

My name is Samantha Zinzy Albertyn. I am currently an Acting Magistrate at the Robertson Court House, Cape Town for the past six months. I have however been acting as a Magistrate for the past twenty-three months.

My experience, passion for the law, and legal career, commenced when I took up employment with Legal Aid South Africa as an attorney in December 2003. I remained in the aforementioned position until April 2011. I was thereafter employed at the Office of the Family Advocate, Cape Town as a Family Advocate from April 2011 until August 2017, where after I commenced my career within the judiciary.

In my employment as a Family Advocate, I was able to attain extensive experience in matters relating to minor children including the drafting of parenting plans, endorsement of consent agreements, mediations and extensive litigation in respect of the welfare and best interests of minor children. I was further privileged to assist with applications under the auspices of the Hague Convention where return of or contact to a minor child was sought from a signatory state. A further role as a Family Advocate included the appointment of expert social workers to conduct comprehensive and concise investigations in respect of the best interests of minor children in often highly acrimonious, conflictual and litigious matters. Complexed recommendations were made to the High and Lower Courts in order to assist such courts in making appropriate decisions in respect of the welfare and best interests of minor children. Being a Family Advocate allowed me the opportunity to specialize in the upliftment and protection of minor children using the law (particularly the Children's Act 38 of 2005) to envelope and protect such children. My work as a Family Advocate did not only afforded me the opportunity to school myself in legislation dealing with the protection of minor children, but afforded me the opportunity to for a brief period glimpse into the lives of each child.

My role as a Magistrate has afforded me similar opportunities. The office that I currently hold requires that I am adequately skilled in all types of legislation dealing with minor children including criminal and civil law, children's court, child justice court, maintenance, domestic violence and harassment applications.

I am privileged to say that my legal experience surrounding minor children has not only provided me with the opportunity to ensure that such children receive the maximum protection that our law provides, but has provided me with the opportunity on a professional level to gain extensive insight into the basic and fundamental needs of a child.

I have been privileged to accumulate 16 years' experience in the fields of law and public service, my greatest achievement being the opportunity to serve our community, and provide sound legal assistance to the poor and indigent members of our society, particularly minor children.

I have been fortunate to experience the law from different vantage points. As an attorney, I had the privilege of defending adult as well as juvenile offenders, and as a Family Advocate, represented the welfare and best interests of minor children. As a Magistrate being a creature of statute, I make decisions within the confines of the law *albeit* in the Criminal, Child Justice, Children's, Maintenance

or Domestic Violence Courts, and use the law to protect the vulnerable and those that do not necessarily have a voice or the ability to protect themselves.

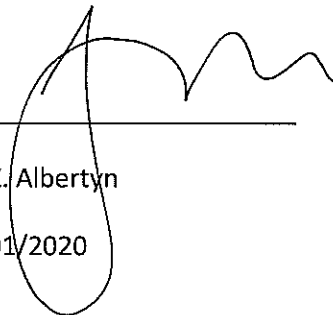
My experience as an Family Advocate, a Magistrate, and even an attorney, has not only provided me with extensive legal and legislative knowledge surrounding minor children, but has aided me in making sound decisions in respect of the welfare and best interests of minor children.

Being a mother myself, and the invaluable experience I have attained thus far, has provided me with the opportunity to pierce through the veil and experience through the eyes of a child the intricate workings and importance of a healthy and functional family.

My experience has further allowed me the opportunity to view not only the negative impact of constant litigation on children, but how the law is able to protect and positively impact their lives. Same has also exposed me to the necessity of ensuring the constant monitoring and improvement of legislative processes in order to ensure the highest level of protection of our children our law has to offer.

It is sincerely my belief that the stability and welfare of our community rest upon a functional and healthy family nucleus wherein which a child is properly nurtured and developed.

I remain immensely passionate in serving our community to the best of my ability, and endeavour to assist through the proper implementation of legislative processes in ensuring that we create a safe and healthy environment for our children.



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S. Z. Albertyn  
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