

§ 7B-911. Civil child custody order.

(a) Upon placing custody with a parent or other appropriate person, the court shall determine whether or not jurisdiction in the juvenile proceeding should be terminated and custody of the juvenile awarded to a parent or other appropriate person pursuant to G.S. 50-13.1, 50-13.2, 50-13.5, and 50-13.7.

(b) When the court enters a custody order under this section, the court shall either cause the order to be filed in an existing civil action relating to the custody of the juvenile or, if there is no other civil action, instruct the clerk to treat the order as the initiation of a civil action for custody.

If the order is filed in an existing civil action and the person to whom the court is awarding custody is not a party to that action, the court shall order that the person be joined as a party and that the caption of the case be changed accordingly. The order shall resolve any pending claim for custody and shall constitute a modification of any custody order previously entered in the action.

If the court's order initiates a civil action, the court shall designate the parties to the action and determine the most appropriate caption for the case. The civil filing fee is waived unless the court orders one or more of the parties to pay the filing fee for a civil action into the office of the clerk of superior court. The order shall constitute a custody determination, and any motion to enforce or modify the custody order shall be filed in the newly created civil action in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 50 of the General Statutes. The Administrative Office of the Courts may adopt rules and shall develop and make available appropriate forms for establishing a civil file to implement this section.

(c) When entering an order under this section, the court shall satisfy the following:

- (1) Make findings and conclusions that support the entry of a custody order in an action under Chapter 50 of the General Statutes or, if the juvenile is already the subject of a custody order entered pursuant to Chapter 50, makes findings and conclusions that support modification of that order pursuant to G.S. 50-13.7.
- (2) Make the following findings:
 - a. There is not a need for continued State intervention on behalf of the juvenile through a juvenile court proceeding.
 - b. At least six months have passed since the court made a determination that the juvenile's placement with the person to whom the court is awarding custody is the permanent plan for the juvenile, though this finding is not required if the court is awarding custody to a parent or to a person with whom the child was living when the juvenile petition was filed. (2005-320, s. 4; 2013-129, s. 29.)