252A.6 How commenced — trial.

1. A proceeding under this chapter shall be commenced by filing a verified petition in the court in equity in the county where the dependent resides or is domiciled, or if the dependent does not reside in or is not domiciled in this state, where the petitioner or respondent resides, or where public assistance has been provided for the dependent. The petition shall show the name, age, residence, and circumstances of the dependent, alleging that the dependent is in need of and is entitled to support from the respondent, giving the respondent's name, age, residence, and circumstances, and praying that the respondent be compelled to furnish such support. The petitioner may include in or attach to the petition any information which may help in locating or identifying the respondent including, but without limitation by enumeration, a photograph of the respondent, a description of any distinguishing marks of the respondent's person, other names and aliases by which the respondent has been or is known, the name of the respondent's employer, the respondent's fingerprints, or social security number.

2. It shall not be necessary for the dependent or the dependent's witnesses to appear personally at a hearing on the petition, but it shall be the duty of the petitioner's representative to appear on behalf of and represent the petitioner at all stages of the proceeding.

3. If at a hearing on the petition the respondent controverts the petition and enters a verified denial of any of the material allegations, the judge presiding at the hearing shall stay the proceedings. The petitioner shall be given the opportunity to present further evidence to address issues which the respondent has controverted.

4. If the respondent appears at the hearing and fails to answer the petition or admits the allegations of the petition, or if, after a hearing, the court has found and determined that the prayer of the petitioner, or any part of the prayer, is supported by the evidence adduced in the proceeding, and that the dependent is in need of and entitled to support from a party, the court shall make and enter an order directing a party to furnish support for the dependent and to pay a sum as the court determines pursuant to section 598.21A or 598.21B, as applicable. Upon entry of an order for support or upon failure of a person to make payments pursuant to an order for support, the court may require a party to provide security, a bond, or other guarantee which the court determines is satisfactory to secure the payment of the support. Upon the party's failure to pay the support under the order, the court may declare the security, bond, or other guarantee forfeited.

5. The court making such order may require the party to make payment at specified intervals to the clerk of the district court or to the collection services center, and to report personally to the sheriff or any other official, at such times as may be deemed necessary.

6. A party who willfully fails to comply with or who violates the terms or conditions of the support order or of the party's probation shall be punished by the court in the same manner and to the same extent as is provided by law for a contempt of such court or a violation of probation ordered by such court in any other suit or proceeding cognizable by such court.

7. Except as provided in 28 U.S.C. §1738B, any order of support issued by a court shall not supersede any previous order of support issued in a divorce or separate maintenance action, but the amounts for a particular period paid pursuant to either order shall be credited against amounts accruing or accrued for the same period under both. This subsection also applies to orders entered following an administrative process including, but not limited to, the administrative processes provided pursuant to chapters 252C and 252F.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §252A.6]

85 Acts, ch 100, §1; 89 Acts, ch 166, §3; 93 Acts, ch 79, §35; 96 Acts, ch 1141, §19, 20; 97 Acts, ch 175, §13; 2003 Acts, ch 62, §7; 2005 Acts, ch 69, §4
Referred to in §252A.6A, 252A.13, 602.8102(47)