CONSOLIDATION OF PUBLIC TRUSTEE ACT

R.S.N.W.T. 1988,c.P-19

(Current to: May 27, 2011)

AS AMENDED BY NORTHWEST TERRITORIES STATUTES:

R.S.N.W.T. 1988,c.8(Supp) In force July 19, 1993: SI-008-93

S.N.W.T. 1991-92,c.41

In force November 1, 1994; SI-012-94

S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29

In force July 1, 1997: SI-004-97

S.N.W.T. 1995,c.11 S.N.W.T. 1996,c.21

Note: see s.3 of S.N.W.T. 1996,c.21 for transitional provision.

S.N.W.T. 1997,c.8 S.N.W.T. 1998,c.17

AS AMENDED BY NUNAVUT STATUTES:

S.Nu. 2005,c.9,s.30 s.30 in force October 18, 2006: SI-005-2006 S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6 s.6 in force June 16, 2009

This consolidation is not an official statement of the law. It is an office consolidation prepared for convenience only. The authoritative text of statutes can be ascertained from the *Revised Statutes of the Northwest Territories*, 1988 and the Annual Volumes of the Statutes of the Northwest Territories (for statutes passed before April 1, 1999) and the Statutes of Nunavut (for statutes passed on or after April 1, 1999).

A copy of a statute of Nunavut can be obtained from the Territorial Printer at the address below. The Annual Volumes of the Statutes of Nunavut and this consolidation are also available online at http://www.justice.gov.nu.ca but are not official statements of the law.

Any certified Bills not yet included in the Annual Volumes of the Statutes of Nunavut can be obtained through the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN CONSOLIDATIONS

Miscellaneous

c. means "chapter".

CIF means "comes into force".

NIF means "not in force".

s. means "section" or "sections", "subsection" or "subsections", "paragraph" or

"paragraphs".

Sch. means "schedule".

SI-005-98 means the instrument registered as SI-005-98 in 1998. (Note: This is a Northwest

Territories statutory instrument if it is made before April 1, 1999, and a Nunavut statutory instrument if it is made on or after April 1, 1999 and before January 1, 2000.)

SI-012-2003 means the instrument registered as SI-012-2003 in 2003. (Note: This is a Nunavut

statutory instrument made on or after January 1, 2000.)

Citation of Acts

R.S.N.W.T. 1988,c.D-22 means Chapter D-22 of the Revised Statutes of the Northwest

Territories, 1988.

R.S.N.W.T. 1988,c.10(Supp.) means Chapter 10 of the Supplement to the *Revised Statutes of the*

Northwest Territories, 1988. (Note: The Supplement is in three

volumes.)

S.N.W.T. 1996,c.26 means Chapter 26 of the 1996 Annual Volume of the Statutes of the

Northwest Territories.

S.Nu. 2002,c.14 means Chapter 14 of the 2002 Annual Volume of the Statutes of

Nunavut.

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PUBLIC TRUSTEE ACT

INTERPRETATION

Definitions

1. In this Act,

"Clerk" means the Clerk of the Nunavut Court of Justice appointed under the *Judicature Act*; (*greffier*)

"court" means the Nunavut Court of Justice; (tribunal)

"missing person" means a person who cannot be found and whose present place of residence is unascertainable; (absent)

"Public Trustee" means the Public Trustee appointed under subsection 2(1). (*curateur public*)

S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(2); S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(2).

PUBLIC TRUSTEE

Public Trustee

2. (1) The Commissioner shall appoint a fit and proper person to be Public Trustee for Nunavut.

Powers and duties

(2) The Public Trustee has the powers and the duties conferred or imposed on the Public Trustee by this or any other Act and such further powers and duties as the Commissioner may confer or impose.

Security bond

(3) If required by the Commissioner, the Public Trustee shall provide security to the satisfaction of the Commissioner in the penal sum of not less than \$10,000 conditioned for the due performance of his or her duties, but shall not otherwise be required to provide security unless a judge so directs and such security may be provided by bond or agreement of any guarantee company approved by the Commissioner. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

Delegation

2.1. Where the Public Trustee is given any power or duty under this Act, under any other enactment or by an order of a court, the Public Trustee may authorize, in writing, one or more persons to exercise that power or perform that duty on such conditions and in such circumstances as are set out in the authorization. S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(3).

Powers of Public Trustee

- **3.** The Public Trustee may
 - (a) act in the administration of estates;
 - (b) act as custodian of property of missing persons and deceased persons;
 - (c) on order of the court, act as judicial trustee of the estate of a deceased person;
 - (d) either alone or jointly with any other person, accept and carry out a trust where the Public Trustee is appointed for that purpose
 - (i) in the instrument creating the trust, or
 - (ii) after the creation of the trust, with the consent of the majority of the persons beneficially interested in the trust, who are for the time being *sui juris*;
 - (d.1) act as attorney on behalf of a person under a power of attorney to which the *Powers of Attorney Act* applies;
 - (e) act as administrator of the estate of a child who has been placed in the permanent custody of the Director of Child and Family Services under the *Child and Family Services Act*;
 - (f) act as guardian *ad litem* of the estate of a minor;
 - (g) act as the trustee of the estate of a person in respect of whom a trusteeship order has been made under the *Guardianship and Trusteeship Act*;
 - (h) where no person has been appointed guardian, act as guardian or trustee of the estate of a minor
 - (i) who has property vested in him or her, or
 - (ii) who is entitled, either immediately or after an interval and either certainly or contingently to property under an intestacy, or under a will, settlement, trust deed or in any other manner; and
 - (i) act in such other capacity and do such other acts, matters and things, as the Public Trustee is authorized, or required to do
 - (i) by the Rules of the Nunavut Court of Justice,
 - (ii) by order of the court, or
 - (iii) under this Act. S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(4); S.N.W.T. 1998,c.17,s.25(2),(3); S.Nu. 2005,c.9,s.30(2); S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

MINORS AND MISSING PERSONS

Notice to Public Trustee

4. (1) The Public Trustee must be served with notice of each application made to a court in respect of the property or estate of a minor or missing person.

Service of notice

(2) Service on the Public Trustee referred to subsection (1) may be made by delivering to the Public Trustee a copy of the statement of claim, originating notice, petition or other process originating the matter in which the application is made, together with copies of all affidavits and other material to be used on the application.

Guardian ad litem

(3) The Public Trustee when served is guardian *ad litem* of the estate of the minor or trustee of the property of the missing person, as the case may be, until the court otherwise orders.

Duties of Public Trustee or guardian

(4) The Public Trustee or any other guardian appointed by the court for a minor shall take the proceedings that he or she considers necessary for the protection of the interests affected and shall attend actively to the interests affected and for that purpose shall communicate with the proper parties.

Representations by Public Trustee

(5) No application referred to in subsection (1) shall be proceeded with until the Public Trustee is represented on the application or has expressed his or her intention of not being represented. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

Notice to Public Trustee of application to court

- **5.** (1) Where a minor, a person who was a minor at date of death or a missing person is interested in an estate in respect of which an application is made to the court, the Clerk shall send to the Public Trustee particulars
 - (a) of each application and of the estate and persons entitled to an interest; and
 - (b) of further applications affecting the estate of the minor or missing person.

Representation

(2) No application referred to in subsection (1) shall be proceeded with until the Public Trustee is represented on the application or has expressed his or her intention of not being represented. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

Property of minor without guardian

6. (1) Subject to B of Part III of the *Children's Law Act* but notwithstanding any other provisions of that Act and any other Act, any money, other than wages or salary, and any property to which a minor is entitled under an intestacy or under a will, settlement, trust deed or in any other manner, and for whose estate no person has been appointed guardian, shall be paid or transferred to the Public Trustee.

Duty to account

(2) The Public Trustee shall account to the minor according to the provisions of the law, will or trust instrument, as the case may be. S.N.W.T. 1998,c.17,s.25(4).

MAINTENANCE AND EDUCATION OF MINORS

Advance out of estate of minor

- **7.** (1) Where
 - (a) a minor is entitled to share in the estate of an intestate and the share has been paid to the Public Trustee as guardian of the estate of the minor or for the benefit of the minor, or
 - (b) property is held by the Public Trustee as trustee for a minor and the property is not subject to the terms of a will, trust deed or other instrument governing the trust,

the Public Trustee shall apply to the court on summary application for an order authorizing the Public Trustee to expend, or to advance to a person having the lawful custody of the minor, so much of the share of property for the maintenance and education of the minor as the judge considers proper.

Authorization of court

(2) On the making of an order under subsection (1), the court, for the purpose of making the payments or advances authorized by the order, may authorize the sale or conversion of any of the real or personal property held by the Public Trustee on behalf of the minor. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

ESTATES OF MISSING PERSONS

Procedure

- **8.** When it is brought to the attention of the Public Trustee that a person appears to be a missing person, the Public Trustee after investigation may
 - (a) take possession of the lands, money, personal estate and effects of the missing person; and
 - (b) safely keep, preserve and protect the lands, money, personal estate and effects pending an order of the court. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

Declaration by judge

- **9.** (1) If it is proved to the satisfaction of a judge that a person is a missing person, the judge
 - (a) may declare the person to be a missing person; and
 - (b) by order may appoint the Public Trustee as trustee of the property of the missing person.

Powers of Public Trustee

(2) The Public Trustee on the order of a judge may mortgage, lease, sell or otherwise dispose of any of the real or personal property of a missing person. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

Payments by Public Trustee

- 10. (1) The Public Trustee, without a further order of the court, may pay out of the capital or income of the property of a person declared to be a missing person
 - (a) sums of money that the missing person might otherwise have been liable to pay; and
 - (b) payments and allowances that are necessary for the support or maintenance
 - (i) of a spouse or child or reputed child of the missing person, or
 - (ii) of any other relative or reputed relative of the missing person dependent on the missing person for support.

Distribution of property

(2) The Public Trustee shall not make a distribution of the estate of a missing person, otherwise than as provided in subsection (1), until the expiration of two years from the time when the person was declared to be a missing person, and then only when directed to do so by an order of the court.

"spouse" defined

- (3) In subsection (1), "spouse" has the meaning assigned to it by the *Family Law Act.* S.N.W.T. 1998,c.17,s.25(5); S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).
- 11. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).
- 12. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).
- 13. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).
- 14. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).
- 15. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).
- 16. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).
- 17. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).
- 18. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).
- 19. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).
- 20. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).
- 21. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).
- 22. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(5).

ADMINISTRATION OF ESTATES

Appointment by court

23. Where the court is empowered to appoint a trustee, executor, administrator, attorney, guardian or committee, the court may appoint the Public Trustee with the consent of the Public Trustee to any of the appointments. S.Nu. 2005,c.9,s.30(3), S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

Public Trustee may take possession

- 24. (1) Where a person dies whether testate or intestate and the lands, personal estate and effects of the person have not been taken possession of by the executors or next-of-kin of the person, the Public Trustee
 - (a) may take possession of the lands, personal estate and effects without delay; and
 - (b) may safely keep, preserve and protect the lands, personal estate and effects.

Powers before grant

(2) The Public Trustee, before the grant of probate to an executor or the grant of letters of administration, as the case may be, has the powers of an executor or administrator, except that the Public Trustee shall not sell property unless in the opinion of the Public Trustee the estate might suffer loss if a sale is not made.

Application for administration

25. (1) Subject to section 26, where a person has died intestate, in or outside Nunavut, leaving property in Nunavut and no application for letters of administration has been made, the Public Trustee may apply for letters of administration of the estate.

Notice of intention

- (2) If the Public Trustee knows of any person resident in Nunavut
 - (a) who would be entitled to letters of administration before the exercise of the powers conferred on the Public Trustee by this section, and
 - (b) who has not renounced his or her right to apply for letters of administration,

the Public Trustee shall give notice of his or her intention to apply for letters of administration to that person by registered mail.

Time limit

(3) The Public Trustee shall not apply for letters of administration until the expiration of one month from the mailing of the notice referred to in subsection (2).

Prohibition

(4) If within the time referred to in subsection (3), an application for letters of administration has been made by another person entitled to letters of administration in

priority to the Public Trustee, then the Public Trustee shall not apply for letters of administration unless the application of that person has been refused. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

Administration of small estates

- 26. (1) Where a person dies possessed of personal property, the gross value of which as estimated by the Public Trustee does not exceed a net value of \$10,000, and no probate of the will or letters of administration of the estate of that person have been granted in Nunavut, the Public Trustee, without obtaining any order or authority from a court or otherwise, may
 - (a) out of the personal property give or distribute in the discretion of the Public Trustee, wearing apparel and articles of personal use or ornaments to or among one or more of the family and relatives of the deceased;
 - (b) sell property not so dealt with under paragraph (a) and apply the proceeds towards payment of sums due and debts incurred for the burial of the deceased; and
 - (c) do all things necessary to complete the administration of the estate.

Letter to bank

(2) A letter signed by the Public Trustee addressed to the manager of a branch of a bank or other person in possession of property belonging to a deceased person, advising that the Public Trustee is administering the estate of the deceased person pursuant to this section, is conclusive proof that the Public Trustee is the administrator of the estate of the deceased person. S.N.W.T. 1995,c.11,s.46; S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

Revocation of grants of letters of administration

- **27.** (1) Where a grant of letters of administration has been made to the Public Trustee under section 25.
 - (a) the grant may be revoked on terms as to the payment of costs and charges of the Public Trustee that the court considers fair and proper; and
 - (b) a new grant may be made on application of a person otherwise entitled to letters of administration on proof
 - (i) that the person has not renounced or refused administration,
 - (ii) that the omission to apply sooner for administration was due to absence from Nunavut, illness, incapacity or other circumstances sufficient to excuse the omission, and
 - (iii) that 14 days notice in writing of the intention of the person to apply for a grant has been given to the Public Trustee.

Costs

(2) On an application under subsection 25(1), no costs shall be awarded against the Public Trustee. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

JUDICIAL TRUSTEE

Appointment of Public Trustee

28. (1) A person may apply to the court for an order appointing the Public Trustee a judicial trustee under the *Trustee Act*.

Power to appoint

(2) The court may by order appoint the Public Trustee a judicial trustee where, in the opinion of the court, it is expedient to do so. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(3),(5).

29. Repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(6).

COMMON FUND

Common fund

30. (1) Moneys in the hands of the Public Trustee, not being money subject to any express trust or direction for the investment of the money, may be invested in a common fund in a bank approved by the Commissioner and kept and controlled by the Public Trustee.

Investments held in common

(2) An investment made under subsection (1) shall not be made on account of or belong to a particular estate.

Interest of beneficiaries

(3) The interest of a person entitled to a share or interest in a common fund referred to in subsection (1) is in common with the other persons so entitled.

Rate of interest

31. (1) The interest payable in respect of the estates, the moneys of which form the common fund, shall be at the rate of 3% per year or at another rate that is prescribed.

Crediting of interest

- (2) Interest shall be
 - (a) credited to the respective estates at the authorized rate half-yearly, on April 30 and October 31 in each year; and
 - (b) calculated on the minimum monthly balances of the moneys that form the common fund.

Investment in securities for distribution

(3) The moneys deposited in the common fund shall be invested from time to time in securities authorized by the Comptroller General and not otherwise.

Distribution

- (4) For the purpose of distribution
 - (a) the investments in the common fund shall be deemed to be of the same aggregate value as the aggregate amount of moneys invested in the fund; and
 - (b) no regard shall be had to a fluctuation in value or price of the investments of the common fund.

Excess interest in common fund

- 32. (1) Where the amount of interest earned by the investment of the common fund in a half-year period ending on April 30 or October 31 exceeds the amount of interest payable in respect of the estates invested in the common fund, the amount of the excess interest shall be paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund after deduction of
 - (a) the amount of any prescribed fees; and
 - (b) any deficiency between the aggregate amount of sums invested in the common fund and the actual value of the investments of the common fund.

Guarantee

(2) Subject to subsection (3), the Government of Nunavut guarantees that the common fund will be sufficient for the purpose of paying lawful claims that are payable out of the common fund pursuant to this Act.

Source of payments to meet guarantee

(3) The sums that are necessary to implement the guarantee referred to in subsection (2) must be paid from moneys appropriated for that purpose out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund. S.N.W.T. 1996,c.21,s.2; S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

GENERAL

Investigation or audit of trust

33. (1) The Public Trustee on the order of the court or of the Commissioner may investigate or audit the accounts of any trust.

Powers of Public Trustee

- (2) The Public Trustee when making an investigation or audit
 - (a) has the right of access for the Public Trustee and for any other person acting under instructions of the Public Trustee to
 - (i) the books, accounts and vouchers of the trustees, and
 - (ii) any securities and documents of title held by the trustees on account of the trust; and
 - (b) may require from the trustees any information and explanation necessary for the performance of the duties of the Public Trustee.

Report of investigation

(3) When an investigation and audit is completed, the Public Trustee shall make a report on it to the court or to the Commissioner, as the case may be. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

Application to require passing of accounts

- **34.** (1) The Public Trustee may, in the following circumstances, apply to the court to compel an administrator or executor acting in the affairs of an estate in which the Public Trustee is interested to pass his or her accounts:
 - (a) at the expiration of two years after the date on which probate or letters of administration were issued; or
 - (b) at any other time when the Public Trustee considers it advisable.

Order to pass accounts

(2) Where an application is made under subsection (1), the judge may order that the executor or administrator pass his or her accounts within a time that may be fixed by the judge.

Enforcement of order

(3) An order made under subsection (2) may be enforced in the same manner as is set out in the Rules of the Nunavut Court of Justice for the enforcement of an order of the court. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(4),(5).

Accountable advance

35. The Comptroller General may, pursuant to the *Financial Administration Act*, make an accountable advance to the Public Trustee from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the period and on the terms and conditions that are considered necessary for the advantageous administration of an estate being administered by the Public Trustee pursuant to this Act.

Costs

36. Where a Public Trustee is a party to a proceeding or application, the court may order any other party to the proceeding or application or any other person not a party to the proceeding or application to pay the costs of the proceeding or application. S.Nu. 2009,c.7,s.6(5).

Waiver or remission of fees

37. The Public Trustee, or a person designated by the Public Trustee, may waive or remit a fee prescribed or determined under the regulations where the Public Trustee or the designate considers that the imposition of the fee would cause hardship or unfairness in the circumstances. S.N.W.T. 1991-92,c.41,s.2.

Expenses and disbursements

37.1. (1) The Public Trustee may charge to and take from a trust or estate under the control or administration of the Public Trustee such expenses and disbursements as would be allowed to a private trustee acting in respect of such a trust or estate.

Charge for services of staff

(2) A charge may be made as a disbursement under subsection (1) for any service performed by a member of the staff of the office of the Public Trustee in respect of a trust or estate controlled or administered by the Public Trustee, where the service would be allowed as a disbursement against the trust or estate if performed by a person retained or employed by a private trustee to perform such a service. S.N.W.T. 1991-92,c.41,s.2.

Audit

38. (1) The Commissioner shall cause an audit to the books, accounts, vouchers and other documents in the hands of the Public Trustee annually and at any other times that the Commissioner considers expedient.

Examination

(2) The Public Trustee shall permit the books, accounts, vouchers and other documents in the hands of the Public Trustee to be examined for the purposes of subsection (1).

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Regulations

- **39.** (1) The Commissioner, on the recommendation of the Minister, may make regulations
 - (a) repealed, S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(7);
 - (b) prescribing the fees that, for the management of the common fund, may be charged against the common fund and against the persons entitled to the common fund;
 - (c) prescribing fees, a scale of fees or a formula for determining fees payable to the Public Trustee for the performance of a duty or for services rendered by or on behalf of the Public Trustee under this Act or any other enactment;
 - (d) authorizing the Public Trustee to take fees from a trust or estate that is under the control or administration of the Public Trustee;
 - (e) prescribing the rate of interest in respect of the estates referred in subsection 31(1); and
 - (f) governing practices and procedures in the office of the Public Trustee, including the disposal of assets in estates.

Rules and regulations

(2) The Commissioner, on the recommendation of the Minister, may make rules and regulations for the management of the common fund. S.N.W.T. 1991-92,c.41,s.3; S.N.W.T. 1997,c.8,s.29; S.N.W.T. 1994,c.29,s.66(7).

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