

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 16TH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF THE STATE OF
FLORIDA IN AND FOR MONROE COUNTY

IN RE:

Administrative Order 5.031

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
FAMILY LAW DIVISION

_____:

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of Florida in In Re:Report of the Family Court Steering Committee, 26 Fla.L. Weekly S287 (May 3, 2001) has directed each Judicial Circuit to submit a revised local rule or administrative order consistent with the recommendations approved by the Court in said opinion; and

WHEREAS, the 16th Judicial Circuit is committed to implementing an integrated and comprehensive approach to handling all cases involving children and families, while at the same time, resolving such disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS, the 16th Judicial Circuit endorses the twelve guiding principles as enumerated by the Florida Supreme Court as the foundation for defining and implementing its model family court; and

WHEREAS, the 16th Judicial Circuit has, by separate Administrative Orders, established the following Programs to support the work of its Family Courts:

- I. Administrative Orders 5.014, 5.026, and 5.027, controlling the operation of the Self-Help Program;
- II. Administrative Order 6.002, creating a Guardian ad Litem Program;
- III. Administrative Orders 5.020 and 5.029, providing for alternative dispute resolution programs in dependency and other family related matters;
- IV. Administrative Order 5.013, approving a Parent Education and Family Stabilization Course;

- V. Administrative Order 5.024 establishing a Family Treatment Court model to support the Dependency Courts dealing with substance abusing parents;
- VI. Administrative Orders 5.017 and 5.028, providing for the use of Masters in Family Court hearings to help maximize judicial resources;
- VII. Administrative Order 5.015, creating the Case Management Project for Family Court;
- VIII. Administrative Order 2.004 setting forth the current judicial assignments in the Circuit; and
- IX. Administrative Order 2.015, providing for security for all judicial facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority conferred by Rule 2.050 (b), of the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration, it is

ORDERED that:

- 1. The Chief Judge of the 16th Judicial Circuit shall serve as the administrative judge for the Family Division; and
- 2. The Family Division of the 16th Judicial Circuit shall include the following types of cases:
 - A. Dissolution of marriage;
 - B. Division and distribution to property arising out of a dissolution of marriage;
 - C. Annulment;
 - D. Support unconnected with dissolution of marriage;
 - E. Paternity;
 - F. Child support;
 - G. URESA/UIFSA
 - H. Custodial care of and access to children;
 - I. Adoption;
 - J. Name Change;
 - K. Declaratory Judgment actions related to premarital, marital, or postmarital agreements;
 - L. Civil domestic and repeat violence injunctions;
 - M. Juvenile Dependency;

- N. Juvenile Delinquency;
- O. Termination of Parental Rights;
- P. Emancipation of a Minor;
- Q. CINS/FINS;
- R. Truancy; and
- S. Modification and enforcement of orders entered in these cases.

3. By creating this new Family Division, the 16th Judicial Circuit intends to reduce the impact of inconsistent orders on parties, witnesses, and law enforcement, encourage the use of alternative dispute resolution methods, reduce the need for modification and enforcement proceedings, and minimize the disruption caused by repeated court appearances for litigants and their families.
4. To the extent existing staff and resources can be allocated, the Family Division shall receive case management services and support to enable the Family Court Judge to assess the resources needed for handling cases, to be able to identify all collateral cases affecting the family at issue, and to monitor the movement of cases through the judicial process.
5. This Administrative Order is effective January 1, 2002. It is also being submitted to the Supreme Court for approval as Local Rule 7. Upon such approval, this Administrative Order and Local Rule 2, dated December 13, 1994, shall be rescinded.

DONE AND SIGNED in Chambers, at Key West, Monroe County, Florida this 30 day of November, 2001.

Hon. Richard G. Payne, Chief Judge