

RCW 13.38.070 Notice—Procedures—Determination of Indian status.

(1) In any involuntary child custody proceeding seeking the foster care placement of, or the termination of parental rights to, a child in which the petitioning party or the court knows, or has reason to know, that the child is or may be an Indian child as defined in this chapter, the petitioning party shall notify the parent or Indian custodian and the Indian child's tribe or tribes, by certified mail, return receipt requested, and by use of a mandatory Indian child welfare act notice addressed to the tribal agent designated by the Indian child's tribe or tribes for receipt of Indian child welfare act notice, as published by the bureau of Indian affairs in the federal register. If the identity or location of the parent or Indian custodian and the tribe cannot be determined, such notice shall be given to the secretary of the interior by registered mail, return receipt requested, in accordance with the regulations of the bureau of Indian affairs. The secretary of the interior has fifteen days after receipt to provide the requisite notice to the parent or Indian custodian and the tribe. No foster care placement or termination of parental rights proceeding shall be held until at least ten days after receipt of notice by the parent or Indian custodian and the tribe. The parent or Indian custodian or the tribe shall, upon request, be granted up to twenty additional days to prepare for the proceeding.

(2) The determination of the Indian status of a child shall be made as soon as practicable in order to serve the best interests of the Indian child and protect the interests of the child's tribe.

(3) (a) A written determination by an Indian tribe that a child is a member of or eligible for membership in that tribe, or testimony by the tribe attesting to such status shall be conclusive that the child is an Indian child;

(b) A written determination by an Indian tribe that a child is not a member of or eligible for membership in that tribe, or testimony by the tribe attesting to such status shall be conclusive that the child is not a member or eligible for membership in that tribe. Such determinations are presumptively those of the tribe where submitted in the form of a tribal resolution, or signed by or testified to by the person(s) authorized by the tribe's governing body to speak for the tribe, or by the tribe's agent designated to receive notice under the federal Indian child welfare act where such designation is published in the federal register;

(c) Where a tribe provides no response to notice under RCW 13.38.070, such nonresponse shall not constitute evidence that the child is not a member or eligible for membership. Provided, however, that under such circumstances the party asserting application of the federal Indian child welfare act, or this chapter, will have the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the child is an Indian child.

(4) (a) Where a child has been determined not to be an Indian child, any party to the proceeding, or an Indian tribe that subsequently determines the child is a member, may, during the pendency of any child custody proceeding to which this chapter or the federal Indian child welfare act applies, move the court for redetermination of the child's Indian status based upon new evidence, redetermination by the child's tribe, or newly conferred federal recognition of the tribe.

(b) This subsection (4) does not affect the rights afforded under 25 U.S.C. Sec. 1914. [2017 c 269 s 1; 2011 c 309 s 7.]