment and authorized to make that provision as part of the establishment's activities.

#### **EXEMPTION FOR OCCASIONAL FACILITIES**

- 5. (1) Where day care for children under the age of 6 years is provided in a particular premises on less than 6 days in any year, that provision shall be disregarded for the purposes of Section 169 of this Law if the person making it has notified the State Government in writing before the first occasion on which the premises concerned are so used in that year.
- (2) In sub-paragraph (1) of the paragraph, “**year**” means the year beginning with the day on which the day care in question is, after the commencement of this paragraph, first provided in the premises concerned and any subsequent year.

#### **CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION**

- 6. (1) Where the State Government registers a person under section 169 of this Law, it shall issue that person with a certificate of registration.
- (2) The certificate shall certify:
  - (a) the registered person's name and address;
  - (b) in the case falling within section 164 (1) (b) of this Law, the address or situation of the premises concerned; and
  - (c) any requirement imposed under section 165 or 166 of this Law
- (3) Where, due to change of circumstances, any part of the certificate requires to be amended, the State Government shall issue an amended certificate.
- (4) Where the State Government is satisfied that the certificate has been lost or destroyed, it shall issue a copy on payment by the registered person, such fee as may be prescribed.

#### **FEES OF ANNUAL INSPECTION OF PREMISES**

- 7. (1) Where:
  - (a) a person is registered under section 164 of this Law; and
  - (b) the State Government concerned makes an annual inspection of the premises in question under section 169 of this Law, it shall serve on that person a notice informing him that the inspection is to be carried out and requiring the person to pay to it such fee as may be prescribed.
- (2) It shall be a condition of the continued registration of that person under section 169 of this Law that the fee is so paid before the expiration of a period of 28 days beginning with the date on which the inspection was carried out.

**PART II –INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED ABOUT THE APPLICANT**

1. The full name of the applicant, including, if different, name at birth and any other former names, or where day care is to be provided by a partnership, committee or body corporate or un-incorporate, the full names of the partners, members of the committee, Board of Directors, or the Board, identifying the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and the person in charge.
2. The address at which the children are to be looked after and the address of the applicant and of the person in charge, if different.
3. Whether the premises at which the children are to be looked after is domestic premises.
4. In the case of day care, a description of the facilities available to the applicant for day care, including the number of rooms, their functions, the numbers of lavatories and washbasins, any separate facilities for adult workers and access to the premises for cars.
5. Whether the applicant wishes to register as child minder, or as provider of day care, and if the latter whether the applicant will provide full day care or seasonal day care.
6. In the case of day care, the proposed hours for which the applicant wishes to provide day care.
7. Relevant experience of the applicant and any person in charge, including any previous work with children or with elderly or physically challenged persons, whether paid or not.
8. The number and ages of any children of the applicant or the person in charge or any children for whom either is to be responsible.
9. Any relevant qualifications, with dates, of the applicant or the person in charge giving details of the organization running the course, the subjects studied, the length of the course and the name of the qualifications.
10. The names of two referees for the applicant or the person in charge who may be contacted.
11. The name and address of the medical practitioner of the applicant or the person in charge and whether that person may be approached for details concerning the state of health of the applicant or person in charge, together with details of anything for which the person is currently being treated by his medical practitioner or by a hospital and details of any hospital admissions during the last 2 years and any serious illness in the last 5 years.
12. Details of any criminal convictions of the applicant or the person in charge, including the:
  - (a) date of offence;
  - (b) nature of offence;
  - (c) place where it occurred;
  - (d) name of the court which gave the conviction; and
  - (e) penalty imposed.

**PART III – INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED ABOUT  
ANY PERSON ASSISTING OR LIKELY TO ASSIST, OR LIVING OR LIKELY TO LIVE  
IN THE PREMISES**

- 1.** In the case of child minders, names and date of birth of anyone living, or likely to be living, in the premises in which they intend to look after children, including numbers of the family and lodgers and the name and address of any person assisting, or likely to be assisting, in looking after the children.
- 2.** In the case of the day care applicants, names and dates of birth of anyone living, or likely to be living, on the premises to be used for a day care, details on how many staff will be employed in looking after the children and in what capacity, details of any person in charge, any other person assisting, or likely to be assisting, in looking after children on the premises in question, with their names and addresses.
- 3.** Details of any criminal conviction of any of the persons mentioned in sub-paragraph 1 and 2 of this Annex, including the:
  - (a) date of offence;
  - (b) nature of offence;
  - (c) place where it occurred;
  - (d) name of the Court which gave the conviction; and
  - (e) penalty imposed.

## **SCHEDULE VII**

*Section 176 (4), (5) and 179 (9)*

### **STATE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

#### **PART I – PROVISION OF SERVICES FOR FAMILIES**

##### **IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN IN NEED AND PROVISION OF INFORMATION**

1. (1) The State Government shall take reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are children in need within its area.
- (2) The State Government shall:
  - (a) publish information:
    - (i) about services provided by it under sections 176, 177, 179 and 184 of this Law; and
    - (ii) where it considers it appropriate, about the provision by others, including, in particular, voluntary organizations, or services which the State Government has power to provide under those sections; and
  - (b) take any step reasonably practicable to ensure that those who might benefit from the services received the information relevant to them.

##### **MAINTENANCE OF REGISTER OF PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED CHILDREN**

2. (1) The State Government shall open and maintain a register of physically challenged children within the State.
- (2) The register may be kept by means of computer.

##### **ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN'S NEEDS**

3. Where it appears to the State Government that a child within the State is in need, the State Government may assess the child's needs for the purposes of this Law, at the same time as any assessment of the child's needs is made under any other Enactment.

##### **PREVENTION OF NEGLECT AND ABUSE**

4. (1) The State Government shall take reasonable steps, through the provision of services under part XV of this Law to prevent children within the State from suffering ill-treatment or neglect.
- (2) Where the State Government believes that a child who is at any time within the State:
  - (a) is likely to suffer harm; but
  - (b) lives or proposes to live in another State,it shall inform the State Government of that other State.
- (3) When informing the other State Government, it shall specify:
  - (a) the harm that it believes that the child is likely to suffer, and
  - (b) if it can, where the child lives or proposes to live.

## **PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE CHILD.**

5. (1) Where:
  - (a) it appears to the State Government that a child who is living in a particular premises is suffering or is likely to suffer ill-treatment at the hands of another person who is living in those premises, and
  - (b) that other person proposes to move from the premises, the State Government may assist that other person to obtain alternative accommodation.
- (2) Assistance given under this paragraph may be in cash.
- (3) Subsection (1) to (2) of section 176 of this Law shall apply in relation to assistance given under this paragraph as they apply in relation to assistance given under that section.

## **PROVISION FOR PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED CHILDREN**

6. The State Government shall provide services designed:
  - (a) to minimize the effect on physically challenged children within the State of their physical challenges; and
  - (b) to give physically challenged children the opportunity to lead lives which are as normal as possible.

## **PROVISION TO REDUCE NEED FOR CARE PROCEEDING, ETC.**

7. The State Government shall take reasonable steps designed:
  - (a) to reduce the need to bring:
    - (i) proceedings for care or supervision orders with respect to children within the State;
    - (ii) criminal proceedings against children;
    - (iii) any family or other proceedings with respect to the children which might lead to them being placed in the care of the State Government; or
    - (iv) proceedings in the Court with respect to children;
  - (b) to encourage children within the State not to commit criminal offences; and
  - (c) to avoid the need for children within the State to be placed in secure accommodation.

## **PROVISION FOR CHILDREN LIVING WITH THEIR FAMILIES**

8. The State Government shall make provision as it considers appropriate for the following services to be available with respect to children in need within the State while they are living with their families:
  - (a) advise, guidance and counseling;
  - (b) occupational, social, cultural or recreational activities;
  - (c) home help, which may include laundry facilities;
  - (d) facilities for, or assistance with, traveling to and from home for the purpose of taking advantage of any other service provided under this Law or of any similar service;
  - (e) assistance to enable the child concerned and his/her family to have a holiday.

## **FAMILY CENTRES**

- 9.** (1) The State Government shall provide family centers it considers appropriate in relation to children within the State.
- (2) A family centre is a centre at which any of the persons mentioned in sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph may:
- (a) attend for occupational, social, cultural or recreational activities;
  - (b) attend for advice, guidance or counseling, or
  - (c) be provided with accommodation while the person is receiving advice, guidance or counseling.
- (3) The persons referred to in sub-paragraph (2) of the paragraph are:
- (a) a child;
  - (b) the parents of the child;
  - (c) any person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for child; and
  - (d) any other person who is caring for the child

## **MAINTENANCE OF THE FAMILY HOME**

- 10.** The State Government shall take steps reasonably practicable where any child within the State who is in need and whom it is not caring for, is living apart from his or her family:
- (a) to enable the child to live with his or her family, or
  - (b) to promote contact between the child and his or her family, if in its opinion, it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard or promote the child's welfare.

## **DUTY TO CONSIDER RELIGIOUS PERSUASION, ETC. TO WHICH CHILDREN IN NEED BELONG**

- 11.** The State Government shall, in making any arrangements:
- (a) for the provisions of day care within the State;
  - (b) designed to encourage persons to act as State Government foster parents;
- have regard to the different religious persuasion, ethnic and linguistic background of children within the State who are in need.

## **PART II– CHILDREN CARED FOR BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT**

### **REGULATIONS AS TO PLACING OF CHILDREN WITH THE STATE GOVERNMENT FOSTER PARENTS**

- 12.** Regulations under section 179 and of this law may, in particular, make provisions:
- (a) with regard to the welfare of children placed with State Government foster parents;
  - (b) as to the arrangements to be made by State Government in connection with the health and education of the children;
  - (c) as to the records to be kept by the State Government;

- (d) for securing that a child is not placed with a State Government foster parent unless that person is for the time being approved as a State Government foster parent by the State Government as may be prescribed;
- (e) for securing that, where possible, the State Government foster parent with whom a child is to be placed is:
  - (i) of the same religious persuasion as the child, or
  - (ii) gives an undertaking that the child will be brought up in that religious persuasion;
- (f) for securing that children placed with State Government foster parents, and the premises in which they are accommodated, will be supervised and inspected by the State Government and that the children will be removed from those premises if their welfare appears to require it;
- (g) as to the circumstances in which State Governments may make arrangements for duties imposed on them by the regulations to be discharged, on their behalf.

### **REGULATIONS AS TO ARRANGEMENTS UNDER SECTION 179**

- 13. Regulations under section 179 (2) of this Law may, in particular, make provisions as to the:
  - (a) person to be notified of any proposed arrangements,
  - (b) opportunities such persons are to have to make representations in relation to the arrangements proposed;
  - (c) persons to be notified of any proposed changes in the arrangements;
  - (d) records to be kept by the State Government; and
  - (e) supervision by the State Government of the arrangements made.

### **REGULATIONS AS TO CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH A CHILD IN CARE IS ALLOWED TO LIVE WITH PARENTS, ETC.**

- 14. Regulations under section 179 of this Law may, in particular, impose requirements on the State Government as to the:
  - (a) making of any decision by the State Government to allow a child to live with any person falling within section 183 (4) of this Law, including requirements as to those who must be consulted before the decision is made, and those who must be notified when it has been made;
  - (b) supervision or medical examination of the child concerned;
  - (c) removal of the child, in such circumstances as may be prescribed, from the care of the person with whom the child has been allowed to live.

### **PROMOTION AND MAINTENANCE OF CONTACT BETWEEN CHILD AND FAMILY**

- 15. (1) Where a child is being cared for by the State Government, the State Government shall, unless it is not reasonably practicable or consistent with the child's welfare, endeavour to promote contact between the child and:
  - (a) the child's parents;
  - (b) any person who, though not a parent of a child, has parental responsibility for the child; and
  - (c) any relative, friend or other persons connected with the child.

- (2) Where a child is being cared for by the State Government:
  - (a) the State Government shall take steps reasonably practicable to secure that:
    - (i) the parents of the child, and
    - (ii) any person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child,
 are kept informed of where the child is being accommodated; and
  - (b) every such person shall ensure that the State Government is kept informed of his/her address.
- (3) Where the State Government (“the Receiving Authority”) takes over the provision of the accommodation for a child from another State Government (“the Transferring Authority”) under section 175 (2) of this Law:
  - (a) the Receiving Authority shall, where reasonably practicable, inform:
    - (i) the parents of the child, and
    - (ii) any person who, though not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for the child;
  - (b) sub-paragraph (2) (a) of this paragraph shall apply to the Transferring Authority, as well as the Receiving Authority, until at least one such person has been informed of the change; and
  - (c) sub-paragraph (2) (b) of this paragraph shall not require any person to inform the Receiving Authority of his address until the person has been so informed.
- (4) Nothing in this paragraph requires the State Government to inform any person of the whereabouts of a child if:
  - (a) the child is in the care of the State Government, and
  - (b) the State Government has reasonable cause to believe that informing the person would prejudice the child’s welfare.
- (5) A person who fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with sub-paragraph (2) (b) of this paragraph commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦150,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or to both fine and imprisonment.
- (6) It is a defence in any proceedings under sub-paragraph (5) of this paragraph to prove that the defendant was resident at the same address as another person who was the child’s parent or had parental responsibility for the child and had reasonable cause to believe that the other person had informed the appropriate authority that both of them were residing at that address.

### **VISITS TO OR BY CHILDREN: EXPENSES**

16. (1) This paragraph applies where:
  - (a) a child is being cared for by the State Government; and
  - (b) the conditions mentioned in sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph are satisfied.
- (2) The State Government may:
  - (a) make payments to:
    - (i) a parent of the child,

- (ii) any person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child, or
  - (iii) any relative, friend or other person connected with the child, in respect of traveling, subsistence or other expenses incurred by that person in visiting the child; or
- (b) make payments to the child, or to any person on the child's behalf, in respect of travelling, subsistence or other expenses incurred by or on behalf of the child in his visiting:
  - (i) a parent of the child,
  - (ii) any person who, though not a parent of the child has parental responsibility for the child, or
  - (iii) any relative, friend or other person connected with the child.
- (3) The conditions referred to in sub-paragraphs (1) (b) of this paragraph are that:
  - (a) it appears to the State Government that the visit in question could not otherwise be made without undue financial hardship; and
  - (b) the circumstances warrant the making of the payments.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF VISITOR FOR CHILD WHO IS NOT BEING VISITED**

- 17.** (1) Where it appears to the State Government in relation to a child that it is caring for that:
- (a) communication between the child and:
    - (i) the child's parents; or
    - (ii) any person who, though not a parent of a child, has parental responsibility for the child, has been infrequent; or
  - (b) the child has not visited or been visited by, or lived with, any such person during the preceding 12 months, and that it would be in the child's best interest for an independent person to be the child's visitor for the purposes of this paragraph, it shall appoint such a visitor.
- (2) A person appointed as a visitor:
- (a) has the duty of visiting, advising and befriending the child; and
  - (b) is entitled to recover from the State Government who appointed him, any reasonable expenses incurred by the person for the purposes of his functions under this paragraph.
- (3) A person's appointment as a visitor in pursuance of this paragraph shall be determined if:
- (a) the person gives notice in writing to the State Government who appointed him that he resigns the appointment; or
  - (b) the State Government gives the person notice in writing that it has terminated the appointment.
- (4) The determination of an appointment shall not prejudice any duty under this paragraph to make a further appointment.
- (5) Where the State Government proposes to appoint a visitor for a child under this paragraph, the appointment shall not be made if:

- (a) the child objects to it; and
  - (b) the State Government is satisfied that the child has sufficient understanding to make an informed decision.
- (6) Where a visitor has been appointed for a child under this paragraph, the State Government shall determine the appointment if:
  - (a) the child objects to its continuing; and
  - (b) the State Government is satisfied that the child has sufficient understanding to make an informed decision.
- (7) The Commissioner may make regulations as to the circumstances in which a person appointed as a visitor under this paragraph is to be regarded as independent of the State Government.

### **POWER TO GUARANTEE APPRENTICESHIP DEEDS ETC.**

- 18. (1) While a child is being cared for by the State Government, or is a person qualifying for advice and assistance, the State Government may undertake any obligation by way of guarantee under a deed of apprenticeship which the child enters into.
- (2) Where the State Government has undertaken an obligation under such a deed, it may at any time (whether or not it is still caring for the child concerned), undertake the obligation under any supplemental deed.

### **ARRANGEMENTS TO ASSIST CHILDREN TO LIVE ABROAD**

- 19. (1) The State Government may only arrange for, or assist in arranging for any child in its care to live outside the State with the approval of the Court.
- (2) The State Government may, with the approval of every person who has parental responsibility for the child arrange for, or assist in arranging for any other child cared for by it to live outside the State.
- (3) The Court shall not give its approval under sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph unless it is satisfied that:
  - (a) living outside the State would be in the child's best interest;
  - (b) suitable arrangements have been, or will be made for the child's reception and welfare in the State in which the child will live;
  - (c) the child has consented to living in that State; and
  - (d) every person who has parental responsibility for the child has consented to the child living in that State.
- (4) Where the Court is satisfied that the child does not have sufficient understanding to give or withhold his or her consent, it may disregard sub-paragraph (3) (c) of this paragraph and give its approval if the child is to live in the State or Country concerned with a parent, guardian, or other suitable person.

- (5) Where a person whose consent is required by sub-paragraph (3) (d) of this paragraph fails to give the consent, the Court may disregard that provision and give its approval if it is satisfied that the person:
  - (a) cannot be found;
  - (b) is incapable of consenting; or
  - (c) is withholding his/her consent unreasonably.
- (6) Where a Court decides to give its approval under this paragraph, it may order that its decision is not to have effect during the appeal period.
- (7) In sub-paragraph (6) of this paragraph, the “**appeal period**” means:
  - (a) where an appeal is made against the decision, the period between the making of the decision and the determination of the appeal; or
  - (b) otherwise, the period during which an appeal may be made against the decision.

## **DEATH OF CHILDREN BEING CARED FOR BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT**

- 20.** (1) If a child who is being cared for by the State Government dies, the State Government:
- (a) shall notify the Commissioner;
  - (b) so far as is reasonably practicable, notify the child’s parents and every person who, though not a parent of the child, has parental responsibility for the child;
  - (c) may, with consent, so far as is reasonably practicable to obtain it, of every person who has parental responsibility for the child, arrange for the child’s body to be buried or cremated; and
  - (d) may, if the conditions mentioned in sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph are satisfied, make payments to any person who has parental responsibility for the child, or any relative, friend or other person connected with the child, in respect of traveling, subsistence or other expenses incurred by that person in attending the child’s funeral.
- (2) The conditions referred to in sub-paragraph (1) (d) of this paragraph are that:
- (a) it appears to the authority that the person concerned could not otherwise attend the child’s funeral without undue financial hardship; and
  - (b) that the circumstances warrant the making of the payments.
- (3) Sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph does not authorize cremation where it does not accord with the practice of the child’s religious persuasion.
- (4) Where the State Government has exercised its power under sub-paragraph (1) (c) of this paragraph with respect to a child who was under the age of 16 years when the child died, it may recover from any parent of the child any expenses incurred by it.
- (5) Any sum so recoverable shall, without prejudice to any other method of recovery, be recoverable summarily as a civil debt.
- (6) Nothing in this paragraph affects any Enactment regulating or authorizing the burial, cremation or anatomical examination of the body of a deceased person.

**PART III – CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS MAINTENANCE OF CHILDREN CARED  
FOR BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT**

**LIABILITY TO CONTRIBUTE**

- 21.** (1) Where the State Government is caring for a child, other than in the cases mentioned in sub-paragraph (7) of this paragraph, it shall consider whether it should recover contributions towards the child's maintenance from any person liable to contribute ("a Contributor").
- (2) The State Government may only recover contributions from a Contributor if it considers it reasonable to do so.
- (3) The persons liable to contribute are:
- (a) each of the child's parents, where the child is under the age of 16 years;
  - (b) the child, where the child has attained the age of 16 years.
- (4) A parent is not liable to contribute during any period when the parent is in receipt of income support or public funds.
- (5) A person is not liable to contribute towards the maintenance of a child in the care of the State Government in respect of any period during which the child is allowed by the State Government under section 178 of this Law to live with a parent of the child.
- (6) A Contributor is not obliged to make any contributions towards a child's maintenance except as agreed or determined in accordance with this Part of this schedule.
- (7) The cases referred to under sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph are where the child is cared for by the State Government under:
- (a) section 178 of this Law;
  - (b) an Interim Care Order or
  - (c) any prescribed Enactment.

**AGREED CONTRIBUTIONS**

- 22.** (1) Contributions towards a child's maintenance may only be recovered if the State Government has served a notice (a "contribution notice") on the Contributor specifying:
- (a) the weekly sum which it considers that the Contributor should contribute; and
  - (b) arrangements for payment.
- (2) The contribution notice must be in writing and dated.
- (3) Arrangements for payment shall in particular, include:
- (a) the date on which liability to contribute begins, which shall not be earlier than the date of the notice;
  - (b) the date on which liability under the notice will end if the child has not before that date, ceased to be cared for by the State Government; and
  - (c) the date on which the first payment is to be made.

- (4) The State Government may specify in a contribution notice, a weekly sum which is a standard contribution determined by it for all children cared for, by it.
- (5) The State Government may not specify in a contribution notice, a weekly sum greater than that which it considers:
  - (a) it would normally be prepared to pay if it had placed a similar child with State Government foster parents; and
  - (b) is reasonably practicable for the contributor to pay having regard to the contributors means.
- (6) The State Government may at any time withdraw a contribution notice without prejudice to its power to serve another.
- (7) Where the State Government and the Contributor agree on:
  - (a) the sum which the Contributor is to contribute; and
  - (b) arrangements for payment, whether as specified in the contribution notice or otherwise and the Contributor notifies the State Government in writing that he/she so agrees, the State Government may recover summarily as a civil debt, any contribution which is overdue and unpaid.
- (8) A Contributor may, by serving a notice in writing on the State Government, withdraw his/her agreement in relation to any period of liability falling after the date of service of the notice.
- (9) Sub-paragraph (7) of this paragraph is without prejudice to any other method of recovery.

### **CONTRIBUTION ORDERS**

- 23.** (1) Where a Contributor has been served with a contribution notice and has:
  - (a) failed to reach any arrangement with the State Government as mentioned in paragraph 22 (7) of this Schedule within the period of one month beginning with the day on which the contribution notice was served; or
  - (b) served a notice under paragraph 22 (8) of this Schedule withdrawing his agreement, the State Government may apply to the Court for an Order under this paragraph.
- (2) On an application under sub- paragraph (1) of this paragraph, the Court may make an Order(“a Contribution Order”) requiring the Contributor to contribute a weekly sum towards the child’s maintenance in accordance with arrangements for payment specified by the Court.
- (3) A Contribution Order:
  - (a) shall not specify a weekly sum greater than that specified in the contribution notice; and
  - (b) shall be made with due regard to the contributor’s means.
- (4) A Contribution Order shall not:
  - (a) take effect before the date specified in the contribution notice;

- (b) have effect while the Contributor is not liable to contribute by virtue of paragraph 21 of this Schedule; or
  - (c) remain in force after the child has ceased to be cared for by the State Government which obtained the Order.
- (5) The State Government may not apply to the Court under sub-paragraph (1) of this Schedule in relation to a contribution notice which it has withdrawn.
- (6) Where:
  - (a) a Contribution Order is in force; and
  - (b) the State Government serves another contribution notice; and
  - (c) the Contributor and the State Government reach an arrangement under paragraph 22 (7) of this Schedule in respect of that other contribution notice, the effect of the arrangement shall be to discharge the Order from the date on which it is agreed that the subsequent agreement shall take effect.
- (7) Where an agreement is reached under sub-paragraph (6) of this paragraph, the State Government shall notify the Court:
  - (a) of the agreement; and
  - (b) of the date on which it took effect.
- (8) A Contribution Order may be varied or revoked on the application of the Contributor or the State Government.
- (9) In proceedings for the variation of a Contribution Order, the State Government shall specify the:
  - (a) weekly sum which, having regard to paragraph 22 of this Schedule, it proposes that the Contributor should contribute under the Order as varied; and
  - (b) proposed arrangements for payment.
- (10) Where a Contribution Order is varied, the Order shall:
  - (a) not specify a weekly sum greater than that specified by the State Government in the proceedings for variation; and
  - (b) be made with due regard to the Contributor's means.
- (11) An appeal shall lie in accordance with the Rules of Court from any Order made under this paragraph.

#### **ENFORCEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION ORDERS, ETC.**

- 24.** (1) A Contribution Order made by the Court at the Magistrates' Court level shall be enforceable as a Magistrates' Court Maintenance Order.
- (2) Where a Contributor has agreed, or has been ordered, to make contributions to the State Government, any other State Government within whose State the Contributor is for the time being living, may:
- (a) at the request of the State Government who, having served the contribution notice; and

- (b) subject to the agreement as to any sum to be deducted in respect of services rendered, collect from the Contributor any contributions due on behalf of the Rivers State Government who served the notice.
- (3) The power to collect sums under sub-paragraph (2) include the power to
  - (a) receive and give a discharge for any contributions due; and
  - (b) if necessary, enforce payment of any contribution, notwithstanding that those contributions may have fallen due at a time when the Contributor was living elsewhere.
- (4) Any contribution collected under sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph shall be paid, subject to any agreed deduction, to the State Government who served the contribution notice.
- (5) In any proceedings under this paragraph, a document which purports to be
  - (a) a copy of an Order made by a Court under or by virtue of paragraph 23 of this Schedule; and
  - (b) certified as a true copy by the Registrar of the Court, shall be evidence of the Order.
- (6) In any proceedings under this paragraph, a certificate which:
  - (a) purports to be signed by a duly authorized Officer of the State Government who obtained the Contribution Order; and
  - (b) states that any sum due to the State Government under the Order is overdue and unpaid, shall be evidence that the sum is overdue and unpaid.

## **REGULATIONS**

- 25.** The Commissioner may make regulations:
- (a) as to the consideration which the State Government shall take into account in deciding:
    - (i) whether it is reasonable to recover contributions and
    - (ii) what the arrangements for payment should be;
  - (b) as to the procedures it must follow in reaching agreements with:
    - (i) Contributors, under paragraphs 22 and 23 of this Schedule; and
    - (ii) any other State Government, under paragraph 23 of this Schedule.

**SCHEDULE VIII  
COMMUNITY HOMES**

*Section 185 (9) and 187 (6)*

**PART I– MANAGEMENT AND CONDUCT OF COMMUNITY HOMES**

**INSTRUMENTS OF MANAGEMENT FOR CONTROLLED AND ASSISTED  
COMMUNITY HOMES**

1. (1) The Commissioner may by Order make an instrument of management providing for the constitution of a Body or Managers for any voluntary home which is designated as a controlled or an assisted community home.
- (2) Sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph applies where two or more voluntary homes are designated as controlled community homes or as assisted community homes
- (3) If:
  - (a) those homes are, or are to be provided by the same voluntary organization; and
  - (b) the State Government is to be represented on the Body or Managers for those homes, a single instrument of management may be made by the Commissioner under this paragraph constituting one Body or Managers for the home or for any two or more of them.
- (4) The number of persons who, in accordance with an instrument of management, constitute the Body or Managers for a voluntary home shall be such number (which must be a multiple of 3) as may be specified in the instrument.
- (5) The instrument shall provide that the State Government shall appoint:
  - (a) in the case of a voluntary home which is designated as a controlled community home, 2/3 of the Managers and
  - (b) in the case of a voluntary home which is designated as an assisted community home, 1/3 of the Managers.
- (6) An instrument of management shall provide that the foundation Managers shall be appointed, in such manner and by such persons as may be specified in the instrument:
  - (a) so as to represent the interests of the voluntary organization by which the home is, or is to be provided; and
  - (b) for the purpose of securing that:
    - (i) so far as is practicable, the character of the home as a voluntary home will be preserved, and
    - (ii) subject to paragraph 2 (3) of this Schedule, the terms of any trust deed relating to the home are observed
- (7) An instrument of management shall come into force on such date as it may specify.
- (8) If any instrument of management comes into force in relation to a voluntary home, the home shall be, and be known as, a controlled community home or as an assisted community home, according to its designation.

### **Schedule VIII Interpretation (1)**

(9) In this paragraph:

“**Designated**” means designated in accordance with section 191 of this Law; and

“**Foundation Managers**” in relation to a voluntary home, means those of the Managers of the home who are not appointed by the State Government in accordance with subparagraph (5) of this paragraph.

2. (1) An instrument of management shall contain such provisions as the Commissioner considers appropriate.
- (2) Nothing in the instrument of management shall affect the purposes for which the premises comprising the home are held.
- (3) Without prejudice to the generality of sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph, an instrument of management may contain provisions:
  - (a) specifying the nature and purpose of the home, or each of the homes, to which it relates;
  - (b) requiring a specified number or proportion of the places in that home, or those homes, to be made available to the State Government and to any other body specified in the instrument; and
  - (c) relating to the management of that home, or those homes, and charging of fees with respect to:
    - (i) children placed there, or
    - (ii) places made available to the State Government or other body.
- (4) Subject to sub-paragraphs (1) and (2) of this paragraph, where there is any inconsistency between the provisions of any trust deed and an instrument of management, the instrument of management shall prevail over the provisions of the trust deed in so far as they relate to the home concerned.
- (5) After consultation with the voluntary organization concerned and with the State Government, the Commissioner may by Order vary or revoke any provision of the instrument.

### **PART II – MANAGEMENT OF CONTROLLED AND ASSISTED COMMUNITY HOMES**

3. (1) The management, equipment and maintenance of a controlled community home shall be the responsibility of the State Government.
- (2) The management, equipment and maintenance of an assisted community home shall be the responsibility of the voluntary organization by which the home is provided.
- (3) The functions of a home’s Responsible Body shall be exercised through the Managers.
- (4) Anything done, liability incurred or property acquired by a home’s Managers shall be done, incurred or acquired by them as agents of the Responsible Body.

- (5) In so far as any matter is reserved for the decision of a home's Responsible Body by:
  - (a) sub-paragraph (7) of this paragraph;
  - (b) the instrument of management; or
  - (c) the service by the Body on the Managers or any of them, of a notice reserving any matter,  
that matter shall be dealt with by the Body and not by the Managers.
- (6) In dealing with any matter so reserved, the Responsible Body shall have regard to any representation made to the Body by the Managers.
- (7) The employment of persons at a home shall be a matter reserved for the decision of the Responsible Body.
- (8) Where the instrument of management of a controlled community home so provides, the Responsible Body may enter into arrangement with the voluntary organization by which that home is provided whereby, in accordance with such terms as may be agreed between them and the voluntary organization, persons who are not in the employment of the Responsible Body shall undertake duties at that home.
- (9) Subject to sub-paragraph (10) of this paragraph:
  - (a) where the Responsible Body for an assisted community home proposes to engage any person to work in that home or to terminate without notice the employment of any person at that home, it shall consult the State Government and if the State Government so directs, the Responsible Body shall not carry out its proposal without their consent; and
  - (b) the State Government may, after consultation with the Responsible Body, require that Body to terminate the employment of any person at that home.
- (10) Sub-paragraph (9) (a) and (b) of this paragraph shall not apply:
  - (a) in such cases or circumstances as may be specified by notice in writing given by the State Government to the Responsible Body and
  - (b) in relation to the employment of any person or class of persons specified in the home's instrument of management.
- (11) The accounting year of the Managers of a home shall be such as may be specified by the Responsible Body.
- (12) Before such date in each accounting year as may be so specified, the Managers of a home shall submit an estimate to the Responsible Body, in such form as the Body may require, of expenditure and receipts in respect of the next accounting year.
- (13) Any expenses incurred by the Managers of a home with the approval of the Responsible Body shall be defrayed by the Body.
- (14) The Managers of a home shall keep:
  - (a) proper accounts with respect to the home; and
  - (b) proper records in relation to the accounts.

- (15) Where an instrument of management relates to more than one home, one set of accounts and records may be kept in respect to all the homes to which it relates.

### **Schedule VIII Interpretation (2)**

- (16) In this paragraph:

**“Home”** means a controlled community home or an assisted community home, as the case may be;

**“Managers”** in relation to a home, means the Managers constituted by its instrument of management; and

**“Responsible Body”** in relation to a home, means the State Government or voluntary organization, as the case may be, responsible for its management, equipment and maintenance.

### **PART III – REGULATIONS**

4. (1) The Commissioner may make regulations:
- (a) as to the placing of children in community homes;
  - (b) as to the conduct of the community homes; and
  - (c) for securing the welfare of children in the community homes.
- (2) The regulations may, in particular:
- (a) prescribe standards to which the premises used for such homes are to conform;
  - (b) impose requirements as to the accommodation, staff and equipment to be provided in such homes and as to the arrangements to be made for protecting the health of children in such homes;
  - (c) provide for the control and discipline of children in such homes;
  - (d) impose requirements as to the keeping of records and giving of notices in respect of children in such homes;
  - (e) impose requirements as to the facilities which are to be provided for giving religious instructions to children in such homes;
  - (f) authorise the Commissioner to give and revoke directions requiring:
    - (i) the State Government by whom a home is provided or who is specified in the instrument of management for a controlled community home, or
    - (ii) the voluntary organization by which an assisted community home is provided, to accommodate in the home a child cared for by the State Government for whom no place is made available in that home or to take such action in relation to a child accommodated in the home as may be specified in the directions;
  - (g) provide for, in consultation with the Commissioner, applicants for appointment to take charge of a home;
  - (h) empower the Commissioner to prohibit the appointment of any particular applicant, except in any case in which the regulations dispense with the consultation by reason that the person to be appointed possess such qualifications as may be prescribed;

- (i) require the approval of the Commissioner for the provision and use of accommodation for the purpose of restricting the liberty of children in such homes and impose other requirements in addition to those imposed by section 186 of this Law, as to the placing of a child in accommodation provided for that purpose, including a requirement to obtain the permission of the State Government who is caring for the child; and
  - (j) state that, to such extent as may be provided for in the regulations, the Commissioner may direct that any provision or regulations under this paragraph which is specified in the direction and makes any such provision as is referred to in sub-paragraph (2) (a) or (b) of this paragraph shall not apply in relation to a particular home or the premises used for it and may provide for the variation or revocation of any such direction by the Commissioner.
- (3) Without prejudice to the power to make regulations under this paragraph conferring functions on:
  - (a) the State Government or voluntary organizations by which a community home is provided; or
  - (b) the Managers of a controlled or assisted community home;regulations under this paragraph may confer functions in relation to a controlled or assisted community home, on the State Government.

## **SCHEDULE IX**

*Section 195 (5) (c)*

### **VOLUNTARY HOME AND VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **PART I – REGISTRATION OF VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS**

##### **GENERAL**

1. (1) An application for registration under this paragraph shall be made:
  - (a) by the person intending to carry on the home to which the application relates and
  - (b) in such manner, and as may be accompanied by such particulars, as the Commissioner may prescribe.
- (2) On an application duly made under sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph, the Commissioner may:
  - (a) grant or refuse the application, or
  - (b) grant the application subject to such conditions as the Commissioner considers appropriate.
- (3) The Commissioner may from time to time:
  - (a) vary any condition for the time being in force with respect to a voluntary home by virtue of this paragraph or
  - (b) impose an additional condition; whether on the application of the person carrying on the home or without such an application.
- (4) Where at anytime it appears to the Commissioner that the conduct of a voluntary home:
  - (a) is not in accordance with regulations made under paragraph 7 of this Schedule; or
  - (b) is otherwise unsatisfactory,the Commissioner may cancel the registration of the home and remove it from the register.
- (5) A person who without reasonable excuse, carries on a voluntary home in contravention of:
  - (a) section 197 of this Law; or
  - (b) a condition to which the registration of the home is for the time being required by virtue of this Part of this Schedule,commits an offence.
- (6) A person convicted of an offence under this paragraph is liable on summary conviction to a fine of:
  - (a) ₦100,000 if his offence is under sub-paragraph (5) (a) of this paragraph; or
  - (b) ₦500,000 if it is under sub paragraph (5)(b) of this paragraph.
- (7) Where the Commissioner registers a home under this paragraph, or cancels the registration of a home, the Commissioner shall notify the State Government.

## **PROCEDURE**

2. (1) Where:
- (a) a person applies for registration of a voluntary home; and
  - (b) the Commissioner proposes to grant the application, the Commissioner shall give the applicant written notice of the Commissioner's proposal and of the conditions subject to which the Commissioner proposes to grant the application.
- (2) The Commissioner needs not give notice if he proposes to grant the application subject only to conditions which the:
- (a) application specified in the application or
  - (b) Commissioner and the application have subsequently agreed.
- (3) Where the Commissioner proposes to refuse the application, he shall give notice of his proposal to the applicant.
- (4) The Commissioner shall give any person carrying on a voluntary home, notice of a proposal to:
- (a) cancel the registration of the home;
  - (b) vary any condition for the time being in force with respect to the home by virtue of paragraph 1 of this schedule; or
  - (c) impose any additional conditions.
- (5) A notice under this paragraph shall give the Commissioner's reasons for his proposal.

## **RIGHT TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS**

3. (1) A notice under paragraph 2 of this Schedule shall state that within 14 days of service of the notice, any person on whom it is served may, in writing, require the Commissioner to give him/her an opportunity to make representations to the Commissioner concerning the matters.
- (2) Where a notice has been served under paragraph 2 of this Schedule, the Commissioner shall not determine the matter until:
- (a) the person on whom the notice was served has made representations to the Commissioner concerning the matter;
  - (b) the period during which any person could have required the Commissioner to give him/her an opportunity to make representations has elapsed without the Commissioner being required to give such an opportunity; or
  - (c) the conditions referred to in sub-paragraph 3 of this paragraph are satisfied.
- (3) The conditions referred to in sub-paragraph (2) (c) of this paragraph are that:
- (a) a person on whom the notice was served has required the Commissioner to give him an opportunity to make representations to the Commissioner;
  - (b) the Commissioner has allowed the person a reasonable period to make his representations and
  - (c) the person has failed to make them within that period.

- (4) The representations may be made, at the option of the person making them, in writing or orally.
- (5) If the person informs the Commissioner that he desires to make oral representations, the Commissioner shall give the person an opportunity of appearing before and of being heard by, a person appointed by the Commissioner.

### **DECISION OF THE COMMISSIONER**

- 4. (1) If the Commissioner decides to adopt the proposal, the Commissioner shall serve notice in writing of his decision on any person on whom he is required to serve notice of the proposal.
- (2) A notice under this paragraph shall be accompanied by a notice explaining the right of appeal conferred by paragraph 5 of this Schedule.
- (3) A decision of the Commissioner, other than a decision to grant an application for registration subject to such conditions as are mentioned in paragraph 2 (2) of this schedule or to refuse an application for registration shall not take effect if:
  - (a) no appeal is brought, until the end of the period of 28 days referred to in paragraph 5 (3) of this schedule and
  - (b) an appeal is brought, until it is determined or abandoned.

### **APPEALS**

- 5. (1) An appeal against a decision of the Commissioner under Part XVII of this Law shall lie to the Court at the High Court level.
- (2) An appeal shall be brought by notice in writing given to the Commissioner.
- (3) No appeal may be brought by a person more than 28 days after service on him/her of the decision.
- (4) On an appeal, the Court may confirm the Commissioner's decision or direct that it shall not have effect.
- (5) The Court shall also have power on an appeal to:
  - (a) vary any condition for the time being in force by virtue Part XVII of this Law with respect to the home to which the appeal relates;
  - (b) direct that any such condition shall cease to have effect or
  - (c) direct that any such conditions as it thinks fit shall have effect with respect to the home.

### **NOTIFICATION OF PARTICULARS WITH RESPECT OF VOLUNTARY HOMES**

- 6. (1) It shall be the duty of the person in charge of any voluntary home established after the commencement of this law to send to the Commissioner with respect to the home as the Commissioner may prescribe.

- (2) It shall be the duty of the person in charge of any voluntary home, whether established before or after the commencement of this Law, to send to the Commissioner particulars with respect to the home as may be prescribed.
- (3) The particulars shall be sent:
  - (a) in the case of a home established before the commencement of this Law, in every year or
  - (b) in the case of a home established after the commencement of this Law, in every year subsequent to the year in which particulars are sent under sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph, by such date as the Commissioner may prescribe.
- (4) Where the Commissioner by regulations varies the particulars which are to be sent to him under sub-paragraph (1) or (2) of this paragraph by the person in charge of a voluntary home:
  - (a) that person shall send to the Commissioner the prescribed particulars within 3 months from the date of the making of the regulations;
  - (b) if any such home was established before, but not more than 3 months before the making of regulations, compliance with sub-paragraph (4) (a) of this paragraph shall be sufficient compliance with the prescribed particulars within 3 months from the establishment of home and
  - (c) in the year in which the particulars are varied, compliance with subparagraph (4)(a) of this paragraph by the person in charge of any voluntary home shall be sufficient compliance with the requirement of sub-paragraph (2) of this paragraph to send the prescribed particulars before the prescribed date in that year.
- (5) If a person in charge of a voluntary home fails, without reasonable cause, to comply with any of the requirement of this paragraph the person commits an offence.
- (6) Any person convicted of an offence under sub-paragraph 5 is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦100,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or to the both such fine and imprisonment.

## **PART II – REGULATIONS AS TO VOLUNTARY HOMES**

### **REGULATIONS AS TO CONDUCT OF VOLUNTARY HOMES**

7. (1) The Commissioner may make regulations for:
  - (a) the placing of children in voluntary homes;
  - (b) the conduct of the home and
  - (c) securing the welfare of children in the homes.
- (2) The regulations may in particular:
  - (a) prescribe standards to which premises used for the homes are to conform;
  - (b) impose requirements as to the accommodation, staff and equipment to be provided in the homes, as well as the arrangements to be made for protecting the health of children in the homes;
  - (c) provide for the control and discipline of children in the homes;

- (d) require the furnishing to the Commissioner of information as to the facilities provided for:
    - (i) the parents of the children in the homes; and
    - (ii) persons who, though not parents of the children, have parental responsibility for those children, and
    - (iii) other persons connected with the children, to visit and communicate with children;
  - (e) authorise the Commissioner to limit the number of children who may be accommodated in any particular voluntary home;
  - (f) prohibit the use of accommodation for the purposes of restricting the liberty of children in the voluntary homes;
  - (g) impose requirements as to the keeping of records and giving of notices with respect to children in the voluntary homes or, of the premises used by the homes;
  - (h) impose requirements as to the facilities which are to be provided for giving religious instruction to children in the voluntary homes and
  - (i) require notice to be given to the Commissioner of any charge of the person carrying on or in charge of a voluntary home or, of the premises used by the home.
- (3) The regulations may provide that a contravention, or failure to comply with, any specified provision of the regulations without reasonable cause shall be an offence against the regulations.
  - (4) Any person convicted of an offence under this paragraph is liable to a fine of ₦100,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or to both such fine and imprisonment.

### **DISQUALIFICATION**

- 8. The Commissioner may by regulations make provisions with respect to the disqualification of person in relation to voluntary homes of a kind similar to that made in relation to children's homes by section 202 of this Law.

## **SCHEDULE X**

*Section 196 (8)*

### **REGISTERED CHILDREN'S HOME**

#### **PART I – REGISTRATION**

##### **APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION**

1. (1) An application for the registration of a children's home shall be made:
  - (a) by the person carrying on or intending to carry on the home and
  - (b) to the State Government.
- (2) The application shall be made in the prescribed manner and shall be accompanied by:
  - (a) particulars as may be prescribed and
  - (b) any reasonable fee as the State Government may determine.
- (3) If the State Government is satisfied that a children's home with respect to which an application has been made in accordance with the schedule complies or will comply with any:
  - (a) requirement as may be prescribed and
  - (b) other requirement that appears to it to be appropriate, it shall grant the application either unconditionally or subject to conditions imposed under paragraph 2 of this schedule.
- (4) Before deciding whether or not to grant an application, the State Government shall comply with any prescribed requirements.
- (5) Registrations made for purposes of sub-paragraph (5) of this paragraph may, in particular make provision as to the inspection of the home in question.
- (6) Where an application is granted, the State Government shall notify the applicant that the home was registered under this Law as from such date as may be specified in the notice.
- (7) If the State Government is not satisfied as mentioned in sub-paragraph (4) of this paragraph, it shall refuse the application.
- (8) For the purpose of this Law, an application which has not been granted or refused within the period of 12 months beginning with the date when it is served on the State Government shall be deemed to have been refused by it, and the applicant shall be deemed to have been notified of its refusal at the end of that period.
- (9) Where a school to which section 196 of this Law applies is registered, it shall not cease to be a registered children's home by reason only of a subsequent change in the number of children for whom it provides accommodation.

##### **CONDITIONS IMPOSED ON REGISTRATION**

2. (1) The State Government may grant an applicant for registration subject to such conditions relating to the conduct of the home as it thinks fit.
- (2) The State Government may from time to time:

- (a) vary any condition for the time being in force with respect to a home by virtue of this paragraph; or
  - (b) impose an additional condition, either on the application of the person managing the home or without such an application.
- (3) If any conditions imposed or varied under this paragraph is not complied with, the person carrying on the home, if he has no reasonable excuse, commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦100,000 and imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or both fine and imprisonment.

### **ANNUAL REVIEW OF REGISTRATION**

3. (1) In this part of this Schedule, “**the responsible authority**”, in relation to a registered children’s home means the State Government.
- (2) The responsible authority for a registered children’s home shall, at the end of the period of twelve months beginning with the date of registration, and annually thereafter, review its registration for the purpose of determining whether the registration should continue in force or be canceled under paragraph 4 (3) of this Schedule.
- (3) If on any annual review the responsible authority is satisfied that the home is being carried on in accordance with the relevant requirements, it shall determine that, subject to sub-paragraph (4) of this paragraph, the registration should continue in force.
- (4) The responsible authority shall give to the person managing the home notice of their determination under sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph and the notice shall require him/her to pay to the responsible authority with respect to the review such reasonable fee as the responsible authority may determine.
- (5) It shall be a condition of the home’s continued registration that the fee is so paid before the expiry of the period of 28 days beginning with the date on which the notice is received by the person carrying on the home.

### **CANCELLATION OF REGISTRATION**

4. (1) The person carrying on registered children’s home may at any time make an application, in such manner and including such particulars as may be prescribed, for the cancellation by the responsible authority of the registration of the home.
- (2) If the responsible authority is satisfied, in the case of a school registered by virtue of section 196 (4) of this Law, that it is no longer a school to which that provision applies, the responsible authority shall give to the person carrying on the home notice that the registration of the home has been cancelled as from the date of the notice.
- (3) If on any annual review under paragraph 3 of this Schedule, or any other time, it appears to the responsible authority that a registered home is being carried on, otherwise than in accordance with the relevant requirement; it may determine that the registration of the home should be cancelled.

- (4) The responsible authority may at any time determine that the registration of a home should be canceled on the ground that:
  - (a) the person carrying on the home has been convicted of an offence under this Part of this Law or any regulations made under paragraph 10 of this Schedule; or
  - (b) any other person has been convicted of such offence in relation to the home.

### **PROCEDURE**

- 5. (1) Where:
  - (a) a person applies for the registration of a children's home; and
  - (b) the State Government proposes to grant the person's application, it shall give the person written notice of its proposal and any conditions subject to which it proposes to grant the application.
- (2) The responsible authority need not give notice if it proposes to grant the application subject only to conditions which:
  - (a) the applicant specified in the application; or
  - (b) the responsible authority and the applicant have subsequently agreed.
- (3) The responsible authority shall give an applicant notice of a proposal to refuse the application.
- (4) The responsible authority shall give any person carrying on a registered children's home notice of a proposal:
  - (a) to cancel the registration;
  - (b) to vary any condition for the time being in force with respect to the home by virtue of Part XVII of this Law; or
  - (c) to impose any additional condition.
- (5) A notice under this paragraph shall give the responsible authority's reasons for its proposal.

### **RIGHT TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS**

- 6 (1) A notice under paragraph 5 of the Schedule shall state that within 14 days of service, any person on whom it is served may, in writing, require the State Government to give him an opportunity to make representations to them concerning the matter.
- (2) Where a notice has been served under paragraph 5 of this Schedule, the State Government shall not determine the matter until:
  - (a) any person on whom the notice was served has made representations to it concerning the matter;
  - (b) the period during which the person could have required the State Government to give him opportunity to make representations has elapsed without its being required to give such an opportunity; or
  - (c) the conditions specified in sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph are satisfied.
- (3) The conditions referred to in sub-paragraph (2) (c) of this paragraph are that:

- (a) a person on whom the notice was served has required of the State Government to give him an opportunity to make representations to it concerning the matter;
  - (b) the State Government has allowed the person a reasonable period to make his representations; and
  - (c) the person has failed to make the representations within that period.
- (4) The representations may be made, at the option of the person making them, in writing or orally.
  - (5) If the person informs the State Government that he desires to make oral representations, the State Government shall give him an opportunity of appearing before and of being heard by its committee or sub-committee.

### **DECISIONS OF STATE GOVERNMENT**

- 2.(1) If the State Government decides to adopt its own proposal to grant an application, it shall serve notice in writing of its decision on any person on whom it is required to serve notice of its proposal.
- (2) A notice under this paragraph shall be accompanied by an explanation of the right of appeal conferred by paragraph 8 of this Schedule.
- (3) A decision of the State Government other than a decision to grant an application for registration subject only to such conditions, as are mentioned in paragraph (2) of this Schedule or to refuse an application for registration, shall not take effect:
  - (a) if no appeal is brought, until the end of the period of 28 days referred to in paragraph 8 (3) of this Schedule; and
  - (b) if an appeal is brought, until it is determined or abandoned.

### **APPEALS**

- 8. (1) An appeal against a decision of the State Government under part XVIII of the Law shall lie to the Court at the High Court level.
- (2) An appeal shall be brought by notice in writing given to the State Government.
- (3) No appeal shall be brought by a person more than 28 days after service on the person of notice of the decision.
- (4) On an appeal, the Court may confirm the State Government's decision or direct that it shall not have effect.
- (5) A Court has power on an appeal:
  - (a) to vary any condition in force with respect to the home to which the appeal relates by virtue of paragraph 2 of this Schedule;
  - (b) to direct that the condition shall cease to have effect; or
  - (c) to direct that any such condition as it thinks fit shall have effect with respect to the home.

- (6) The State Government shall comply with any direction given by a Court under this paragraph;

### **PROHIBITION ON FURTHER APPLICATION**

9. (1) Where an application for registration of a home is refused, no further application may be made within the period of 6 months beginning with the date when the applicant is notified of the refusal.
- (2) Sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph shall have effect, where an appeal against the refusal of an application is determined or abandoned, as if the reference to the date when the applicant is notified of the refusal were a reference to the date on which the appeal is determined or abandoned.
- (3) Where the registration of a home is cancelled, no application for the registration of the home shall be made within the period of 6 months beginning with the date of cancellation.
- (4) Sub-paragraph (3) of this paragraph shall have effect, where an appeal against the cancellation of the registration of a home is determined or abandoned as if the reference to the date of cancellation were a reference to the date on which the appeal is determined or abandoned.

### **PART II – REGULATIONS AND INTERPRETATION**

10. (1) The Commissioner may make regulations:
- (a) as to the placing of children in registered children's home;
  - (b) as to the conduct of the homes; and
  - (c) for securing the welfare of the children in the homes.
- (2) The regulations may in particular:
- (a) prescribe standards to which the premises used for the homes are to conform;
  - (b) impose requirements as to the accommodation, staff and equipment to be provided in the home;
  - (c) impose requirements as to the arrangements to be made protecting the health of children in the home;
  - (d) provide for the control and discipline of children in the homes;
  - (e) require the furnishing to the responsible authority of information as to the facilities provided for:
    - (i) the parents of children in such homes;
    - (ii) persons who though not parents of the children, have parental responsibility for those children; and
    - (iii) other persons connected with the children, to visit and communicate with the children;
  - (f) impose requirements as to the keeping of records and giving of notices with respect to children in the homes;
  - (g) impose requirements as to the facilities which are to be provided for giving religious instructions to children in the homes;

- (h) make provision as to the carrying out of annual reviews under paragraph 3 of this Schedule;
  - (i) authorize the responsible authority to limit the number of children who may be accommodated in any particular registered home;
  - (j) prohibit the use of accommodation for the purpose of restricting the liberty of children in the homes;
  - (k) require notice to be given to the responsible authority of any change of the person carrying on or in charge of a registered home or of the premises used by the home; and
  - (l) make provision similar to that made by regulations under section 179 of this Law.
- (3) The regulations may provide that a contravention of or failure to comply with any specified provision of the regulations without reasonable excuse, constitutes an offence against the regulations.
- (4) A person who commits an offence under this paragraph is liable on summary conviction to a fine of ₦100,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months or to both fine and imprisonment.

### **Schedule X Interpretation**

**11.** In this Schedule:

**“Relevant requirements”** means any requirements of Part XVII of this Law and any regulations made under paragraph 10 of this Schedule, and any conditions imposed under paragraph 2 of this Schedule;

**“Responsible authority”** in relation to a registered children’s home means the State Government which register the children’s home.

## SCHEDULE XI

### 1. FORM FOR COMMITTAL ORDER BY THE FAMILY COURT

IN THE HIGH COURT / MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA

IN THE HIGH COURT/MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

..... JUDICIAL DIVISION / MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT  
FORM FOR NOTICE TO PARENT (Section 273 RSCRL 2022)  
FORMS IN RELATION TO PARTS VI, XX, AND XXI OF THE LAW  
(FORM FOR COMMITTAL ORDER BY THE FAMILY COURT)

Let the boy or girl known by the name of .....

.....  
whose description appears below be taken to:

.....  
.....  
(Name of institution or person)  
and be detained there in the custody and/or care of:

.....  
.....  
(Person in charge of the institution or name of the said person)  
subject to the provisions of the Rivers State Child Rights Law.

This committal order shall remain in force from the date thereof up to and inclusive of the

..... day of ..... 20 .....

### DESCRIPTION

Name: .....

Sex: ..... Age: ..... Tribe or Community: .....

.....

Name and address of father: .....

.....

Name and address of mother: .....

.....  
Description of child: .....

.....  
Reason for the issue of Committal / Care / Supervision Order: .....

.....  
Dated this..... day of ..... 20 .....

Judge: .....

Court No. / Judicial Division: .....

Magistrate: .....

Court No. / Magisterial District: .....

Confirmed this ..... day of ..... 20 .....

.....  
Judge / Magistrate

## 2. GENERAL TITLE FORM

IN THE HIGH COURT / MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

Case No: PHC/ ..... /2022

Between:

XXXX ..... Complainant/Applicant

And

YYYY ..... Defendants/Respondent

## 3. FORM FOR WARRANT FOR APPREHENSION OF CHILD

IN THE HIGH COURT / MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

(Section 160 (3) RSCRL 2022)  
FORM FOR WARRANT FOR APPREHENSION OF CHILD

To: .....  
of: .....  
.....

Complaint on oath has been made on the ..... day of ..... 20 .....

by .....

that ....., a child  
(Name of child)

on the ..... day of ....., 20 .....

at .....

in the Judicial Division / Magisterial District aforesaid, did / has been / is

.....

.....

.....

(State the substance of the offence or the description as mentioned in Section 158 or 159 of the RSCRL 2020)

You are hereby commanded to bring the said child, .....

..... before the Family Court aforesaid sitting at

..... Judicial Division / Magisterial District forthwith, to  
answer the said complaint.

Dated this ..... day of ..... 20 .....

.....

Judge/Magistrate

**4. FORM FOR REMAND AND COMMITTAL TO STATE ACCOMMODATION AND  
APPROVED INSTITUTIONS**

IN THE HIGH COURT / MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

(Sections 248, 249, 250, 252 and 253 RSCRL 2022)

**FORM FOR REMAND AND COMMITTAL TO STATE ACCOMMODATION AND APPROVED  
INSTITUTIONS**

To .....  
and to the person / officer in charge of the Approved Institution at:

.....

.....

hereinafter called the place of detention.

.....

(Name of child)

hereinafter called the defendant, being a child brought before the aforesaid Family Court sitting at

..... Judicial Division / Magisterial District

charged with having .....

.....

(State the substance of the offence)

The hearing of the case being adjourned:

You, the Police Officer, are hereby commanded to convey the defendant to the place of detention and there, to deliver him/her to the person/officer in charge thereof, together with this warrant and you, the person/officer in charge of the said place of detention to receive him/her into your custody and unless he/she shall have been bailed in the meantime, keep him/her until the ..... day of .....  
20 ..... And on that day, you the Police Officer, are required to convey him/her before the aforesaid Family Court sitting at ..... at the hour of ....., to be further dealt with according to law, unless otherwise ordered in the meantime.

Dated this ..... day of ..... 20 .....

.....

Judge / Magistrate

**5. FORM FOR SUMMONS FOR ATTENDANCE OF PARENT FOR GUARDIAN**

IN THE HIGH COURT / MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

(Section 217 (2) RSCRL 2022)

FORM FOR SUMMONS FOR ATTENDANCE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN

To: .....

of .....

....., a child

(Name of child)

whom you are stated to be the parent(s) / guardian(s) is charged for an offence(s) that he /

she on the ..... day of ..... 20 .....

at .....

in the ..... Judicial Division / Magisterial District

aforesaid, did .....

.....

.....

(State the substance of the offence)

You are therefore summoned to appear before the Family Court sitting at No: .....

in the ..... Judicial Division / Magisterial District

on ....., the ..... day of ..... 20 .....,

at the hour of ..... in the forenoon and during all the stages of the proceedings.

.....  
Judge/Magistrate Date

**6. FORM FOR NOTICE TO PARENT OR GUARDIAN: CARE OR PROTECTION**

IN THE HIGH COURT / MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

(FORM 13)

(Section 160RSCRL 2022)

FORM FOR NOTICE TO PARENT OR GUARDIAN: CARE OR PROTECTION

To .....

of .....

the parent / guardian of ....., a child.

Take notice that .....

(name of the child)

is to be brought before the Family Court sitting at .....

..... Judicial Division / Magisterial District

on ....., the ..... day of ..... 20 .....

at the hour of ..... in the forenoon, by virtue of the provisions of

Section ..... of the Rivers State Child Rights Law on the ground(s) that

.....

.....

.....

(State the grounds of the application).

You are mandated to attend the said Court during all the stages of the proceedings.

Dated this ..... day of ..... 20 .....

.....

Registrar / Police Officer / Authorized Officer.

**Note:** A copy of this notice is to be sent to the Registrar of the Family Court.

**7. FORM FOR SUMMONS TO PARENT TO CONTRIBUTE TO MAINTENANCE**

IN THE HIGH COURT / MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

(Section 53 RSCRL 2022)

FORM FOR SUMMONS TO PARENT TO CONTRIBUTE TO MAINTAINANCE

To: .....

of .....

complaint has been made this ..... day of ..... 20 .....

by .....

that you are the father/step-father, mother/step-mother (or a person co-habiting with the  
mother or step-mother) of .....  
(a child) or you are a person in whose care and custody he/she has been, for 2(two) years

immediately prior to the ..... day of ..... 20 .....

That ..... (the child),

on the (said) ..... day of ..... 20 ..... a committal order  
was accordingly made whereby the said child was committed to:

.....

a Government Accommodation / or to the care of .....

..... (other person / institution).

You are therefore summoned to appear before the Family Court sitting at

..... on .....

the ..... day of ..... 20 ....., at the hour of ....., to show cause  
why an order should not be made requiring you to contribute such monthly / periodic sum as the Court, having  
regard to your means, thinks fit.

Dated this ..... day of ..... 20 .....

.....

Judge / Magistrate

**8. FORM FOR DISPOSAL PENDING OPERATION OF COMMITTAL ORDER**

IN THE HIGH COURT / MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

(Sections 51 and 52 RSCRL 2022)

**FORM FOR DISPOSAL PENDING OPERATION OF COMMITTAL ORDER**

To: .....

and to the person / officer in charge of the Approved Institution at: .....

.....

or to .....

of .....

..... (a child)

being ordered by the Family Court Sitting at the High Court / Magistrates' Court in the

..... Judicial Division / Magisterial District

on the ..... day of ..... 20 ..... to be sent to an Approved Institution and the  
operation of such committal order being postponed.

It is ordered that ..... (a child)

be taken to the Approved Institution or to the custody of the said .....

.....

at .....

and there be detained by him / her or the person in charge thereof or to the

..... together with this warrant and  
you, the person / officer in charge of the said Approved Institution the said

..... is to receive him / her into custody and  
detain him / her as aforesaid.

Dated this ..... Day of ..... 20 .....

.....

Judge/Magistrate

**9. FORM FOR RECOGNIZANCE UNDER SUPERVISION ORDER**

IN THE HIGH COURT / MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

(Section 243 RSCRL 2022)

**FORM FOR RECOGNISANCE UNDER SUPERVISION ORDER**

The undersigned Principal Party to this recognizance hereby binds himself to perform the following obligations at all times during a period of \_\_\_\_\_ from the date hereof - to be of good behavior.

To be and remain under the supervision of:

.....or the  
Supervision Officer from time to time for the:

..... Area.

To appear before the Court at: .....

To be further dealt with anytime when called upon by the Court (or when so directed by the

said ..... / Supervision Officer  
(and such further conditions as the case may require).

And the said Principal Party together with the undersigned surety / or sureties hereby acknowledges himself / acknowledge themselves bound to forfeit to the Governor the following sum(s):

the said Principal Party the sum of ₦ .....  
and the said surety / sureties the sum of ₦ ..... (each)  
in case the said Principal Party fails to perform the above obligations or any part thereof.

Principal Party:.....

Surety 1:.....

Surety 2:.....

Taken before me at .....

This ..... day of ..... 20 .....

.....  
Sworn Interpreter

.....  
Judge / Magistrate

**10. FORM FOR NOTICE OF CHANGE OF SUPERVISION OFFICER**

IN THE HIGH COURT / MAGISTRATES' COURT OF RIVERS STATE OF NIGERIA  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION

(Section 240 RSCRL 2022)

**FORM FOR NOTICE OF CHANGE OF SUPERVISION OFFICER**

Take notice that .....

has been substituted by .....

or with the approval of the Family Court to perform the duties of Supervision Officer in your case in place of:

.....

and that the name of the said .....

is substituted for that of the said .....

as from this date wherever the name of the said .....  
occurs in the order made by the aforesaid Court in your case on the

..... day of ....., 20 ..... and in the recognizance entered into by you  
thereupon.

Dated this ..... day of ..... 20 .....

.....  
Judge / Magistrate