IN THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER S-2026-059
(Supersedes Administrative Order S-2026-053)

FAMILY LAW PROCEEDINGS

It is necessary for the proper and efficient administration of justice to update the assignment provisions for family law proceedings.

By the power vested in the chief judge under article V, section 2(d), Florida Constitution; Florida Statutes section 43.26; and Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215(b)(2), it is ORDERED:

1. Scope

This administrative order applies to each of the following types of actions: (A) Dissolution of Marriage; (B) Support Unconnected with Dissolution; (C) Temporary Custody by Extended Family Member; (D) Paternity, including child support, time-sharing and disestablishment of paternity; (E) Termination of Parental Rights Pending Adoption; (F) Adoption; (G) Change of Name; and (H) Protective Injunctions (domestic violence, repeat violence, dating violence, sexual violence, and stalking).

2. Divisions

A. Generally

Family law matters of the circuit court will be administered by the following nineteen divisions: Division "A," Division "B," Division "C," Division "D," Division "E," Division "F," Division "G," Division "H," Division "I," Division "J," Division "K," Division "L," Division "M," Division "N," East Circuit Division "P," East Circuit Division "Q," East Circuit Division "R," East Circuit Division "S," East Circuit Division "T," and East Circuit Division "V."

B. Standard Divisions

Divisions "A," "B," "C," "D," "E," "F," "I," "J," and "L" are standard Tampa family law divisions. East Circuit Divisions "P," "R," and "T" are standard Plant City family law divisions.

C. Protective Injunctions Divisions

Divisions "G," "H," "K," and "M" are Tampa protective injunctions divisions. East Circuit Divisions "Q," "S," and "V" are Plant City protective injunctions divisions.

3. Allocation of Cases

A. Cases Other than Protective Injunctions

Upon filing of a petition commencing one or more of the above-enumerated case types, other than protective injunctions, the Clerk of the Circuit Court ("clerk") will determine whether the same parties were involved in a previously filed petition of the same or substantially related type. If so, the subsequently filed petition will be assigned to the same division in which the previously filed petition was assigned. For purposes of this paragraph, any cases of the type referenced in section 1A though 1D of this administrative order involving the same marriage or same child or children are "substantially related." A termination of parental rights case pending adoption is always substantially related to the subsequent adoption. If the case is not substantially related to a previously filed case involving the same parties, the clerk will assign the newly filed petition to a standard Tampa family law division using a random and equitable assignment system. The clerk will assign newly filed petitions in the East Division to East Circuit Division "P," East Circuit Division "R," and East Circuit Division "T" on a random equitable basis. *See* Administrative Order S-2024-079 (*East Division*) or any successor administrative order for the geographic boundaries of the East Division.

B. Self-Representation Case Identification

For tracking purposes, new cases filed under section 3A of this administrative order in which all parties are self-represented will be assigned to a subdivision within each Family Law Division and the East Division. The subdivision will be a two-letter designation. The designation will be "AP," "BP," "CP," "DP," "EP," "FP," "IP," "JP," "LP," "PP," "RP" or "TP." The first letter designates the respective Family Law Division or the East Division to which the case is assigned and the second letter – "P" – designates that the case involves only self-represented litigants. The subdivision designation will assist the court and the Case Management Unit in tracking and managing self-represented litigation cases.

C. Protective Injunctions

i. Assignment of Petitions

Upon receipt of a petition for an injunction for protection against domestic violence, repeat violence, dating violence, sexual violence, or stalking (collectively referred to as a "petition for protective injunction"), the clerk will determine whether

the same parties were involved in a previously filed petition for protective injunction.

(a) Petitions Involving Same Parties to a Previously Filed Petition

If the clerk determines the same parties were involved in a previously-filed petition for protective injunction, the subsequently-filed petition will be assigned to the same division in which the previously-filed petition was assigned, except that if the previously-filed petition was assigned to East Circuit Division "Q," "S," or "V," the subsequently-filed petition will only be assigned to East Circuit Division "Q," "S," or "V" if one of the parties currently resides within the East Division boundaries.

(b) Petitions Not Involving Same Parties to Previously Filed Petition

If the clerk determines the same parties were not involved in a previously filed petition for protective injunction and the petitioner does not reside within the East Division boundaries, the clerk will assign the newly filed petition randomly to one of the four Tampa protective injunction divisions, "G," "H," "K," or "M" using a ratio of 1:1:1:1. If the clerk determines the same parties were not involved in a previously filed petition for protective injunction and the petitioner resides within the East Division boundaries, the clerk will assign the newly filed petition to East Circuit Division "Q," "S," or "V" on a random equitable basis.

(c) Related Family Law Case / Motions to Consolidate or Transfer

Assignment of petitions for protective injunction will proceed according to this section even when a related family law case may be pending between the same parties. A judge assigned to Family Law Division "A," "B," "C," "D," "E," "F," "I," "J," "L," "P," "R," or "T" may, upon appropriate motion or on the judge's own motion, consolidate or transfer the related petition for protective injunction action into the division in which the other family law case is pending. The judge's decision to consolidate or transfer may only consolidate or transfer the petition for protective injunction into the related family law case, not vice versa. Judges assigned to Protective Injunctions Divisions "G," "H," "K," "M," "Q," "S," and "V" may not consolidate or transfer a petition for protective injunction into a standard Family Law Division.

ii. Review of Petitions

(a) Presiding Judge Review

Petitions filed between 8:00:00 a.m. and 3:29:59 p.m. on non-holiday weekdays will be reviewed on a rotational basis by one of the presiding judges of Protective Injunctions Divisions "G," "H," "K," or "M" if the petition for protective injunction is assigned to Division "G," "H," "K," or "M" in Tampa or reviewed on a rotational basis by one of the presiding judges of East Circuit Divisions "Q," "S," or "V" if the petition for protective injunction is assigned to Division "Q," "S," or "V" in Plant City. The administrative judge of the Tampa protective injunctions divisions will maintain the judicial rotation schedule for reviewing petitions in the Tampa divisions and the administrative judge of the East Division will maintain the judicial rotation schedule for reviewing petitions in the Plant City protective injunctions divisions. Both administrative judges will strive to ensure that one of their presiding judges of the protective injunctions divisions is available to review petitions on as many non-holiday weekdays as possible.

(b) Coverage Judge Review

For petitions filed between 8:00:00 a.m. and 3:29:59 p.m. on non-holiday weekdays, if the presiding judges of East Divisions "Q," "S," and "V" are on leave at the same time, the clerk will first determine if any other judge in the East Division is available to review the petition. If the presiding judges of East Divisions "Q," "S," and "V" are on leave at the same time and there are no other East Division judges available, the clerk will submit the petition to a presiding judge of Protective Injunctions Divisions "G," "H," "K," or "M" for review. If all four judges of the Tampa protective injunctions divisions are on leave at the same time, petitions will be reviewed on a rotational basis by a judge assigned to the Unified Family Court (UFC) divisions. Any protective injunction division judge who needs coverage by a UFC division judge to review petitions must provide as much advance notice to the administrative judge of the UFC as possible, but no later than ninety days before coverage is needed. The administrative judge of the UFC will maintain a schedule of judges assigned to the UFC divisions who will review petitions for protective injunction when all of the presiding judges of the protective injunction divisions are on leave at the same time.

(c) Duty Judge Review

The duty judge will review petitions filed between 3:30:00 p.m. and 7:59:59 a.m. on non-holiday weekdays and petitions filed on weekends in accordance with the applicable duty judge administrative order.

iii. Return Hearings

When a temporary injunction for protection against violence or stalking is entered *ex parte*, the return hearing on the petition will be heard by the judge presiding in the division to which the petition is assigned. The return hearing may be continued for good cause shown. For East Division cases, if the judge presiding in the division to which the petition is assigned is not available to conduct the return hearing, the judge will attempt to coordinate with one of the other presiding judges of the East Division to cover the return hearings. For Tampa cases, if the judge presiding in the division to which the petition is assigned is not available to conduct the return hearing, the judge will attempt to coordinate with one of the other four presiding judges of the protective injunction divisions to cover the return hearings. If all four judges assigned to the protective injunction divisions are on leave at the same time, the return hearings will be conducted on a rotational basis by a judge assigned to the UFC divisions based on the schedule maintained by the administrative judge of the UFC divisions. Any protective injunction division judge who needs return hearing coverage by a UFC division judge must provide as much advance notice to the administrative judge of the UFC as possible but no later than ninety days before coverage is needed.

D. Cases Involving Special Immigrant Juvenile Status

Any petition requesting that the court make the necessary findings to permit a juvenile to apply for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status will be scheduled and disposed of in the dependency division to which the administrative judge of the UFC is assigned. If a judge assigned to any of the family law divisions determines that a pending petition is requesting such relief, the judge will confer with the administrative judge of the UFC so that the petition can be scheduled and disposed of in the UFC administrative judge's division.

E. Cases Seeking Expedited Affirmation of Parental Status of Gestational Surrogacy

The clerk will assign any petition filed in accordance with Florida Statutes section 742.16 seeking an expedited affirmation of parental status of gestational surrogacy to the Family Law Division to which the administrative judge is assigned. If a judge assigned to any of the other family law divisions determines that a petition is requesting an expedited affirmation of parental status of gestational surrogacy, the judge will enter an Order of Transfer transferring the case to the administrative judge's division.

F. Single Division for All Actions Involving Same Parties

If more than one family law action involving the same parties or the same child or children is pending in more than one family law division, except for a petition for protective injunction action pending in Protective Injunctions Divisions "G," "H," "K," or "M" or East Circuit Divisions "Q," "S," or "V," such cases will be consolidated in the division with the lowest case number. The parties or their attorneys will be responsible for initiating the transfer if not accomplished by the court.

4. Service of Temporary Injunctions for Protection

In accordance with Florida Statutes sections 741.30(8)(a)1. and 784.046(8)(a)1., any sworn law enforcement officer in Hillsborough County may serve petitions and temporary injunctions for protection against domestic violence, repeat violence, sexual violence, dating violence, and stalking.

5. Reassignment of Case upon Judge's Disqualification

A. Family Law Cases

If a judge presiding in Family Law Division "A," "B," "C," "D," "E," "F," "I," "J," "L," or "N" enters an order of disqualification, the clerk will reassign the case to another one of the Tampa family law divisions on a random equitable basis. If a judge presiding in East Circuit Divisions "P," "R," or "T" enters an order of disqualification in a family law case, the clerk will reassign the case randomly and equitably to one of the other two East Circuit Divisions. If all East Circuit Division judges have entered orders of disqualification in a family law case, the clerk will reassign the case to a Tampa Family Law Division on a random equitable basis.

B. Protective Injunction Cases

i. Tampa

If any of the judges presiding in Protective Injunctions Divisions "G," "H," "K," or "M" enters an order of disqualification, the clerk will randomly reassign the protective injunction case to one of the other Tampa protective injunction divisions. If all four judges assigned to Protective Injunctions Divisions "G," "H," "K," and "M" enter orders of disqualification, the clerk will reassign the protective injunction case to a Tampa standard family law division on a random equitable basis, unless there is a family law action pending between the same parties, in which event the protective injunction case will be assigned to the same division in which such other case is pending.

ii. Plant City

If a judge presiding in East Circuit Divisions "Q," "S," or "V" enters an order of disqualification in a protective injunction case, the clerk will reassign the case randomly and equitably to one of the other two East Circuit Divisions. If all judges assigned to East Circuit Divisions "Q," "S," and "V" enter orders of disqualification, the clerk will reassign the case to a Tampa protective injunction division on a random equitable basis, unless there is a family law action pending between the same parties, in which event the protective injunction case will be assigned to the same division in which such other case is pending.

6. Standing Temporary Order for Family Law Cases

Upon the filing of any petition commencing an action governed by this administrative order, except for adoption, change of name, and protective injunction cases, the clerk will provide the petitioner with two copies of the Standing Temporary Order for Family Law Cases ("Standing Temporary Order"). The Standing Temporary Order is a tool used to educate the parties in a family law case at the outset of litigation of their duties and responsibilities concerning the treatment of their children, if any, and the preservation of their assets. The Standing Temporary Order will be signed by the administrative judge of the Family Law Division. The petitioner must serve a copy of the Standing Temporary Order along with a copy of the initial process and original petition. The Standing Temporary Order will remain in effect until further order of the court.

7. Case Management Order

A. Generally

Upon the filing of any petition commencing or reopening an action governed by this administrative order except for adoption, change of name, intensive family service team, and protective injunction cases, an Order Setting First Case Management Conference ("Case Management Order") will be entered. The Case Management Order is a mechanism by which the court will take charge of all cases at an early stage in the litigation and control the progress of the case thereafter until the case is concluded. The Case Management Order will be signed by the presiding judge of the respective family law division and apply to all actions concerning dissolution of marriage, support unconnected with dissolution, temporary custody by extended family member, and paternity, including child support, time-sharing and disestablishment of paternity.

B. Service

If the petitioner is represented by counsel, the clerk will provide petitioner's counsel with two copies of the Case Management Order and petitioner's counsel

must serve a copy of the Case Management Order along with a copy of the initial process and original petition and copy of the Standing Temporary Order. If the petitioner is self-represented, the Administrative Office of the Courts Case Management Unit will be responsible for serving a copy of the Case Management Order on both parties.

C. Rescheduled Conference

A case management conference may only be rescheduled by order of the court. Either party may move the court for entry of an order continuing the initial case management conference to a later date by sending to the judge's chambers a jointly signed stipulation and proposed order ratifying the stipulation. The stipulation must state: (1) respondent has been properly served and an answer has been filed; (2) both parties have exchanged financial affidavits and complied with mandatory disclosure requirements; (3) if there are any minor children, that both parties have completed the parenting course and filed their respective certificates of completion; (4) that mediation has been completed or is scheduled and will not be cancelled except by order of court; and (5) the date and time of the new case management conference that has been provided by the judicial assistant and cleared by both parties, which is within sixty days of the originally-scheduled date.

D. Cancellation

A case management conference may only be canceled if (1) the case settles prior to the date of the case management conference; (2) the written settlement agreement is provided to the presiding judge; and (3) the presiding judge authorizes the cancellation. A final disposition form and final judgment must be submitted to the court within ten days of the cancellation, if no hearing is required to prove the elements of the case. If a hearing is required to prove the elements of the case, the case management conference will be used for the final hearing unless an earlier date is cleared and properly calendared.

E. Production of Evidence

Counsel and self-represented parties should be prepared, at the case management conference, to provide evidence of the statutory residence requirement and that the marriage is irretrievably broken. The court may take evidence at the case management conference of the statutory residence requirement and the irretrievably broken marriage in order to avoid scheduling a future uncontested dissolution hearing if the case settles after the case management conference.

8. Notice of Related Cases Form

Petitioners must file a Notice of Related Cases form (Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(h)) with the clerk along with the initial pleading in a family law case, even if there are no related cases.

9. Attorney & Party Information

In all filed pleadings and other documents, an attorney must state the following information directly below the signature line: the attorney's name; address; telephone number, including area code; Florida Bar number; primary e-mail address; secondary e-mail address, if any; and the party whom the attorney represents. In all filed pleadings and other documents, all self-represented litigants must state the following information directly below the signature line: the party's name; address; and telephone number, including area code. A self-represented litigant may also provide an e-mail address with this information.

10. Pleadings, Financial Affidavits and Other Documents

A. Pleadings

All pleadings and other documents must be filed with the clerk in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.525 and served in accordance with Rule 2.516. A courtesy copy of all pleadings and other documents should be brought to the court for use by the court and the opposing party.

B. Financial Affidavits

The title page of a financial affidavit must designate the date the affidavit was signed and the name of the affiant. The financial affidavit requirements of the Family Law Rules of Procedure will be applicable to all temporary hearings and trials including modification proceedings in which child support or alimony may be involved. Sufficient copies of all financial affidavits and other exhibits must be brought to the hearing or trial for use by the court and parties.

C. Specific Requirements

It is incumbent upon the attorney or self-represented party to review each individual judge's webpage for any specific requirements of the judge including, but not limited to, whether memorandum of law, documentary evidence, or other papers must be delivered in advance of a scheduled court hearing.

11. Modification Proceedings – Attachments

In all modification proceedings involving financial matters, in addition to the current financial affidavit filed, there must also be attached to the initial modification pleading a copy of the last financial affidavits submitted to the court by the parties

together with a copy of the final judgment and the most recent modification order, if any, entered in the cause. A copy of any stipulation or property settlement agreement incorporated into such judgment or modification order must also be attached. Failure to do so may result in the imposition of sanctions, including an award of attorney's fees to the other party.

12. Uniform Motion Calendar / Open Docket / Motion Docket

A. Calendar

A Uniform Motion Calendar / Open Docket is provided in each Family Law Division, at least one day per week per judge, unless holidays, illness, vacations, judges' meetings, or education programs present a conflict. Each judge will select a day and time to hold the judge's uniform motion calendar / open docket.

B. Time Limitation

Uniform Motion Calendar / Open Docket hearings are non-evidentiary except for uncontested final hearings and will be limited to seven minutes per case. The time limitation will include the time necessary for the judge to review documents, memoranda, and cases.

C. Types of Matters Heard

Uniform Motion Calendar / Open Docket hearings may include, but are not limited to: motions to compel discovery, motions for protective orders, motions to withdraw, uncontested final hearings, and motions to continue. Complex matters will not be heard during the uniform motion calendar / open docket time.

D. Scheduling

i. JAWS

Attorneys and parties do not need to reserve calendar time with the judicial assistant for a hearing on the Uniform Motion Calendar / Open Docket if the hearing has been reserved through the Judicial Automated Workflow System ("JAWS") which may be accessed at the following link on the court's website.[i] However, counsel or a self-represented moving party must file a notice of hearing with the clerk and serve notice upon opposing counsel or a self-represented party in accordance with the applicable rules of procedure.

ii. Motion Docket

In any division that uses a Motion Docket, the docket will be available online through JAWS for scheduling hearings up to thirty minutes in length. The hearing time contemplates presentation by both sides; if the scheduling party knows its presentation is fifteen minutes in length, a thirty-minute hearing should be scheduled

to provide adequate time for both sides. The Motion Docket is for fifteen-minute or thirty-minute hearings (up to two fifteen-minute blocks of time may be reserved). The scheduling party may contact the judicial assistant to obtain alternative hearing times if unable to clear time on the Motion Docket with opposing counsel or self-represented party.

iii. E-Mail

For hearings not scheduled through JAWS, the preferred method for scheduling is via e-mail rather than telephone. Divisional e-mail addresses may be accessed via the judicial directory posted on the court's webpage. For any scheduling request, the requesting party should e-mail the judicial assistant for hearing time(s) and copy the opposing party. The judicial assistant will provide a minimum of two available dates/times to the requesting party, with a copy to the opposing party by "replying to all." If the requesting party sends the dates to the opposing party or attorney (whichever is applicable) by e-mail, the responding party or a representative in the attorney's office must respond via e-mail within two business days of receipt of the request. If the responding party or attorney fails to respond via e-mail within two business days, the requesting party may select the hearing date and time of his or her choice.

13. Motions

A. Generally

Motions are filed with the clerk, and they are not brought to the attention of the court until called up for hearing by the parties or their respective counsel. Counsel or a self-represented moving party must review each individual judge's webpage to determine whether the division judge requires a courtesy copy of the motion to be delivered to the judge in advance of a scheduled hearing.

B. Notice

All pleadings or motions seeking relief in a family law action must be served on the party or counsel not less than five days prior to the hearing. If motions or pleadings are not timely served, the court may continue the hearing to a later date. Pleadings or motions requesting emergency relief may be exempt from this five-day service requirement upon a finding of emergency status by the judge before whom such motion or pleading is to be heard.

C. Piggybacking Motions

There will be no cross-noticing on hearing time or "piggybacking" one motion upon a previously scheduled motion without timely notice to the parties and the court. No "piggybacked" motion will be heard unless it is determined by the court

that the docket will accommodate the hearing of the additional matters at the scheduled time. The motions will be heard in the order in which they are scheduled.

D. Discovery Motions & Motions to Set Case for Trial

i. General

All motions to compel discovery, for compulsory physical examination, and to set case for trial must contain a certificate by the attorney filing such motion that the attorney has discussed the subject matter of the motion with the opposing counsel and has been unable to reach agreement concerning the disputed discovery or the setting of the case for trial, or that opposing counsel has failed to respond.

ii. Order Issued without Hearing for Failure to Respond

If a party has failed to file or serve any response, objection, or request for an extension to a discovery request or mandatory disclosure, and the deadline to provide such response(s) has expired, then the opposing party may serve a motion to compel discovery and include an order compelling responses to the discovery or mandatory disclosure, which may be delivered to the assigned judge for consideration without a hearing. In addition to the certification required in section 13D(i) above, such motion must also include a certification that the non-moving party has: (1) failed to respond or object in any way to the discovery request or mandatory disclosure, whether by filing with the clerk or by communicating with the moving party, and (2) that the non-moving party has made no request, whether by filing with the clerk or by communicating with the moving party, for any extension of time. The moving party utilizing this procedure must submit the proposed order to the Court via the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal (Portal) or with delivery of hard copies of the proposed order with sufficient copies, envelopes, and postage to facilitate service to all parties. The proposed order must allow the non-responding party no less than ten days to provide responses to the discovery request or mandatory disclosure. The motion, proposed order, and any correspondence to the Court accompanying the same must reference this section of this administrative order and that the relief sought by the moving party is for judicial consideration without a hearing.

The procedure described in this section is intended to provide an alternative, expedited method for obtaining an order compelling discovery or mandatory disclosure in those instances where there has been a complete failure by the non-moving party to provide any response, objection, or request for extension. Because an award of expenses may only be granted after an opportunity for hearing under Florida Rule of Family Law Procedure 12.380, a party electing to utilize this procedure to obtain discovery must not include any request within the motion to recover attorney's fees or costs associated with such motion.

E. Motions for Continuance

In accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(e) and Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.460, all motions for continuance must be signed by the litigant requesting the continuance as well as the litigant's attorney, unless made at trial, or good cause is shown.

14. Notices of Hearing

All notices of hearing must be on a document separate from the pleading or motion for which the hearing is scheduled. All notices of hearing will clearly state if a court reporter will be provided.

15. Cancellation of Hearings

All hearings scheduled for two hours or more must be approved by the presiding judge and should be scheduled by order of the court. Whether scheduled by order of the court or by notice of hearing, a hearing of two hours or more may not be canceled without approval of the court. Other hearings may be canceled on twenty-four hours' notice by the attorney or party scheduling them. Any attorney or party cancelling a hearing of less than two hours must notify the opposing party or their counsel *and the court*.

16. Temporary Relief Matters

A. Hearing Prerequisites of Moving Party

The party seeking temporary relief must:

i. File with the clerk the appropriate Uniform Motion for Temporary Relief which may be accessed at http://www.fljud13.org/Forms.aspx;
ii. Attach to the motion a proposed temporary time-sharing plan if the case involves a minor child or minor children;
iii. Attach, if not previously filed, a financial affidavit in compliance with Florida Family Law Rule 12.285(d)(1);
iv. File a notice of hearing reflecting the date and time obtained from the court;
v. Serve a copy of the above documents on the opposing party; and
vi. Serve on the opposing party/counsel, but do not file with the clerk, the documents required under Rule 12.285(d)(2)-(4).

B. Hearing Prerequisites of Responding Party

Within ten days after being served with the Motion for Temporary Relief (fifteen days if service was made by mail), the party against whom the temporary relief is being sought will file and serve a response to the motion stating what, if any,

temporary relief the responding party contends is appropriate. When applicable, the responding party will propose an alternate time-sharing plan. The responding party will attach a financial affidavit in compliance with Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.285(d)(1) and will serve the response and financial affidavit upon the opposing party. Contemporaneously, the responding party must serve upon the opposing party, but not file with the clerk or with the judge, the documents required in Rule 12.285(d)(2)-(4). Any temporary relief sought by the responding party may be asserted by cross-motion at that time.

C. Temporary Relief Mediation

Temporary relief matters involving children must be mediated prior to being heard by the court. Presiding judges are authorized to enter an order naming the mediator and setting the time of mediation on an *ex parte* basis upon motion by either party if the parties cannot schedule mediation by agreement. The presiding judge has discretion to move forward with the request for temporary relief if the responding party cancels or refuses to attend mediation.

D. Temporary Relief Mediation Cover Sheet

To initiate the mediation process with the court's Mediation and Diversion Services Program (Program), the attorney or the self-represented party will submit a Temporary Relief Cover Sheet to the Program, with a copy of the motion requesting temporary relief. Temporary Relief Cover Sheets are available from the court, the Program, the Case Management Unit, and may be accessed at http://www.fljud13.org/Forms.aspx.

E. Temporary Attorney's Fees

If the relief sought includes temporary attorney's fees, the seeking party must file an attorney's fee affidavit at least seven business days before the hearing. The attorney's fee affidavit must set forth fees and costs to date and anticipated hours, fees, and costs reasonably expected to be incurred through the final hearing.

F. Exhibits and Temporary Relief Memorandum

At least seventy-two hours prior to the scheduled temporary relief hearing, the parties will exchange exhibits and each will file and serve a copy of a Temporary Relief Hearing Memorandum using the uniform Temporary Relief Hearing Memorandum that may be accessed at http://www.fljud13.org/Forms.aspx.

G. Court Action for Unresolved Issues or Issues Not Involving Children

If temporary relief issues involving children are not resolved through mediation, a temporary relief hearing should be scheduled for the earliest available date following the scheduled mediation conference. If temporary relief issues do not involve children, the hearing should be scheduled within fourteen business days of the request for hearing, if possible. Hearings that will involve complex temporary support matters or other temporary relief matters, such as custody or visitation issues, or hearings to exceed one hour, may be scheduled for a date beyond fourteen business days.

17. Attorney's Fees Hearings for Requests Exceeding $50,000

When a party seeks an award of attorney's fees and costs exceeding $50,000 after a final hearing or seeks an interim award of attorney's fees and costs exceeding $50,000 for which fees and costs have already been incurred, the hearing on the matter will be set using a uniform order that may be accessed at http://www.fljud13.org/Forms.aspx. The requesting party will be responsible for scheduling the hearing time and submitting a completed uniform order to the presiding judge.

18. Extraordinary Relief

A. Temporary Injunctions

Applications for temporary injunctions without notice must comply with Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.610 or Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 1.610. All petitions for protective injunction must be filed with the clerk's office through the protective injunctions division of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit in accordance with Florida Statutes sections 741.30, 784.046, or 784.0485.

B. Emergency Matters in an Assigned Case

Application for emergency relief in an assigned case must be filed with the clerk with a request for emergency handling. A judge will review the request as soon as it is reasonably possible.

i. Handling by a Judge Assigned to the Family Law Division

The clerk will promptly present the matter, along with the paper court file if electronic images are not available in the case maintenance system, and the emergency motion handling order form, to the judge of the division to which the case is assigned. When the judge is absent from the courthouse, any emergency application in a case assigned to that judge's division will be presented to the family

law judge present in the courthouse whose division next follows in alphabetical sequence (Divisions "A" through "F," "I," "J," and "L" only). "Present in the courthouse" includes being in a hearing or trial. If uncertain about a judge's presence in the courthouse, the clerk will inquire at the bailiff station and if the bailiff reports that the assigned judge is not present, the clerk will present the matter to the next judge in alphabetical letter division sequence.

Any judge assigned to the Family Law Division who issues an *ex parte* order must hold the return hearing personally, unless the judge of the division in which the case is pending agrees to hold the hearing. All emergency motion handling orders must be docketed by the clerk and delivered, along with the paper court file if electronic images are not available in the case maintenance system, to the chambers of the judge of the division in which the case is pending for any necessary follow-up action. All emergency motion handling orders must be served to the parties by facsimile, e-mail, or regular United States mail.

If the reviewing judge determines that an emergency does not exist or denies the emergency request without a hearing, the requesting party is prohibited from presenting the emergency request to any other judge except the judge presiding in the division to which the case is assigned.

ii. Handling by a Duty Judge

If there are no family law judges present in the courthouse when an application for emergency relief in an assigned case is made, then the emergency matter will be presented to the duty judge. If the duty judge is a judge assigned to the Family Law Division, the judge will handle the matter in accordance with section 18B.i. of this administrative order. If the duty judge is not assigned to the Family Law Division, then the duty judge will handle the matter as set forth below.

If a duty judge issues an *ex parte* order and determines that the nature of the emergency requires that a return hearing be conducted imminently, the duty judge will conduct the return hearing personally. If a duty judge issues an *ex parte* order and determines that the nature of the emergency allows the return hearing to be scheduled with the judge presiding in the division in which the case is pending, then the clerk will, by the next business day, deliver the emergency motion, the *ex parte* order entered by the duty judge, and the paper court file if electronic images are not available in the case maintenance system, to the judge presiding in the division to which the case is assigned. If a duty judge issues an *ex parte* order and determines that the nature of the emergency allows the return hearing to be scheduled with the judge presiding in the division in which the case is pending, such determination is

conditioned upon the understanding that the judge presiding in the division in which the case is pending may vacate any order issued by the duty judge before, after, or in lieu of the return hearing.

All emergency motion handling orders must be docketed by the clerk and delivered, along with the paper court file if electronic images are not available in the case maintenance system, to the chambers of the judge of the division in which the case is pending for any necessary follow-up action. All emergency motion handling orders must be served to the parties by facsimile, e-mail, or regular United States mail.

If a duty judge determines that an emergency does not exist or denies the emergency request without a hearing, the requesting party must not present the emergency request to any other judge except the judge presiding in the division to which the case is assigned.

C. Emergency Matters in an Unassigned Case

An unassigned case is a matter that has not been assigned to a Family Law Division because the clerk's office is not and will not be open within a reasonable time. Application for emergency relief in an unassigned case may be made to the chief judge or the chief judge's designee. Otherwise, the application will be made to the duty judge. As soon as the clerk's office is open, any such application and any such order will be properly filed with the clerk and the assignment of the case will be made by the clerk in accordance with section 3 of this administrative order.

19. Professional Courtesy in Clearing Hearing Dates and Deposition Dates

A good faith effort to clear all hearing dates and deposition dates with opposing counsel or a self-represented party is required prior to notices being filed. This fact should be shown on the face of the notice itself by inserting the following at the very bottom of the notice after the certificate of service: *"The above hearing/deposition has been cleared with opposing counsel's (party's) calendar on (date)."* In the alternative, if it has not been possible to reach opposing counsel's office (party) to clear the date or if opposing counsel (party) has failed to respond, the following language should be used: *"The above hearing/deposition date has not been cleared with opposing counsel's/party's calendar because (state reason)..."*

20. Interpreters

At the time of any hearing or trial in which a witness who does not speak English is to be presented, it is the responsibility of the party offering the non-

English speaking witness to provide a disinterested, qualified interpreter at the initial expense of the offering party.

21. Trials and Pretrial Conferences - Scheduling

In all cases in which a trial is scheduled for more than four hours, a pretrial conference will be scheduled. A pretrial memorandum must be served at least three days prior to the pretrial conference. A uniform order setting trial and pretrial conference will be entered. All trials must be scheduled in accordance with Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 1.440 and Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.440, or by stipulation waiving such procedure.

22. Uncontested Trials - Limit

Judges will provide block time for uncontested trials. Some divisions permit use of Uniform Motion Calendar / Open Docket time for uncontested trials. Attorneys must ascertain from the individual judge's office the day and time provided for such trials. Each attorney or firm may be limited to the number of uncontested sessions.

23. Orders and Judgments

A. Consultation with Opposing Counsel or Self-Represented Party

Unless the presiding judge directs otherwise, prior to submitting a proposed order or judgment for the court's consideration after a hearing, the counsel or self-represented party directed to submit the proposed order must consult with opposing counsel or the opposing self-represented party within five business days after the court's decision and make a genuine effort to agree on the language of the proposed order.

B. Objection

If, after consultation with opposing counsel or the opposing self-represented party, the parties cannot agree on the language in the proposed order or judgment to be submitted to the court, then the attorney or self-represented party submitting the proposed order or judgment must document in a cover letter that the opposing party or counsel has registered an objection and specifically state what the objection is. At the time the cover letter and proposed order or judgment is submitted to the court, a copy must simultaneously be sent to all parties or their attorneys. If an objection is registered, the court will determine if a hearing is necessary to resolve the dispute.

C. Timely Submission

The attorney or self-represented party directed to prepare the order or judgment must submit the proposed order or judgment to the court by within ten

business days after the court's decision. If the attorney or self-represented party designated to prepare the order or judgment fails to timely submit a proposed order or judgment, the attorney for the opposing party or the opposing self-represented party may submit a proposed order or judgment within five business days after the initial ten-day period.

D. Submission of Proposed Orders and Judgments

Unless the presiding judge directs otherwise, if all parties are represented by attorneys, none of whom have been excused from e-mail service under Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516, an attorney who is requested to submit a proposed order or judgment must do so through the Portal. If any party is represented by an attorney who has been excused from e-mail service by the court under Rule 2.516, the attorney who is requested to submit a proposed order or judgment must do so by submitting to the presiding judge sufficient hard copies of the proposed order or judgment along with stamped, addressed envelopes. If any party is self-represented and is directed by the presiding judge to submit a proposed order to the court without a direction regarding the specific method for submission, the self-represented party may either submit the proposed order through the Portal or may submit sufficient hard copies of the proposed order along with stamped, addressed envelopes to the presiding judge.

When submitting a proposed order, a contemporaneous cover letter must also be included indicating that one of the following statements is true: (i) all parties have agreed to the content of the proposed order or judgment; (ii) opposing party or counsel has not responded within five business days of being provided the proposed order or judgment; or (iii) opposing party or counsel has registered an objection and the cover letter states what the objection is. Competing proposed orders or judgments must not be submitted through the Portal.

E. Title

The title of every proposed order and judgment submitted must contain the subject matter of the pleading or motion upon which the ruling is made and must fairly apprise the reader of the action being ordered. Phrasing such as "order granting…" or "order denying…" is preferred over "order on…".

F. Form

The first paragraph of all proposed orders and judgments must state the date or dates on which the hearing or trial took place. In all proposed orders or judgments, the page containing the court's signature must also contain substantive language of the proposed order or judgment so that a proposed order or judgment does not

contain a signature page consisting only of the court's signature. Each page, except for the first page, must contain a page number.

G. Income Withholding Order

If an order or final judgment provides for payment of alimony or child support by income withholding order, the income withholding order must be submitted contemporaneously with the order or final judgment.

H. Settlement Agreements

Unless the presiding judge directs otherwise, either the entire settlement agreement must be recited word for word in the final judgment or it must be attached and incorporated into the final judgment. Notwithstanding the above, the judgment must recite provisions of the settlement agreement pertaining to shared or sole parental responsibility, time-sharing, child support, and alimony.

I. Orders Granting Motions to Withdraw

Any order granting an attorney's motion to withdraw under Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.505(f)(1) must include a statement that the party whose attorney is withdrawing is obligated to provide the court and the opposing attorney or opposing self-represented party a written notice of any change to the party's mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address (if available) if the party intends to remain self-represented.

J. Final Disposition Form

A Final Disposition Form must be submitted at the time of submission of a final order or judgment to the court.

24. Court Registry Fee

In accordance with Florida law, the clerk is entitled to be paid a registry fee when the clerk accepts money for deposit into the registry of the court. When a person is required by law or court order to deposit a specified sum of money into the registry of the court, the person making the deposit must pay the amount of the registry fee to the clerk in addition to the amount of the deposit. If the registry fee is not paid at the time of the deposit, the clerk will deduct the amount of the registry fee from the deposit. The court has jurisdiction to determine the sufficiency of a deposit when a registry fee is not paid and which party is responsible for payment of the registry fee. The clerk will assist the public in calculating the amount of the registry fee.

25. Orders of Disbursement from the Court Registry

A. Request for Clerk's Statement of Available Registry Funds

Any time a party seeks an order directing the clerk to disburse funds from the court registry, prior to filing a motion, the party must request the clerk to provide a statement showing available funds in the court registry. The statement will indicate the date and time the available funds were verified by the clerk. The clerk will develop and post on the clerk's website (www.hillsclerk.com) a form entitled *Request for Clerk's Statement of Available Registry Funds.*

B. Motion for Disbursement of Registry Funds

The party must attach a copy of the clerk's Statement of Available Registry Funds to the motion for disbursement of funds, file and serve the motion on all parties and legal counsel for the clerk. If the party seeking disbursement objects to the amount listed in the clerk's Statement of Available Registry Funds, the motion must identify the basis for the objection, and set the motion for hearing. If the party seeking disbursement does not object to the amount listed in the clerk's Statement of Available Registry Funds, the motion must confirm the stated amount is the proper amount of disbursement and request the entry of an order, without a hearing, if no other party files and serves a written objection within five days after service of the motion.

C. Change in Registry Balance

If any party becomes aware of any change to the court registry balance after the issuance of the initial clerk's Statement of Available Registry Funds, that party must obtain an updated clerk's Statement of Available Registry Funds and provide copies to the other party and to the court prior to the hearing on the motion seeking disbursement. If an updated clerk's Statement of Available Registry Funds is not presented at the hearing on the motion seeking disbursement, then the amount identified in the initial clerk's Statement of Available Registry Funds will be deemed the correct amount available for disbursement.

D. Disbursement Orders to Account for Clerk Fees

All proposed orders submitted to the court for disbursement from the court registry must contain the phrase "less clerk fees" immediately after the total requested disbursement amount (for example, Total: $12,000, less clerk fees). If the amount in the order exceeds the amount held in the court registry, the clerk will disburse the available amount in the registry, less clerk fees, at the time of the entry of the order (pro rata if disbursement is made to multiple parties).

26. Children and Court

In accordance with Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.407, children must not be brought to the courthouse for any reason without prior approval of the court authorizing a child's appearance on any day when any hearing, mediation, or other related court proceeding is scheduled to occur, except in uncontested adoption cases or in an emergency situation.

27. The Rules of Courtroom Civility

The judges, general magistrates, and hearing officers assigned to the Family Law Division expect that all litigants, whether or not they are represented by attorneys, will conduct themselves in an appropriate fashion so that all parties will be afforded a fair opportunity to present their case. Specific rules have been established to assist litigants in meeting appropriate standards of conduct when appearing in court. These Rules of Courtroom Civility may be accessed at http://www.fljud13.org/Forms/aspx.

28. Professional Conduct and Courtroom Decorum

Counsel must also adhere to The Florida Bar's Guidelines for Professional Conduct[ii], The Florida Bar's Professionalism Expectations[iii], and the Hillsborough County Bar Association's Standards of Professionalism[iv]. Each judge may announce and enforce additional requirements, or may excuse compliance with any provision(s) of the Guidelines, Expectations, or Standards as that judge deems appropriate.

29. Forms and Procedure

Suggested forms to be used with the provisions of this administrative order may be accessed at www.fljud13.org under the section titled "Forms." Each division judge's webpage should be reviewed for additional procedural requirements specific to that judge.

30. Other Family Law Subjects

Provisions for other family law subjects, such as the central governmental depository, the child support enforcement program under Title IV-D, mediation, general magistrates and hearing officers, adoption records, adoption procedures, and collaborative family law practice can be found in separate administrative orders. These administrative orders, like all procedural administrative orders, may be accessed at www.fljud13.org under the section titled "Administrative Orders."

31. Previous Administrative Order Superseded

This administrative order supersedes Administrative Order S-2026-053 (*Family Law Proceedings*).

32. Effective Date

This administrative order is effective immediately.

ENTERED on October 28, 2026.

Christopher C. Sabella, Chief Judge

Original to: Victor Crist, Clerk of the Circuit Court
Copy to: All Family Law Judges, General Magistrates, and Child Support Enforcement Hearing Officers
Robert Snyder, Trial Court Administrator
All Family Court Programs
Hillsborough County Bar Association, Family Law Section

[i] https://jaws.fljud13.org/System/login.aspx
[ii] https://www.floridabar.org/prof/regulating-professionalism/presources002/
[iii] https://www.floridabar.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/professionalism-expectations.pdf
[iv] http://hillsbar.site-ym.com/?page=Professionalism