

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 50—COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

(ON BEHALF OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON  
CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES)

FEBRUARY 11, 2005

Referred to Committee on Judiciary

SUMMARY—Makes various changes relating to adoptions of  
children. (BDR 11-674)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.  
Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to adoption; providing a procedure for parties to an adoption to enter into an enforceable agreement that provides for postadoptive contact; requiring certain persons to notify the court of the existence of such an agreement; authorizing a natural parent who has entered into such an agreement to petition a court to prove the existence of the agreement, to enforce its terms and to bring certain civil actions related to the agreement; authorizing an adoptive parent who has entered into such an agreement to petition the court to enforce the terms of the agreement and to modify or terminate the agreement; requiring the Division of Child and Family Services of the Department of Human Resources to notify certain persons of any medical history and medical information submitted to the State Register for Adoptions in certain circumstances; expanding information required to be maintained by the State Register for Adoptions to include medical history and medical information about certain persons; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.



**Legislative Counsel's Digest:**

Under existing law, the parental rights of a parent must be terminated before a child is placed for adoption. (NRS 128.150) After an adoption, the natural parents cannot exercise any rights over the child or his property. (NRS 127.160) Administrative regulations, however, implicitly authorize agreements that provide for postadoptive contacts or communications between the parties to an adoption. (NAC 127.210) The Nevada Supreme Court has held that because there is no statutory provision providing for the enforcement of an agreement for postadoptive contacts or communications, such agreements are unenforceable unless incorporated into the adoption decree. (*Birth Mother v. Adoptive Parents*, 118 Nev. 972 (2002))

This bill adopts the holding of the Nevada Supreme Court by providing that any agreement for postadoptive contacts is enforceable only if the agreement is written, signed by the parties, and incorporated into the order or decree of adoption.

This bill requires certain parties and other persons who are involved in an adoption proceeding to notify the court of the existence of an agreement for postadoptive contact. This bill further requires the court to question those parties and persons as to their knowledge of the existence of such an agreement. If the court determines that an agreement for postadoptive contact exists, the court is required to incorporate the agreement into the order or decree of adoption.

In addition, this bill authorizes a natural parent who has entered into an agreement for postadoptive contact to petition the court to prove the existence of the agreement and to enforce the terms of the agreement. This bill further authorizes an adoptive parent who has entered into such an agreement to petition the court to enforce the terms of the agreement and to modify or terminate the agreement. This bill provides that failure to comply with an agreement for postadoptive contact may not be used as a basis for setting aside an adoption or consent to an adoption.

Further, this bill authorizes a natural parent or adoptive parent, under certain circumstances, to inspect only the portions of the court's files and records which concern an agreement for postadoptive contact without obtaining a court order. However, those portions of the file or records that are made available for inspection by a natural parent or adoptive parent must not include any confidential information, such as information that would identify the natural parent or lead to the identification of the natural parent if the identity of the natural parent is not included in the agreement.

This bill authorizes a natural parent who has entered into such an agreement to bring a civil action against certain persons who knowingly provide false information to the court concerning the existence of the agreement and thereby cause the court not to incorporate the agreement into the order or decree of adoption.

Existing law establishes the State Register for Adoptions within the Division of Child and Family Services of the Department of Human Resources. The Register consists of names and other information relating to persons who have released a child for adoption, have consented to the adoption of a child or whose parental rights have been terminated. The Register also consists of other information relating to adopted persons who are 18 years of age or older and to certain relatives of adopted persons. (NRS 127.007)

This bill requires the Division of Child and Family Services to include within the State Register for Adoptions information concerning the medical history and other medical information about the natural parents and certain relatives of an adopted person. Such information may be released to the adoptive parent of a child or to an adopted person who is 18 years of age or older so long as the information is provided in a manner which does not identify and would not lead to the identification of the natural parent.



This bill further requires a court to order the adoptive parent of a child or the attorney of the parent after an order or decree of adoption is entered to submit contact information to the Division. After the adopted person reaches 18 years of age, the adopted person may submit contact information. The Division is required to use the contact information to notify the parent of the adopted child or the adopted child, as applicable, of information submitted to the Register which includes medical history or medical information on or after October 1, 2005. The notice must exclude any information that identifies or would lead to the identification of the natural parent. The Division is required to maintain the confidentiality of the contact information and may use the contact information only to provide the required notice.

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THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN  
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

**Section 1.** Chapter 127 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2 to 9, inclusive, of this act.

**Sec. 2. 1. *The natural parent or parents and the prospective adoptive parent or parents of a child to be adopted may enter into an enforceable agreement that provides for postadoptive contact between:***

***(a) The child and his natural parent or parents;***

***(b) The adoptive parent or parents and the natural parent or parents; or***

***(c) Any combination thereof.***

**2. *An agreement that provides for postadoptive contact is enforceable if the agreement:***

***(a) Is in writing and signed by the parties; and***

***(b) Is incorporated into an order or decree of adoption.***

**3. *The identity of a natural parent is not required to be included in an agreement that provides for postadoptive contact. If such information is withheld, an agent who may receive service of process for the natural parent must be provided in the agreement.***

**4. *A court that enters an order or decree of adoption which incorporates an agreement that provides for postadoptive contact shall retain jurisdiction to enforce, modify or terminate the agreement that provides for postadoptive contact until:***

***(a) The child reaches 18 years of age;***

***(b) The child becomes emancipated; or***

***(c) The agreement is terminated.***

**5. *The establishment of an agreement that provides for postadoptive contact does not affect the rights of an adoptive parent as the legal parent of the child as set forth in NRS 127.160.***

**Sec. 3. 1. *Each prospective adoptive parent of a child to be adopted who enters into an agreement that provides for***



1 *postadoptive contact pursuant to section 2 of this act shall notify*  
2 *the court responsible for entering the order or decree of adoption*  
3 *of the child of the existence of the agreement as soon as*  
4 *practicable after the agreement is established, but not later than*  
5 *the time at which the court enters the order or decree of adoption*  
6 *of the child.*

7 **2. Each:**

8 (a) *Director or other authorized representative of the agency*  
9 *which provides child welfare services or the licensed child-placing*  
10 *agency involved in the adoption proceedings concerning the child;*  
11 *and*

12 (b) *Attorney representing a prospective adoptive parent, the*  
13 *child, the agency which provides child welfare services or the*  
14 *licensed child-placing agency in the adoption proceedings*  
15 *concerning the child,*

16 *↪ shall, as soon as practicable after obtaining actual knowledge*  
17 *that the prospective adoptive parent or parents of the child and the*  
18 *natural parent or parents of the child have entered into an*  
19 *agreement that provides for postadoptive contact pursuant to*  
20 *section 2 of this act, notify the court responsible for entering the*  
21 *order or decree of adoption of the child of the existence of the*  
22 *agreement.*

23 **Sec. 4. 1. Before a court may enter an order or decree of**  
24 **adoption of a child, the court must address in person:**

25 (a) *Each prospective adoptive parent of the child to be*  
26 *adopted;*

27 (b) *Each director or authorized representative of the agency*  
28 *which provides child welfare services or the licensed child-placing*  
29 *agency involved in the adoption proceedings concerning the child;*  
30 *and*

31 (c) *Each attorney representing a prospective adoptive parent,*  
32 *the child, the agency which provides child welfare services or the*  
33 *licensed child-placing agency in the adoption proceedings*  
34 *concerning the child,*

35 *↪ and inquire whether the person has actual knowledge that the*  
36 *prospective adoptive parent or parents of the child and the natural*  
37 *parent or parents of the child have entered into an agreement that*  
38 *provides for postadoptive contact pursuant to section 2 of this act.*

39 **2. If the court determines that the prospective adoptive parent**  
40 **or parents and the natural parent or parents have entered into an**  
41 **agreement that provides for postadoptive contact, the court shall:**

42 (a) *Order the prospective adoptive parent or parents to provide*  
43 *a copy of the agreement to the court; and*



1       (b) Incorporate the agreement into the order or decree of  
2 adoption.

3       **Sec. 5. 1.** A natural parent who has entered into an  
4 agreement that provides for postadoptive contact pursuant to  
5 section 2 of this act may, for good cause shown:

6       (a) Petition the court that entered the order or decree of  
7 adoption of the child to prove the existence of the agreement that  
8 provides for postadoptive contact and to request that the  
9 agreement be incorporated into the order or decree of adoption;  
10 and

11       (b) During the period set forth in subsection 2 of section 6 of  
12 this act, petition the court that entered the order or decree of  
13 adoption of the child to enforce the terms of the agreement that  
14 provides for postadoptive contact if the agreement complies with  
15 the requirements of subsection 2 of section 2 of this act.

16       2. An adoptive parent who has entered into an agreement that  
17 provides for postadoptive contact pursuant to section 2 of this act  
18 may:

19       (a) During the period set forth in subsection 2 of section 6 of  
20 this act, petition the court that entered the order or decree of  
21 adoption of the child to enforce the terms of the agreement that  
22 provides for postadoptive contact if the agreement complies with  
23 the requirements of subsection 2 of section 2 of this act; and

24       (b) Petition the court that entered the order or decree of  
25 adoption of the child to modify or terminate the agreement that  
26 provides for postadoptive contact in the manner set forth in section  
27 7 of this act.

28       **Sec. 6. 1.** Failure to comply with the terms of an agreement  
29 that provides for postadoptive contact entered into pursuant to  
30 section 2 of this act may not be used as a ground to:

31       (a) Set aside an order or decree of adoption;

32       (b) Revoke, nullify or set aside a valid release for or consent to  
33 an adoption or a relinquishment for adoption; or

34       (c) Except as otherwise provided in section 14 of this act,  
35 award any civil damages to a party to the agreement.

36       2. Any action to enforce the terms of an agreement that  
37 provides for postadoptive contact must be commenced not later  
38 than 120 days after the date on which the agreement was  
39 breached.

40       **Sec. 7. 1.** An agreement that provides for postadoptive  
41 contact entered into pursuant to section 2 of this act may only be  
42 modified or terminated by an adoptive parent petitioning the court  
43 that entered the order or decree which included the agreement.  
44 The court may grant a request to modify or terminate the  
45 agreement only if:



1     (a) *The adoptive parent petitioning the court for the*  
2 *modification or termination establishes that:*

3         (1) *A change in circumstances warrants the modification or*  
4 *termination; and*

5         (2) *The contact provided for in the agreement is no longer*  
6 *in the best interests of the child; or*

7     (b) *Each party to the agreement consents to the modification*  
8 *or termination.*

9     2. *If an adoptive parent petitions the court for a modification*  
10 *or termination of an agreement pursuant to this section:*

11         (a) *There is a presumption that the modification or*  
12 *termination is in the best interests of the child; and*

13         (b) *The court may consider the wishes of the child involved in*  
14 *the agreement.*

15     3. *Any order issued pursuant to this section to modify an*  
16 *agreement that provides postadoptive contact:*

17         (a) *May limit, restrict, condition or decrease contact between*  
18 *the parties involved in the agreement; and*

19         (b) *May not expand or increase the contact between the parties*  
20 *involved in the agreement or place any new obligation on an*  
21 *adoptive parent.*

22     **Sec. 8.** 1. *After an order or decree of adoption has been*  
23 *entered, the court shall direct the petitioner or his attorney to*  
24 *submit to the Division contact information which includes a name*  
25 *and address where the Division may send a notice pursuant to*  
26 *section 9 of this act. The petitioner may update the contact*  
27 *information at any time.*

28     2. *When the adopted person reaches 18 years of age, the*  
29 *adopted person may submit contact information to the Division*  
30 *and may update the contact information at any time.*

31     3. *The Division may use the contact information only to*  
32 *provide notice pursuant to section 9 of this act. The contact*  
33 *information is confidential and must not be disclosed by the*  
34 *Division to any person.*

35     **Sec. 9.** 1. *Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2, the*  
36 *Division shall notify the adoptive parents of a child using the*  
37 *contact information obtained pursuant to section 8 of this act of*  
38 *any medical history or other medical information that is submitted*  
39 *to the State Register for Adoptions pursuant to paragraph (d) of*  
40 *subsection 2 of NRS 127.007 on or after October 1, 2005.*

41     2. *If the adopted person has reached 18 years of age and has*  
42 *submitted contact information to the Division, the Division shall*  
43 *send such notice to the adopted person.*



1     **3. The notification required pursuant to this section must**  
2 **exclude any information that identifies or would lead to the**  
3 **identification of the natural parent.**

4     **Sec. 10.** NRS 127.005 is hereby amended to read as follows:

5     127.005 The provisions of NRS 127.010 to 127.186, inclusive,  
6 **and sections 2 to 8, inclusive, of this act** govern the adoption of  
7 minor children, and the provisions of NRS 127.190, 127.200 and  
8 127.210 and the provisions of NRS 127.010 to 127.186, inclusive,  
9 **and sections 2 to 8, inclusive, of this act,** where not inconsistent  
10 with the provisions of NRS 127.190, 127.200 and 127.210, govern  
11 the adoption of adults.

12     **Sec. 11.** NRS 127.007 is hereby amended to read as follows:

13     127.007 1. The Division shall maintain the State Register for  
14 Adoptions, which is hereby established, in its central office , to  
15 provide information to identify adults who were adopted and  
16 persons related to them within the third degree of consanguinity ~~;~~  
17 **and to provide for the exchange of medical information.**

18     2. The State Register for Adoptions consists of:

19     (a) Names and other information, which the Administrator of the  
20 Division deems to be necessary for the operation of the Register,  
21 relating to persons who have released a child for adoption or have  
22 consented to the adoption of a child, or whose parental rights  
23 have been terminated by a court of competent jurisdiction, and who  
24 have submitted the information voluntarily to the Division;

25     (b) Names and other necessary information of persons who are  
26 18 years of age or older, who were adopted and who have submitted  
27 the information voluntarily to the Division; ~~and~~

28     (c) Names and other necessary information of persons who are  
29 related within the third degree of consanguinity to adopted persons,  
30 and who have submitted the information voluntarily to the Division  
31 ~~;~~ **and**

32     **(d) Information concerning the medical history and other**  
33 **medical information about persons listed in paragraphs (a), (b)**  
34 **and (c) submitted by the persons voluntarily to the Division.**

35     **3.** Any person whose name appears in the Register may  
36 withdraw it by requesting in writing that it be withdrawn. The  
37 Division shall immediately withdraw a name upon receiving a  
38 request to do so, and may not thereafter release any information to  
39 identify that person, including the information that such a name was  
40 ever in the Register.

41     ~~[3.]~~ **4.** Except as otherwise provided in ~~[subsection 4,]~~  
42 **subsections 5 and 6 and section 9 of this act,** the Division may  
43 release information:

44     (a) About a person related within the third degree of  
45 consanguinity to an adopted person; or



(b) About an adopted person to a person related within the third degree of consanguinity,  
→ if the names and information about both persons are contained in the Register and written consent for the release of such information is given by the natural parent.

**[4-] 5. *The Division may release information described in paragraph (d) of subsection 2 to the adoptive parent of a child or to an adopted person if the adopted person is 18 years of age or older regardless of whether the natural parent has provided consent if the information is provided in a manner which does not identify and would not lead to the identification of the natural parent.***

6. An adopted person may, by submitting a written request to the Division, restrict the release of any information concerning himself to one or more categories of relatives within the third degree of consanguinity.

**Sec. 12.** NRS 127.140 is hereby amended to read as follows:

127.140 1. All hearings held in proceedings under this chapter are confidential and must be held in closed court, without admittance of any person other than the petitioners, their witnesses, the director of an agency, or their authorized representatives, attorneys and persons entitled to notice by this chapter, except by order of the court.

2. The files and records of the court in adoption proceedings are not open to inspection by any person except **[upon]**:

(a) **Upon** an order of the court expressly so permitting pursuant to a petition setting forth the reasons therefor **[or if]**;

(b) **If** a natural parent and the child are eligible to receive information from the State Register for Adoptions **[ ]**; or

(c) **As provided pursuant to subsections 3, 4 and 5.**

3. **An adoptive parent who intends to file a petition pursuant to section 5 or 7 of this act to enforce, modify or terminate an agreement that provides for postadoptive contact may inspect only the portions of the files and records of the court concerning the agreement for postadoptive contact.**

4. **A natural parent who intends to file a petition pursuant to section 5 of this act to prove the existence of or to enforce an agreement that provides for postadoptive contact or to file an action pursuant to section 14 of this act may inspect only the portions of the files or records of the court concerning the agreement for postadoptive contact.**

5. **The portions of the files and records which are made available for inspection by an adoptive parent or natural parent pursuant to subsection 3 or 4 must not include any confidential information, including, without limitation, any information that**





1 *identifies or would lead to the identification of a natural parent if*  
2 *the identity of the natural parent is not included in the agreement*  
3 *for postadoptive contact.*

4 **Sec. 13.** NRS 127.171 is hereby amended to read as follows:

5 127.171 1. ~~[[1]]~~ *Except as otherwise provided in sections 2 to*  
6 *7, inclusive, of this act, in* a proceeding for the adoption of a child,  
7 the court may grant a reasonable right to visit to certain relatives of  
8 the child only if a similar right had been granted previously pursuant  
9 to NRS 125C.050.

10 2. The court may not grant a right to visit the child to any  
11 person other than as specified in subsection 1.

12 **Sec. 14.** Chapter 41 of NRS is hereby amended by adding  
13 thereto a new section to read as follows:

14 *1. A natural parent of an adopted child who has entered into*  
15 *an agreement that provides for postadoptive contact pursuant to*  
16 *section 2 of this act may bring a civil action against a person if:*

17 *(a) The person knowingly provided false information in*  
18 *response to a question asked by a court pursuant to section 4 of*  
19 *this act; and*

20 *(b) The provision of false information caused the court not to*  
21 *incorporate the agreement that provides for postadoptive contact*  
22 *in the order or decree of adoption pursuant to section 4 of this act.*

23 *2. If a person is liable to a natural parent of an adopted child*  
24 *pursuant to subsection 1, the natural parent may recover his*  
25 *actual damages, costs, reasonable attorney's fees and any punitive*  
26 *damages that the facts may warrant.*

27 *3. The liability imposed by this section is in addition to any*  
28 *other liability imposed by law.*







