

NEW FAMILY LAW LEGISLATION

On October 27, 2010, Governor Rendell signed into law two new pieces of legislation that will have a serious impact on PA Family Law.

New **Act 2010-85** amends the PA Probate, Estates & Fiduciaries Code and clarifies rights of inheritance when a divorce is pending. A surviving spouse now has no right or interest in the estate of the deceased spouse if the spouse died domiciled in Pennsylvania during the course of divorce proceedings, no decree of divorce has been entered, and grounds have been established. Similarly, wills are modified not only by divorce but also by a **pending** divorce where grounds have been established. The surviving spouse in a pending divorce is deemed to have **predeceased** when the will is interpreted. A pending divorce will also void a beneficiary designation of a life insurance policy, annuity contract, pension or profit-sharing plan.

New **Act 2010-101** amends the Adoption Act to (1) provide an option for adoptive parents and birth relatives to enter into a voluntary agreement for ongoing communication or contact, under new Subchapter D of Chapter 27 and (2) streamline the procedures for retrieving adoption records, under new Subchapters B, C, and D of Chapter 29.

Both of these new acts will be reported on in the next issue of the Bisel's Family Law E-Reporter and the Family Law Update Newsletter. However, Bisel's PA Domestic Relations Lawsource[®] will not incorporate these important acts until the next DRLS revision sometime next Spring.

Now is the time to consider subscribing to Bisel's Family Law Newsletter or E-Reporter to get timely up-to-date information on Family Law practice.