

75-2-803 Definitions -- Effect of homicide on intestate succession, wills, trusts, joint assets, life insurance, and beneficiary designations -- Forfeiture -- Revocation.

- (1) As used in this section:
 - (a) "Disposition or appointment of property" includes a transfer of an item of property or any other benefit to a beneficiary designated in a governing instrument.
 - (b) "Disqualifying homicide" means a homicide established by a preponderance of the evidence that meets the elements of any felony homicide offense in Title 76, Chapter 5, Offenses Against the Person, except automobile homicide, applying the same principles of culpability and defenses as in Title 76, Utah Criminal Code, including but not limited to Chapter 2, Principles of Criminal Responsibility.
 - (c) "Governing instrument" means a governing instrument executed by the decedent.
 - (d) "Killer" means a person who commits a disqualifying homicide.
 - (e) "Revocable," with respect to a disposition, appointment, provision, or nomination, means one under which the decedent, at the time of or immediately before death, was alone empowered, by law or under the governing instrument, to cancel the designation, in favor of the killer, whether or not the decedent was then empowered to designate himself in place of his killer and whether or not the decedent then had capacity to exercise the power.
- (2) An individual who commits a disqualifying homicide of the decedent forfeits all benefits under this chapter with respect to the decedent's estate, including an intestate share, an elective share, an omitted spouse's or child's share, a homestead allowance, exempt property, and a family allowance. If the decedent died intestate, the decedent's intestate estate passes as if the killer disclaimed his intestate share.
- (3) The killing of the decedent by means of a disqualifying homicide:
 - (a) revokes any revocable:
 - (i) disposition or appointment of property made by the decedent to the killer in a governing instrument;
 - (ii) provision in a governing instrument conferring a general or nongeneral power of appointment on the killer; and
 - (iii) nomination of the killer in a governing instrument, nominating or appointing the killer to serve in any fiduciary or representative capacity, including a personal representative, executor, trustee, or agent; and
 - (b) severs the interests of the decedent and killer in property held by them at the time of the killing as joint tenants with the right of survivorship, transforming the interests of the decedent and killer into tenancies in common.
- (4) A severance under Subsection (3)(b) does not affect any third-party interest in property acquired for value and in good faith reliance on an apparent title by survivorship in the killer unless a writing declaring the severance has been noted, registered, filed, or recorded in records appropriate to the kind and location of the property which are relied upon, in the ordinary course of transactions involving such property, as evidence of ownership.
- (5) Provisions of a governing instrument are given effect as if the killer disclaimed all provisions revoked by this section or, in the case of a revoked nomination in a fiduciary or representative capacity, as if the killer predeceased the decedent.
- (6) A wrongful acquisition of property or interest by one who kills another under circumstances not covered by this section shall be treated in accordance with the principle that one who kills cannot profit from his wrong.
- (7) The court, upon the petition of an interested person, shall determine whether, under the preponderance of evidence standard, the individual has committed a disqualifying homicide of the decedent. If the court determines that, under that standard, the individual has committed

a disqualifying homicide of the decedent, the determination conclusively establishes that individual as having committed a disqualifying homicide for purposes of this section, unless the court finds that the act of disinheritance would create a manifest injustice. A judgment of criminal conviction for a disqualifying homicide of the decedent, after all direct appeals have been exhausted, conclusively establishes that the convicted individual has committed the disqualifying homicide for purposes of this section.

- (8)
- (a) A payor or other third party is not liable for having made a payment or transferred an item of property or any other benefit to a beneficiary designated in a governing instrument affected by a disqualifying homicide, or for having taken any other action in good faith reliance on the validity of the governing instrument, upon request and satisfactory proof of the decedent's death, before the payor or other third party received written notice of a claimed forfeiture or revocation under this section. A payor or other third party is liable for a payment made or other action taken after the payor or other third party received written notice of a claimed forfeiture or revocation under this section.
 - (b) Written notice of a claimed forfeiture or revocation under Subsection (8)(a) shall be mailed to the payor's or other third party's main office or home by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, or served upon the payor or other third party in the same manner as a summons in a civil action. Upon receipt of written notice of a claimed forfeiture or revocation under this section, a payor or other third party may pay any amount owed or transfer or deposit any item of property held by it to or with the court having jurisdiction of the probate proceedings relating to the decedent's estate, or if no proceedings have been commenced, to or with the court having jurisdiction of probate proceedings relating to the decedent's estates located in the county of the decedent's residence. The court shall hold the funds or item of property and, upon its determination under this section, shall order disbursement in accordance with the determination. Payments, transfers, or deposits made to or with the court discharge the payor or other third party from all claims for the value of amounts paid to or items of property transferred to or deposited with the court.
- (9)
- (a) A person who purchases property for value and without notice, or who receives a payment or other item of property in partial or full satisfaction of a legally enforceable obligation, is neither obligated under this section to return the payment, item of property, or benefit nor is liable under this section for the amount of the payment or the value of the item of property or benefit. But a person who, not for value, receives a payment, item of property, or any other benefit to which the person is not entitled under this section is obligated to return the payment, item of property, or benefit, or is personally liable for the amount of the payment or the value of the item of property or benefit, to the person who is entitled to it under this section.
 - (b) If this section or any part of this section is preempted by federal law with respect to a payment, an item of property, or any other benefit covered by this section, a person who, not for value, receives the payment, item of property, or any other benefit to which the person is not entitled under this section is obligated to return the payment, item of property, or benefit, or is personally liable for the amount of the payment or the value of the item of property or benefit, to the person who would have been entitled to it were this section or part of this section not preempted.

Amended by Chapter 270, 2006 General Session