DISCLAIMER

The South Carolina Legislative Council is offering access to the unannotated South Carolina Code of Laws on the Internet as a service to the public. The unannotated South Carolina Code on the General Assembly's website is now current through the 2010 session. The unannotated South Carolina Code, consisting only of Code text and numbering, may be copied from this website at the reader's expense and effort without need for permission.

The Legislative Council is unable to assist users of this service with legal questions. Also, legislative staff cannot respond to requests for legal advice or the application of the law to specific facts. Therefore, to understand and protect your legal rights, you should consult your own private lawyer regarding all legal questions.

While every effort was made to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the unannotated South Carolina Code available on the South Carolina General Assembly's website, the unannotated South Carolina Code is not official, and the state agencies preparing this website and the General Assembly are not responsible for any errors or omissions which may occur in these files. Only the current published volumes of the South Carolina Code of Laws Annotated and any pertinent acts and joint resolutions contain the official version.

Please note that the Legislative Council is not able to respond to individual inquiries regarding research or the features, format, or use of this website. However, you may notify Legislative Printing, Information and Technology Systems at [LPITS@scstatehouse.gov](mailto:LPITS@scstatehouse.net) regarding any apparent errors or omissions in content of Code sections on this website, in which case LPITS will relay the information to appropriate staff members of the South Carolina Legislative Council for investigation.

CHAPTER 53.

DECLARATORY JUDGMENTS

**SECTION 15‑53‑10.** Short title.

This chapter may be cited as the “Uniform Declaratory Judgments Act.”

**SECTION 15‑53‑20.** Courts of record may declare rights, status and other legal relations.

Courts of record within their respective jurisdictions shall have power to declare rights, status and other legal relations whether or not further relief is or could be claimed. No action or proceeding shall be open to objection on the ground that a declaratory judgment or decree is prayed for. The declaration may be either affirmative or negative in form and effect. Such declarations shall have the force and effect of a final judgment or decree.

**SECTION 15‑53‑30.** Determination of questions under deed, will, written contract, statute, municipal ordinance, contract or franchise.

Any person interested under a deed, will, written contract or other writings constituting a contract or whose rights, status or other legal relations are affected by a statute, municipal ordinance, contract or franchise may have determined any question of construction or validity arising under the instrument, statute, ordinance, contract or franchise and obtain a declaration of rights, status or other legal relations thereunder.

**SECTION 15‑53‑40.** Construction of contract before or after breach.

A contract may be construed either before or after there has been a breach thereof.

**SECTION 15‑53‑50.** Rights under trust or estate of decedent, infant, lunatic or insolvent.

Any person interested as or through an executor, administrator, trustee, guardian or other fiduciary, creditor, devisee, legatee, heir, next of kin or cestui que trust in the administration of a trust or of the estate of a decedent, infant, lunatic or insolvent may have a declaration of rights or legal relations in respect thereto:

(1) To ascertain any class of creditors, devisees, legatees, heirs, next of kin or others;

(2) To direct the executors, administrators or trustees to do or abstain from doing any particular act in their fiduciary capacity; or

(3) To determine any question arising in the administration of the estate or trust, including questions of construction of wills and other writings.

**SECTION 15‑53‑60.** Enumeration is no restriction on general powers.

The enumeration in Sections 15‑53‑30 to 15‑53‑50 does not limit or restrict the exercise of the general powers conferred in Section 15‑53‑20 in any proceeding when declaratory relief is sought in which a judgment or decree will terminate the controversy or remove an uncertainty.

**SECTION 15‑53‑70.** Declaratory judgment may be refused.

The court may refuse to render or enter a declaratory judgment or decree when such judgment or decree, if rendered or entered, would not terminate the uncertainty or controversy giving rise to the proceeding.

**SECTION 15‑53‑80.** Parties.

When declaratory relief is sought all persons shall be made parties who have or claim any interest which would be affected by the declaration, and no declaration shall prejudice the rights of persons not parties to the proceeding. In any proceeding which involves the validity of a municipal ordinance or franchise the municipality shall be made a party and shall be entitled to be heard. If the statute, ordinance or franchise is alleged to be unconstitutional the Attorney General shall also be served with a copy of the proceeding and be entitled to be heard.

**SECTION 15‑53‑90.** Determination of facts; jury trials.

When a proceeding under this chapter involves the determination of an issue of fact such issue may be tried and determined in the same manner as issues of fact are tried and determined in other civil actions in the court in which the proceeding is pending. All existing rights to jury trials are hereby preserved.

**SECTION 15‑53‑100.** Costs.

In any proceeding under this chapter the court may make such award of costs as may seem equitable and just.

**SECTION 15‑53‑110.** Review of declaratory judgments.

All orders, judgments and decrees under this chapter may be reviewed as other orders, judgments and decrees.

**SECTION 15‑53‑120.** Granting of further relief based on declaratory judgment.

Further relief based on a declaratory judgment or decree may be granted whenever necessary or proper. The application therefor shall be by petition to a court having jurisdiction to grant the relief. If the application be deemed sufficient the court shall, on reasonable notice, require any adverse party whose rights have been adjudicated by the declaratory judgment or decree to show cause why further relief should not be granted forthwith.

**SECTION 15‑53‑130.** Chapter shall be construed liberally.

This chapter is declared to be remedial. Its purpose is to settle and to afford relief from uncertainty and insecurity with respect to rights, status and other legal relations. It is to be liberally construed and administered.

**SECTION 15‑53‑140.** Chapter intended to make uniform the laws of the states.

This chapter shall be so interpreted and construed as to effectuate its general purpose to make uniform the law of those states which enact substantially identical legislation and to harmonize, as far as possible, with Federal laws and regulations on the subject of declaratory judgments and decrees.