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This opinion shall not "constitute precedent or be binding upon any court." Although it is posted on the internet, this opinion is binding only on the parties in the case and its use in other cases is limited. R. 1:36-3.

**SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY
APPELLATE DIVISION
DOCKET NO. A-0766-21**

PARIS QUALLES,

Plaintiff-Respondent,

v.

LORNA AARON,

Defendant-Appellant.

Submitted October 3, 2022 – Decided November 7, 2022

Before Judges Whipple and Smith.

On appeal from the Superior Court of New Jersey,
Chancery Division, Family Part, Morris County,
Docket No. FD-14-0427-16.

Lorna Aaron, appellant pro se.

Paris Qualles, respondent pro se.

PER CURIAM

Defendant pro se Lorna Aaron, (mother) appeals from a September 16,
2021 Family Part order. We affirm.

We discern the following relevant facts and procedural history from the compilation of orders contained in the record. Mother and plaintiff, (father) are the parents of a daughter, father is her sole custodial parent and resides in Massachusetts. Mother lives in New Jersey. In August 2011, the Family Part in Essex County entered an order addressing various cross-motions filed by the parties including but not limited to issues concerning the sharing of medical expenses, insurance information, disparagement, parenting time and holiday/summer vacation schedules. The final paragraph of the order states:

Pursuant to the [New Jersey] court's order of December 1, 2010 entered by consent and agreement of the parties, this court shall retain jurisdiction over all custody and parenting time issues until January 1, 2012. Thereafter any further applications shall be filed in the proper court where the child resides.¹

A Massachusetts custody trial commenced after both parties filed various applications. At the conclusion of that trial, the court ordered, among other things, that father would retain sole physical custody, and that the parents would share joint legal custody, with father having the final

¹ We have not been provided with the December 1, 2010 consent order, but it is referenced in the following order from Judge Gregory V. Roach, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Probate and Family Department, entitled Findings of Fact, Rationale and Judgment of Modification of a Foreign Decree (on Mother's Complaint for Modification filed May 15, 2012, as amended January 15, 2013).

determination in all disagreements. Of relevance to the present appeal is the Massachusetts court's order that mother pay a nominal sum per week to father as child support and immediately notify father and the Massachusetts Department of Revenue upon obtaining employment.

A series of Massachusetts Probate and Family Court orders raising mother's child support obligation followed in 2014 after she failed to disclose income. Mother was twice adjudicated in civil contempt for failure to pay child support and other expenses in October 2015 and in June 2016. Her noncompliance continued, and the Massachusetts child support order was registered in Morris County, New Jersey for enforcement and collection in September 2016.

An enforcement hearing was held on September 16, 2021. According to the testimony of Senior Probation Officer Ian Corcoran, the hearing was scheduled because of mother's non-compliance with payment and outstanding arrears of \$54,099.02. After hearing testimony from the parties, the hearing officer recommended a bench warrant provision to be placed on the account and recommended a lump sum \$1,000 payment.

Mother appealed to the Family Part and requested a stay, pending her appeal of a motion for modification she allegedly filed in Massachusetts. The

court rejected her request because it lacked jurisdiction. It affirmed the hearing officer's determination. This appeal followed.

Mother now asks us to stay the enforcement of child support in New Jersey and place it on an "inactive list" because of an alleged² "identical action in Massachusetts." We disagree.

In short, this case is governed by the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA), which provides "unity and structure in each state's approach to the modification and enforcement of child support orders," both nationally and internationally. See Youssefi v. Youssefi, 328 N.J. Super. 12, 20 (App. Div.

² Mother has not demonstrated that there is an actual pending matter in Massachusetts, which would be a threshold element for a stay.

It is well established that the standard governing whether to grant a motion for a stay is the same standard used by courts in deciding whether to grant injunctive relief, because a stay is a type of injunctive relief. Crowe v. De Gioia, 90 N.J. 126, 139 (1982). Therefore, a stay application should be granted only when: 1) such relief is necessary to prevent irreparable harm; 2) the applicant presents a settled underlying claim and makes a showing of reasonable probability of success on the merits; and 3) a balancing of the relative hardships of the parties favors granting injunctive relief because "greater harm would occur if a stay is not granted than if it were." McNeil v. Legislative Apportionment Comm'n of N.J., 176 N.J. 484, 486 (2003) (LaVecchia, J., dissenting) (citing Crowe, 90 N.J. at 139). In addition to this traditional standard, the New Jersey Supreme Court has stated that, "the standards informing the grant of a stay when an issue of significant public importance is raised must include . . . most paramount, considerations of the public interest." Id. at 484. We see no such elements here.

2000) (citing 42 U.S.C. § 666(f)). For enforcement purposes, New Jersey may register a support order issued in another state.³ N.J.S.A. 2A:4-30.168. Once an order from an initiating tribunal is registered, New Jersey will recognize that state's continuing, exclusive jurisdiction. N.J.S.A. 2A:4-30.133(c).

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2A:4-30.175, "[c]onfirmation of a registered support order, whether by operation of law or after notice and hearing, precludes further contest of the order with respect to any matter that could have been asserted at the time of registration." Moreover, "the law of the issuing state[.]" rather than the law of New Jersey, continues to govern "the nature, extent, amount, and duration of current payments under a registered support order." N.J.S.A. 2A:4-30.171(a)(1). Additionally, New Jersey is to "prospectively apply the law of the . . . state issuing the controlling order," N.J.S.A. 2A:4-30.171(d), and the law of the original state governs "the computation and payment of arrearages." N.J.S.A. 2A:4-30.171(a)(2).

³ To contest the validity or enforcement of one of these registered orders, the non-registering party must request a hearing within twenty days after notice of the registration. N.J.S.A. 2A:4-30.172(b)(2). The non-registering party may then seek to vacate the registration, assert defenses to the registered order, or contest the remedies or amounts. N.J.S.A. 2A:4-30.173. The defenses to the validity or enforcement of a registered order include that "the issuing tribunal lacked personal jurisdiction over the contesting party[.]" N.J.S.A. 2A:4-30.174(a)(1).

Consistent with the UIFSA, New Jersey properly registered the child support order in 2016. Nothing argued by mother in this appeal undercuts New Jersey's obligation to continue to enforce the registered support order. Her relief, if any, is to be found in Massachusetts. Accordingly, we perceive no basis for the trial court to enter a stay or to otherwise disturb the Massachusetts order.

To the extent we have not addressed defendant's remaining arguments, we find they are without sufficient merit to warrant discussion in this opinion.
R. 2:11-3(d)(1)(E).

Affirmed.

I hereby certify that the foregoing
is a true copy of the original on
file in my office.



CLERK OF THE APPELLATE DIVISION