

2024.07.16

2.12 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of the Minister for Children and Families regarding the Commencement Act for the Children and Civil Status (Amendments) (Jersey) Law 2024 (OQ.143/2024)

Will the Minister advise when he intends to lodge the Commencement Act for the Children and Civil Status (Amendments) (Jersey) Law 2024 which was adopted by the Assembly on 19th March 2024 providing, among other things, equal parental rights to same sex parents?

Connétable R.P. Vibert of St. Peter (The Minister for Children and Families):

As the Deputy is aware, prior to the Commencement Act being lodged, further regulations providing consequential amendments to the legal concept of legitimacy and the amendment of the adoption particulars must be drafted, debated and approved by the Assembly. Development of these regulations is under way and progressing well. It remains my intention to lodge them this year. The Commencement Act will follow swiftly after the regulations if they are approved by the Assembly.

2.12.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I thank the Minister for his response. I am pleased to hear that it is still being prioritised. Could the Minister clarify, will the consequential amendments be lodged and debated before the end of this year?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

I thought that I had answered that when I said that the intention was to lodge them this year.

Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Sir, just to clarify, they could be lodged by the end of the year and then debated next year. My question was: will they be lodged and debated before the end of 2024 or will the debate happen in early 2025?

The Connétable of St. Peter:

The Deputy will remember that, initially, 33 consequential amendments were identified before the decision was taken to concentrate on developing the law and, consequently, amend the legislation at a later date. This was a decision taken by the Deputy when she was an Assistant Minister with delegated responsibility for the work. Since the work on searching the statute book for necessary consequential amendments restarted, a further 20 further consequential amendments have been identified. The Law Officers' Department is currently finalising the search activity and considering the nature of the amendments ahead of the law drafting. Despite this, as I said, the aim is still, as previously mentioned, to lodge the consequential regulations this year. That may, depending on the ability of the Law Officers and the Law Drafting Department, of course, result in the regulations being debated in 2025. However, as I have stated now twice, it is my intention to lodge them this year.