

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 614 (HB 272)

2022 Regular Session

Jefferson

Existing law (R.S. 9:327) allows a court to order a mental health evaluation of the parties when determining an award of final spousal support.

New law requires the appointed mental health professional to be licensed.

Existing law (R.S. 9:331) authorizes the court to order an evaluation of a party, conducted by a mental health professional, during a child custody or visitation proceeding.

New law requires the mental health professional to be licensed.

New law defines "licensed mental health professional" as a person who possesses at least a master's degree and who is licensed in counseling, social work, psychology, marriage and family counseling, or is exempt from licensing requirements pursuant to existing law.

New law prohibits ex parte communications with the licensed mental health professional unless authorized by law, approved by the court, agreed to by the parties, or initiated by the mental health professional for the purpose of conducting the court-ordered evaluation.

Existing law (R.S. 9:355.15) allows the court to appoint a mental health expert to assist the court in determining whether it is in the best interest of a child to allow a parent to relocate the residence of the child.

New law requires the mental health expert to be a licensed professional.

Existing law (R.S. 9:365) requires mental health professionals who conduct custody evaluations in family violence cases to have experience relative to family violence.

New law requires the mental health professional to be licensed.

Effective August 1, 2022.

(Amends R.S. 9:327(B), 331, 355.15, and 365)