

Hon. Dr. Findlay.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION.

ANALYSIS.

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A BILL INTITULED

AN ACT to make Better Provision for the Protection of the Lives of Infants. Title.

BE IT ENACTED by the General Assembly of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows :—

1. This Act may be cited as the Infant Life Protection Act, 1907. Short Title.

2. In this Act, if not inconsistent with the context,— Interpretation.

10 “Foster-parent” means the holder of a license under this Act to receive and retain any infant for the purpose of nursing and maintaining it apart from its parents or guardians :

“Foster-home” means the place of abode in which a foster-parent is licensed to receive and retain any infant :

15 “Infant” means a child under or apparently under the age of six years :

“Minister” means the Minister of Education :

“Secretary” means the Secretary to the Department of Education :

20 “Prescribed” means prescribed by regulations made under the authority of this Act.

3. The Minister may from time to time appoint such officers as he deems necessary for the purposes of this Act, and may assign to any such officer such duties, authorities, and functions as he thinks fit. Appointment of officers.

Unauthorised
person not to
receive infant.

4. (1.) It shall not be lawful for any person, in consideration of any payment or reward, to receive or retain in his care or charge any infant for the purpose of nursing or maintaining it apart from its parents or guardians for a longer period than seven consecutive days unless such person is licensed under this Act as a foster-parent. 5

(2.) The Minister may from time to time by warrant exempt from the provisions of this section—

(a.) Any institution that is supported wholly or in part by moneys of the Crown or by public subscription; or

(b.) Any person who, being a near relative of an infant, desires to take charge thereof; or 10

(c.) Any person as to whom the Minister is satisfied that such provisions should not apply.

Application for
license.

5. (1.) Every person who desires to obtain a license to receive and maintain an infant under the provisions of this Act shall make application in the prescribed form to the Secretary or to such other officer as the Minister from time to time appoints to receive such applications. 15

(2.) The application shall state—

(a.) The full name, address, and occupation of the applicant, and, if married, the full name, address, and occupation of the husband or wife, as the case may be, and whether husband and wife are living together or apart from one another; 20

(b.) The situation of the house in which the applicant proposes to receive and maintain infants, the number of rooms therein, the size of each room, and the maximum number of infants proposed to be received and maintained at any one time; 25

(c.) The number and description of persons residing in the house at the date of the application; and 30

(d.) Such other particulars as to the applicant and the house as are prescribed.

(3.) The application shall be accompanied by the certificate, in the prescribed form, of not less than three householders to the effect that the applicant is of good character and fit to be trusted with the care of infants. 35

License.

6. (1.) If, after such inquiry as he thinks fit, the Secretary or other officer as aforesaid is satisfied as to the character and fitness of the applicant and the suitability of the house, he shall issue a license to the applicant. 40

(2.) The holder of a license shall be entitled to receive and maintain in the house specified in the license any infants (not exceeding at any one time the number specified in the license) for the purpose of nursing or maintaining such infants apart from their parents or guardians. 45

(3.) The license shall have effect until the thirty-first day of December next after the date of its issue, and may be renewed from year to year in the manner hereinbefore provided with respect to the issue of licenses. 50

Revocation of
license.

7. (1.) The license may at any time during its currency be revoked by the Minister; and on any such revocation the Minister may make such order as he thinks fit for the removal of any infants

then in the foster-home and for their reception in some other foster-home or otherwise, or he may issue a warrant for the admission of any such infant to an industrial school.

5 (2.) Such warrant shall have the same effect as an order of admission to an industrial school made by a Magistrate under the Industrial Schools Act, 1882.

8. (1.) The foster-parent shall at all times keep a record-book in the prescribed form, and shall at the prescribed times and in the prescribed manner enter in such record-book such particulars as may
10 be required by regulations to be entered.

Record-book.

(2.) Any foster-parent who fails to observe the requirements of this section, or who makes any false entry in any such record-book, shall be liable to a fine not exceeding *twenty* pounds.

15 9. (1.) No payment or reward shall be made or given to or received by a foster-parent in respect of any infant except in pursuance of an agreement approved by the Secretary or other person authorised by the Minister.

Provisions as to maintenance-moneys.

(2.) If default is made in payment of any sum payable under any such agreement, the amount thereof shall be paid to the foster-parent by the Secretary, and shall be recoverable by the Secretary in the manner provided by section *thirteen* hereof:

20 Provided that no such payment shall be made by the Secretary after the child attains the age of fourteen years, or is removed from the foster-home, or dies.

25 (3.) Where any such agreement is for payment of a lump sum, such lump sum shall be deposited with the Secretary or other officer as aforesaid and not paid to the foster-parent, and in such case the foster-parent shall be entitled to receive from the Secretary out of the sum so deposited a weekly payment of such amount as may be
30 agreed between the Secretary and the foster-parent:

Provided that no payment out of the sum so deposited shall be receivable by the foster-parent after the infant dies or is removed from the foster-home, and the residue then remaining in the hands of the Secretary shall be returned to the person from whom it was
35 received.

10. (1.) Any officer appointed under this Act may at any time enter any foster-home, or any premises in which he has reason to believe that any infant is being maintained contrary to the provisions of this Act, and may inspect every part of any such foster-home or
40 premises and examine the state and condition of the infants therein, and also the record-book hereinbefore mentioned.

Powers of inspection.

(2.) Such officer may at any time be accompanied by a registered medical practitioner.

45 (3.) Such officer may at any time in cases of emergency (of which he shall be sole judge) remove any infant from any foster-home or other premises as aforesaid.

(4.) Every person who obstructs or hinders any such officer in the performance of his duties is liable to a fine not exceeding *twenty* pounds.

50 11. Subject to the provisions of the *last preceding* section, it shall not be lawful for any person to remove any child (whether under or over the age of six years) from a foster-home, or for the

Infant not to be removed from foster-home except with consent of officer.

foster-parent to permit such removal, except with the written consent of the Secretary or other officer authorised by the Minister to give such consent.

Death of infant in foster-home.

12. (1.) If any infant dies in a foster-home, the foster-parent shall within twelve hours after the death give notice thereof to the constable in charge of the nearest police-station, who shall forthwith communicate to the Coroner the fact of the death and such circumstances relating to the same as he is aware of. 5

(2.) On such communication the Coroner shall decide whether or not under the special circumstances of the case an inquest is necessary. 10

(3.) It shall be the duty of the Coroner at such inquest to inquire not only into the immediate cause of death, but also into all the circumstances relating to the treatment and condition of the infant during life which in his opinion should be inquired into in the public interest. 15

(4.) It shall not be lawful for the foster-parent to cause or permit the body of such infant to be buried until the Coroner so authorises by writing under his hand.

(5.) A full report of the circumstances attending the death of every such child shall be forwarded by the constable to the Secretary. 20

Expenses paid by Crown recoverable from near relatives.

13. (1.) All moneys of the Crown expended under the authority of this Act in respect of any infant (including the expense of medical attendance and of the burial of any infant) shall be a debt due to the Crown for which the near relatives of the infant shall be jointly and severally liable. 25

(2.) The said debt shall be recoverable in a Magistrate's Court, or in any other Court of competent jurisdiction, by action at the suit of the Secretary for the time being in his own name on behalf of the Crown. 30

(3.) Any near relative paying such debt or any part thereof shall have a right of indemnity as against the father and mother of such infant, and as against any person who has been adjudged to be the father of such infant under the Destitute Persons Act, 1894, and a right of equal contribution as against all other near relatives of such infant. 35

(4.) The term "near relative" in this section includes—

(a.) Any person who is a near relative of the infant within the meaning of the Destitute Persons Act, 1894: 40

(b.) Any person who has been adjudged to be the father of an illegitimate infant under the said Act:

(c.) Any person who would be a near relative of an infant within the meaning of the said Act if such infant were the legitimate child of the person who has been so adjudged to be the father of such infant. 45

Penalty for offences.

14. Every person who commits a breach of any of the provisions of this Act is liable, if no express provision has been made in this Act to the contrary, to a fine not exceeding *fifty* pounds or to imprisonment for any period not exceeding *six* months. 50

General inspection by certain persons.

15. In addition to the inspection provided for by section *ten* hereof, every foster-home shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by any member of the General Assembly or by any Justice.

16. The cost of administration of this Act shall be paid out of moneys from time to time appropriated by Parliament for that purpose. Cost of administration of Act.

17. The Governor may from time to time, by Order in Council gazetted, make regulations to give effect to the provisions of this Act. Regulations.

18. When any infant is adopted under the Adoption of Children Act, 1895, the provisions of this Act shall apply to such infant and to the person or persons adopting the same in the same manner and to the same extent as if no such adoption had taken place. Act to apply to adopted children.

19. (1.) The Infant Life Protection Act, 1896, is hereby repealed. Repeal.

(2.) All persons duly registered as licensees under that Act shall be deemed to be licensed as foster-parents under this Act. Saving.

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General.

20. (1.) It shall be the duty of the occupier of any house in which a child is born alive to give notice of the fact of the birth, the date on which it occurred, and the name of the mother of the child to the Registrar of Births of the district in which the birth took place. Notice of birth to be given to Registrar of Births.

(2.) Such notice shall be in writing, delivered or posted by registered letter to the said Registrar within forty-eight hours after the birth if in a city or borough, or seven days in any other case.

(3.) If the occupier fails to comply with the provisions of this section, he shall be liable to a fine not exceeding *five* pounds.

(4.) The requirements of this section are in addition to and not in substitution for the requirements of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1875.

21. (1.) Notwithstanding anything contained in section five of the Adoption of Children Act, 1895, if the Judge or Magistrate making an order of adoption of any child is satisfied that any parent or guardian of the child is for any reason unfit to have the custody or control of the child, and that notice of the application for the order of adoption has been given to such parent or guardian, the said Judge or Magistrate may, if he thinks fit, in making the said order dispense with the consent of such parent or guardian. In certain cases of adoption consent of parents may be dispensed with.

(2.) Any parent or guardian whose consent is thus dispensed with may, within one month after the making of the order of adoption, make application to any Judge of the Supreme Court, on notice to the adopting parent or parents, to discharge such order, and the said Judge may in his discretion discharge such order accordingly on such terms as he thinks fit. Any such discharge shall have the same effect as a discharge made under section nine of the Adoption of Children Act, 1895.