

THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
FAMILY LAW DIVISION

# BLANK PETITION

(Packet #37)

**CAUTION:**

**USE THIS PACKET ONLY IF THERE IS NO OTHER PACKET  
THAT APPLIES TO YOUR SITUATION.**

**YOU SHOULD SEEK THE ADVICE OF AN ATTORNEY  
BEFORE FILING YOUR CASE.**

**THE JUDGE IS NOT REQUIRED TO GRANT WHAT YOU  
ARE REQUESTING.**

If you choose to represent yourself (*pro se*) in your case, you should be aware that you will be required to follow the same rules that are required in cases filed by persons represented by attorneys. The judge assigned to your case is not necessarily required to grant what you request in a form. If you do not like the outcome of your case, you may not be able to change it. If you have any questions or concerns about your case, you should consult with an attorney.

All instructions and forms distributed by the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit are provided merely as a public service to persons seeking to represent themselves in court without the assistance of an attorney. These documents are meant to serve as a guide only, and to assist pro se (self-represented) litigants with their cases. The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit does not guarantee that either the instructions or the forms will achieve the result desired by the parties or ensure that any individual judge will follow the procedures exactly or accept each and every form as drafted. Any person using these instructions and/or forms does so at his or her own risk, and the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit shall not be responsible for any losses incurred by any person in reliance on the instructions and/or forms.

In no event will the Florida Supreme Court, The Florida Bar, or anyone contributing to the production of these forms, commentary, instructions, and appendices be liable for any direct, indirect, or consequential damages from their use.

**(Printing Instructions: There are 2 options available. Option 1 - print entire packet as one document.  
Option 2 - choose which forms to print by selecting and opening each form separately.)**

<b><u>FORMS CONTAINED IN THIS PACKET</u></b>	<b><u>FORM #</u></b>
<a href="#"><u>General Information for Self-Represented Litigants</u></a>	Appendix C
<a href="#"><u>12 Rules of Courtroom Civility</u></a>	12 Rules
<a href="#"><u>Nonlawyer Disclosure</u></a>	12.900(a)
<a href="#"><u>Civil Cover Sheet</u></a>	12.928
<a href="#"><u>Blank Family Law Petition</u></a>	Blank
<a href="#"><u>Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act Affidavit (UCCJEA)</u></a>	12.902(d)
<a href="#"><u>Summons: Personal Service on an Individual</u></a>	12.910(a)
<a href="#"><u>Process Service Memorandum</u></a>	12.910(b)
<a href="#"><u>Notice of Related Cases</u></a>	12.900(h)
<a href="#"><u>Nonmilitary Affidavit</u></a>	12.912(b)
<a href="#"><u>Motion for Default</u></a>	12.922(a)
<a href="#"><u>Default</u></a>	12.922(b)
<a href="#"><u>Motion for Referral to the General Magistrate</u></a>	12.920(a)
<a href="#"><u>General Magistrate / Hearing Officer Division Referral Assignment Table</u></a>	Table
<a href="#"><u>Notice of Hearing</u></a>	12.923
<a href="#"><u>Fee Schedule for Family Law Cases</u></a>	Fee
<a href="#"><u>Notice of Confidential Information Within Court Filing</u></a>	2.40(d)(2)
<a href="#"><u>Designation of Current Address and E-mail Address</u></a>	12.915

## FAMILY COURT RESOURCES

<b>LEGAL ADVICE</b>	<b>Lawyer Referral Service</b>	(get legal advice/consultation) 813-221-7780 / free referral / initial consultation is \$50 for the 1 <sup>st</sup> ½ hour
	<b>Bay Area Legal Services</b>	(apply for free legal advice/consultation) <a href="http://www.bals.org">www.bals.org</a> / 800-625-2257 to apply
<b>LEGAL INFORMATION</b>	<b>Legal Information Center</b>	Hillsborough County family law cases <a href="http://www.bals.org/LIC">www.bals.org/LIC</a> for in-person walk-in hours and online contact form
	<b>Legal Information Program (Plant City)</b>	Hillsborough County family law cases 813-276-2688 (pre-recorded message and in-person walk in hours)
<b>GET FORMS</b>		<b>Individual Forms:</b> <a href="http://www.flcourts.gov">www.flcourts.gov</a> → “See All Family Law Forms” <b>Packets:</b>
	<b>Free Online to Print</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.fljud13.org">www.fljud13.org</a> → “Family Law Packets List”</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.hillsclerk.com/About-Us/Forms">www.hillsclerk.com/About-Us/Forms</a> → “Family Law”</li> </ul>
	<b>Buy</b>	Court Business Center, 800 E. Twiggs, Room 630 (6th floor) / \$.16/page
<b>FILL OUT FORMS</b>	<b>Family Forms Clinic</b>	Hillsborough County family law forms 813-864-2280, #2 (#3 for Spanish) / 800 E. Twiggs, Room 210 (2 <sup>nd</sup> floor)
<b>CLERK</b>	<b>View Files</b>	HOVER: <a href="http://hover.hillsclerk.com/html/home.html">hover.hillsclerk.com/html/home.html</a>
	<b>File Documents</b>	IN-PERSON: <a href="http://www.hillsclerk.com/About-Us/Service-Options-and-Locations">www.hillsclerk.com/About-Us/Service-Options-and-Locations</a> E-FILING: <a href="http://www.myflcourtaccess.com/">www.myflcourtaccess.com/</a>
<b>CHILD SUPPORT</b>	<b>DOR</b>	Department of Revenue: 850-488-KIDS(5437) 6302 E. MLK Jr. Blvd., Tampa, FL 33619
	<b>SDU</b>	Florida State Disbursement Unit: 877-769-0251 P.O. Box 8500, Tallahassee, Florida 32314-8500
<b>COURT CASE MANAGEMENT</b>		(only for pre-judgment cases when neither party has a lawyer) 813-272-5173 / <a href="mailto:prose@fljud13.org">prose@fljud13.org</a>
<b>COURT DIRECTORY</b>	<b>Judges</b>	<a href="http://www.fljud13.org/JudicialDirectory.aspx">www.fljud13.org/JudicialDirectory.aspx</a>
	<b>Magistrates</b>	<a href="http://www.fljud13.org/GeneralMagistrates.aspx">www.fljud13.org/GeneralMagistrates.aspx</a>
	<b>Hearing Officers</b>	<a href="http://www.fljud13.org/HearingOfficers.aspx">www.fljud13.org/HearingOfficers.aspx</a>
<b>MEDIATION</b>		813-272-5642 / 800 E. Twiggs, Room 208 (2nd floor) <a href="http://www.fljud13.org/CourtPrograms/MediationDiversionServices/ContactUs.aspx">www.fljud13.org/CourtPrograms/MediationDiversionServices/ContactUs.aspx</a>
<b>RESEARCH</b>	<b>Law Library</b>	701 E. Twiggs Street / 813-272-5818 <a href="https://hcplc.org/locations/james-j-lunsford-law">https://hcplc.org/locations/james-j-lunsford-law</a>
	<b>Legal Terms / Definitions</b>	<a href="https://help.flcourts.org/Get-Started/Legal-Terms">https://help.flcourts.org/Get-Started/Legal-Terms</a>
	<b>Florida Rules of Court</b>	<a href="http://www.floridabar.org/rules/ctproc/">www.floridabar.org/rules/ctproc/</a> (incl. Family Law Rules)
	<b>Florida Statutes</b>	<a href="http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/">www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/</a>
	<b>Hillsborough Administrative Orders</b>	<a href="http://www.fljud13.org/AdministrativeOrders.aspx">www.fljud13.org/AdministrativeOrders.aspx</a> → Family Law (left side menu)
<b>SERVICE OF PROCESS</b>	<b>Hillsborough Sheriff</b>	700 E. Twiggs St., 3rd floor, Tampa / 813-242-5200
	<b>Private</b>	<a href="http://www.fljud13.org/Portals/0/Forms/pdfs/process%20servers%20list.pdf">www.fljud13.org/Portals/0/Forms/pdfs/process%20servers%20list.pdf</a>

# STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS

## **STEP 1 - Complete the forms to start the case and have them notarized**

- 1) **FORMS MUST BE COMPLETED AND SIGNED IN BLACK INK AND MOST MUST BE NOTARIZED.** The clerk's office will notarize documents and charge a fee (see attached schedule). Please bring a valid ID.
- 2) **Names must be written the same way on all documents (no full names on one document and initials on another).**
- 3) **Complete the following forms and notarize the ones with a notary signature line:**
  - A) Civil cover sheet - (only use if you are starting a new case – with a new case number)
  - B) 12 Rules of Courtroom Civility - (does not need to be notarized)
  - C) Blank Family Law Petition
  - D) Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA) Affidavit, Form 12.902(d) (only if the petition involves children)
  - E) Summons, Form 12.910(a) - (needs to be signed by the clerk, not by you)
  - F) Process Service Memorandum, Form 12.910(b) - (does not need to be notarized)
  - G) Notice of Related Cases, Form 12.900(h)
  - H) Motion for Referral to the General Magistrate, Form 12.920(a) (only use if you are using an existing case number)
  - I) Designation of Current Address and E-mail Address, Form 12.915

## **STEP 2 – Make copies**

After you have completed the forms and have signed and notarized them, make 2 complete copies of everything you have signed (one copy is for your records). If you are filing a Motion for Referral to the General Magistrate, make 1 extra copy of that and 1 extra copy of the Petition. Copies can be obtained for a fee in the Court Business Center, on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the George Edgecomb Courthouse.

## **STEP 3 - Filing your case**

- 1) Take the original set of completed and signed forms to the clerk at any of the Clerk's Office Customer Service Centers (<https://www.hillsclerk.com/About-Us/Service-Options-and-Locations>) and pay the filing fee. If you are indigent, receive Food Stamps, Medicaid, or Social Security Disability benefits, you can ask the Clerk for an application to waive the filing fee. You will be required to swear under oath that everything in your application is complete and true. If you qualify, the fee will be waived. If you do not qualify, you must pay the filing fee.
- 2) If you are starting a new case, the clerk will assign a case number and division.
- 3) Summons: The clerk will sign the Summons and give it back to you. There is a charge for this.

## **STEP 4 – Notifying the other party**

**SUMMONS** – Attach the Summons and the Process Service Memorandum to one complete copy of your documents and take them to the sheriff or process server in the county where the other party is going to be served (where he/she lives or works). The other party will have 20 days after the date the sheriff or process server delivers the papers to file a written response (answer).



## **STEP 5 – Process the Motion for Referral to the General Magistrate, if used**

- 1) If you are filing a “Motion for Referral to the General Magistrate,” mail the following to the Judge assigned to your case:
  - a. 1 copy of the Petition,
  - b. 1 copy of the Motion for Referral to the General Magistrate,
  - c. 2 stamped envelopes, one addressed to each party (envelopes, but not stamps, can be purchased in the Court Business Center on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Edgecomb courthouse)
- 2) If your case is assigned to a judge in Tampa, mail your documents and envelopes to:
- 3) Judge of Division \_\_\_\_\_, George Edgecomb Courthouse, 800 E. Twiggs Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Tampa, Florida 33602.
- 4) If your case is assigned to a judge in Plant City (Division R, S or T), mail your documents and envelopes to:
- 5) Judge of Division \_\_\_\_\_, Plant City Courthouse, 301 N. Michigan Avenue, Plant City, Florida 33563.
- 6) The Division of your case can be found next to your case number.
- 7) If the Motion for Referral to the General Magistrate is not accompanied by 2 stamped addressed envelopes, your Referral will not be processed and your case will be delayed.

## **STEP 6 – Obtain proof of service**

SUMMONS – When the other party is served, the sheriff or process server should send you a form indicating the date and time he/she was served. File this with the clerk.

## **STEP 7 – Check for answer / default**

- 1) Call the Clerk of the Circuit Court (813-276-8100) 21 days after the other party was served to see if the other party filed an answer.
- 2) If no answer was filed and the other party is not in the military, complete the following forms: Nonmilitary Affidavit - Form 12.912(b), Motion for Default - Form 12.922(a), and a Default - Form 12.922(b). Take the Nonmilitary Affidavit, Motion for Default, Default, and your proof of service to the clerk.
- 3) If no answer was filed and the other party is in the military STOP HERE and consult an attorney.
- 4) If an answer was filed, obtain a copy at any of the Clerk's Office Customer Service Centers (<https://www.hillsclerk.com/About-Us/Service-Options-and-Locations>) (if the other party did not send you a copy).
- 5) If the other party filed a counterpetition, you have 20 days to file a written answer to the counterpetition. You can use Form 12.903(d) – Answer to Counterpetition. File the original with the clerk, send a copy to the other party, and keep a copy for your records.

## **STEP 8 – Mediation** (only if the other party files an answer denying any allegations or files a counterpetition)

If the other party filed an answer and disputes any of the allegations in your petition, you and the other party will need to go to mediation to see if the disputed issue(s) can be resolved. Call the Mediation and Diversion office at 813-272-5642 and ask them to schedule a mediation date. If the other party does not contact the mediation department or the issue(s) cannot be resolved in mediation, the final hearing will be set.

## **STEP 9 – Preparing your case / gathering evidence** (if you and the other party do not agree and your case is contested)

If the other party is contesting issues in your case, you will need to be prepared to present evidence to the judge or general magistrate which supports your position(s). Gathering evidence is called “discovery.” Discovery is governed by Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure 12.280 – 12.410 and Florida Rules of Civil Procedure 1.280 – 1.410.

Some discovery methods are:

1. Interrogatories – written questions you send to the other party. See Forms 12.930(a), Notice of Service of Standard Family Law Interrogatories, and 12.930(b), Standard Family Law Interrogatories for Original Proceedings, and their instructions.

2. Notice of Production from Non-Party/Subpoena – a request to someone who is not a party in the case (not the other party) to provide copies of documents to you or to produce documents to be copied by you. See Forms 12.931(a), Notice of Production from Non-Party, and 12.931(b), Subpoena for Production of Documents, and their instructions.
3. Depositions – taking someone’s testimony (a party or non-party) under oath before a court reporter.
4. Request for Production of Documents and Things – a written request that the other party provide specified documents or things for you to copy or examine. See Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 1.350.

Not all evidence can be considered by the judge or general magistrate. Evidence must conform to the Rules of Evidence in Chapter 90 of the Florida Statutes to be admissible in court. The duty of establishing the facts that you want to present to the court, or the burden of proof, is on YOU. You should provide the judge or general magistrate with admissible evidence to support the claims in your petition and your statements in court.

## **STEP 10 – Scheduling the final hearing**

IF YOU HAVE STARTED A **NEW CASE** AND WERE GIVEN A NEW CASE NUMBER AND THE OTHER PARTY DOES NOT HAVE AN ATTORNEY

1. Contact the Case Management Unit (813-272-5173) to schedule the final hearing.
2. You will be contacted by mail regarding a court date.

IF YOU HAVE STARTED A **NEW CASE** AND THE OTHER PARTY IS REPRESENTED BY AN ATTORNEY

1. Contact the judicial assistant (J.A.) for the judge to whom your case is assigned and ask the J.A. for 3 possible hearing dates and times.
2. Call the opposing attorney and ask which of those dates and times is best for him/her.
3. Call the J.A. and tell her which date and time you have chosen.
4. Complete a Notice of Hearing, Form 12.923 (not included), with the place, date, and time of the hearing.
5. Sign the Notice of Hearing and complete the Certificate of Service part of the notice which states the date you are filing the notice and how you are providing a copy to the opposing attorney.
6. Make 3 copies of the Notice of Hearing.
7. File the original Notice of Hearing with the clerk.
8. Give a copy of the Notice of Hearing to the J.A., send a copy of the notice to the other party’s attorney, and keep a copy of the notice for your records.

IF YOU HAVE USED **AN EXISTING CASE** NUMBER AND THE OTHER PARTY DOES NOT HAVE AN ATTORNEY

1. Once you have received 1) a close-out letter from mediation (showing that you attempted mediation) and, 2) your signed Order of Referral to the General Magistrate, call the administrative assistant for the general magistrate assigned to your case and request a hearing date. The general magistrate/hearing officer assigned is determined by **the last two digits of your case number (see attached table)**.

If assigned to GM-1, call General Magistrate/Hearing Officer **Wartenberg** (Phone: 272-5351)

If assigned to GM-3, call General Magistrate/Hearing Officer **Montagno** (Phone: 276-2337)

If assigned to GM-4, call General Magistrate/Hearing Officer **Sarmiento** (Phone: 272-6435)

If assigned to GM-5, call General Magistrate/Hearing Officer **Mason** (Phone: 272-5525)

2. Once a hearing date has been scheduled, complete a Notice of Hearing, Form 12.923, with the place, date, and time of the hearing.
3. Sign the Notice of Hearing and complete the Certificate of Service part of the notice which states the date you are filing the notice and how you are providing a copy to the other party.
4. Make 2 copies of the Notice of Hearing.
5. File the original Notice of Hearing with the clerk, send a copy of the notice to the other party, and keep a copy for your records.

**IF YOU HAVE USED AN EXISTING CASE NUMBER AND THE OTHER PARTY IS REPRESENTED BY AN ATTORNEY**

1. Once you have received 1) a close-out letter from mediation (showing that you attempted mediation) and, 2) your signed Order of Referral to the General Magistrate, call the administrative assistant for the general magistrate assigned to your case and request a hearing date. The general magistrate/hearing officer assigned is determined by **the last two digits of your case number (see attached table).**

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If assigned to GM-4, call General Magistrate/Hearing Officer **Sarmiento** (Phone: 272-6435)

If assigned to GM-5, call General Magistrate/Hearing Officer **Mason** (Phone: 272-5525)

2. Call the opposing attorney and ask which of those 3 dates and times is best for him/her.

3. Call the administrative assistant and tell her which date and time you have chosen.

4. Complete a Notice of Hearing, Form 12.923 (not included), with the place, date, and time of the hearing.

5. Sign the Notice of Hearing and complete the Certificate of Service part of the notice which states the date you are filing the notice and how you are providing a copy to the opposing attorney.

6. Make 3 copies of the Notice of Hearing.

7. File the original Notice of Hearing with the clerk.

8. Give a copy of the Notice of Hearing to the administrative assistant, send a copy of the notice to the other party's attorney, and keep a copy of the notice for your records.

**COURT REPORTER?**

If you want a court reporter for the hearing, you must arrange for this in advance and you must pay the court reporter's fee. If there is no record of the hearing and the judge rules against you, you may not be able to appeal the decision.

**STEP 11 – The final hearing**

Normally the final hearing is when the petition (and counterpetition, if one was filed) will be considered and all issues will be decided. If you do not go to the final hearing your case may be dismissed.

**HOW TO DRESS** - Dress appropriately. No shorts, tank tops, or sandals. Do not chew gum.

**WHAT TO BRING** - All evidence you want the court to consider in deciding your case, if your case is contested

**WHAT TO EXPECT: In-Person hearings**

The hearing will take place in a hearing room or a courtroom. You will not be in front of a jury, just the general magistrate, hearing officer, or judge. Do not interrupt the magistrate, hearing officer, or judge when he or she speaks. When speaking to the magistrate or judge, address him or her as "Your Honor."

Each court has at least one bailiff who is a deputy sheriff and is there to maintain order. When you arrive for your hearing, let the bailiff know that you are present and ready. He or she will announce your case when it is time for your hearing, and will tell you where to sit and where to place your belongings as you enter the hearing room. A bailiff will usually remain inside the room during your hearing. If witnesses are called, the bailiff will step out to bring the witness into the hearing room.

At your hearing, be prepared to discuss any issues covered in the motion, petition and/or counterpetition, and be able to provide proof of any disputed facts by presenting evidence. Evidence is proof presented at a hearing in the form of witnesses (people), exhibits (documents), and objects (things). Not all evidence can be considered by the court, however. Evidence must conform to the Rules of Evidence in Chapter 90 of the Florida Statutes to be admissible in court. Remember, the duty of establishing the facts that you want to present to the court is on YOU. You should provide the court with admissible evidence to support the claims in your petition and your statements in court. Telling your story may not be enough to win your case.

Once both sides have presented their evidence, the court will make a decision and an order will be prepared. The order will contain all the details of the court's decision. You will receive a copy of the order in the mail. The original order will go to the clerk's office to be filed in your court file.

**WHAT TO EXPECT: Virtual hearings**

**The courts use the Zoom videoconference platform. You do not need an account to use Zoom and the service is free. You may use a cellphone, tablet, or computer. The court is able to swear in witnesses and parties over Zoom; please have a picture identification with you to show the Court. Please review the tips below for your video hearings.**

**COURT HEARING VIDEO CONFERENCING TIPS**

- Dress and look like you are going to court. No hats please.
- Do your best to have a stable internet connection. Ask others in your house or office to avoid large data use (game streaming; video streaming; etc.) while on a videoconference call.
- Use your full real name. Avoid using nicknames or the device's default name setting.
- Be as still as possible while speaking and waiting to speak.
- Do your best to have a solid or non-distracting background, or utilize a virtual background.
- Have the camera face you straight on. Avoid leaning in or away from camera.
- Be aware of your microphone and audio set up. Mute your microphone unless you are speaking. (Wireless earbuds are less distracting than large headphones and exclude outside noise. Wired earbuds can be distracting and the built-in microphone often rubs on your clothes.)
- Speak slowly and clearly. Avoid speaking over others.
- Avoid typing, eating or drinking during the conference.
- Do your best to ensure privacy during the conference; everyone understands children, pets, and other members of the household might wander in.

**YOU MAY FILE FORMS AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:**

**Tampa - George Edgecomb Courthouse – Main Location**

Clerk of the Circuit Court, 800 E. Twiggs Street, Room 101, Tampa, FL 33602

**Brandon – Brandon Regional Service Center**

Clerk of the Circuit Court, 311 Pauls Drive, Suite 110, Brandon, FL 33511

**Plant City – Plant City Courthouse**

Clerk of the Circuit Court, 301 N. Michigan, Room 1071, Plant City, FL 33563

# FAMILY LAW FORMS, COMMENTARY, AND INSTRUCTIONS

## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS

### (02/18)

**You should read this General Information thoroughly before taking any other steps to file your case or represent yourself in court.** Most of this information is **not** repeated in the attached forms. This information should provide you with an overview of the court system, its participants, and its processes. It should be useful whether you want to represent yourself in a pending matter or have a better understanding of the way family court works. **This is not intended as a substitute for legal advice from an attorney. Each case has its own particular set of circumstances, and an attorney may advise you of what is best for you in your individual situation.**

These instructions are not the only place that you can get information about how a family case works. You may want to look at other books for more help. The Florida Statutes, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, Florida Rules of Civil Procedure, and other legal information or books may be found at the public library or in a law library at your county courthouse or a law school in your area. If you are filing a petition for **Name Change** and/or **Adoption**, these instructions may not apply.

If the word(s) is printed in **bold**, this means that the word is being emphasized. Throughout these instructions, you will also find words printed in **bold** and **underlined**. This means that the definitions of these words may be found in the glossary of common family law terms at the end of this general information section.

### Commentary

**1995 Adoption.** To help the many people in family law court cases who do not have attorneys to represent them (pro se litigants), the Florida Supreme Court added these simplified forms and directions to the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure. The directions refer to the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure or the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure. Many of the forms were adapted from the forms accompanying the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure. Practitioners should refer to the committee notes for those forms for rule history.

The forms were adopted by the Court pursuant to *Family Law Rules of Procedure*, 667 So. 2d 202 (Fla. 1995); *In re Petition for Approval of Forms Pursuant to Rule 10-1.1(b) of the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar—Stepparent Adoption Forms*, 613 So. 2d 900 (Fla. 1992); *Rules Regulating the Florida Bar—Approval of Forms*, 581 So. 2d 902 (Fla. 1991).

Although the forms are part of these rules, they are not all inclusive and additional forms, as necessary, should be taken from the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure as provided in Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure. Also, the following notice has been included to strongly encourage individuals to seek the advice, when needed, of an attorney who is a member in good standing of the Florida Bar.

**1997 Amendment.** In 1997, the Florida Family Law Forms were completely revised to simplify and correct the forms. Additionally, the appendices were eliminated, the instructions contained in the appendices were incorporated into the forms, and the introduction following the Notice to Parties was created. Minor changes were also made to the Notice to Parties set forth below.

## **NOTICE TO PARTIES WHO ARE NOT REPRESENTED BY AN ATTORNEY WHO IS A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING OF THE FLORIDA BAR**

If you have questions or concerns about these forms, instructions, commentary, the use of the forms, or your legal rights, it is strongly recommended that you talk to an attorney. If you do not know an attorney, you should call the lawyer referral service listed in the yellow pages of the telephone book under "Attorney." If you do not have the money to hire an attorney, you should call the legal aid office in your area.

Because the law does change, the forms and information about them may have become outdated. You should be aware that changes may have taken place in the law or court rules that would affect the accuracy of the forms or instructions.

In no event will the Florida Supreme Court, The Florida Bar, or anyone contributing to the production of these forms or instructions be liable for any direct, indirect, or consequential damages resulting from their use.

### **FAMILY LAW PROCEDURES**

**Communication with the court.** Ex parte communication is communication with the judge with only one party present. Judges are not allowed to engage in ex parte communication except in very limited circumstances, so, absent specific authorization to the contrary, you should not try to speak with or write to the judge in your case unless the other party is present or has been properly notified. **If you have something you need to tell the judge, you must ask for a hearing and give notice to the other party or file a written statement in the court file and send a copy of the written statement to the other party.**

**Filing a case.** A case begins with the filing of a petition. A petition is a written request to the court for some type of legal action. The person who originally asks for legal action is called the petitioner and remains the petitioner throughout the case.

A petition is given to the clerk of the circuit court, whose office is usually located in the county courthouse or a branch of the county courthouse. A case number is assigned and an official court file is opened. Delivering the petition to the clerk's office is called filing a case. A filing fee is usually required.

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file a petition or other pleadings, motions, and documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your petition electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the circuit within which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

**Service of the original petition or supplemental petition.** When one party files a petition, motion, or other pleading, the other party must be "served" with a copy of the document. This means that the other party is given proper notice of the pending action(s) and any scheduled hearings. The person

against whom the original legal action is being requested is called the **respondent**, because he or she is expected to respond to the petition. The respondent remains the respondent throughout the case.

**Personal service** of the petition and summons on the respondent by a deputy sheriff or private process server is required in all **original petitions** and **supplemental petitions**, unless **constructive service** is permitted by law. Personal service may also be required in other actions by some judges.

**Constructive Service.** If you absolutely do not know where the other party to your case lives or if the other party resides in another state, you may be able to use **constructive service**; however, if constructive service is used, other than granting a divorce, the court may only grant limited relief, which cannot include either alimony or child support. For more information on constructive service, see **Notice of Action for Dissolution of Marriage (No Child or Financial Support)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a)(1), **Notice of Action for Family Cases with Minor Child(ren)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a)(2), **Affidavit of Diligent Search and Inquiry**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(b), and **Affidavit of Diligent Search**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(c).. Additionally, if the other party is in the military service of the United States, additional steps for service may be required. See, for example, **Memorandum for Certificate of Military Service**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.912(a). In sum, the law regarding constructive service and service on an individual in the military is very complex and you may wish to consult an attorney regarding these issues.

Forms for service of process are included in the Florida Family Law Forms, along with more detailed instructions and information regarding service. The instructions to those forms should be read **carefully** to ensure that you have properly served the other party. **If proper service is not obtained, the court cannot hear your case. Service must be in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.**

**Subsequent Service.** Other than the original or supplemental petitions, any time you file additional pleadings or motions in your case, you must provide a copy to the other party and include a **certificate of service**. Likewise, the other party must provide you with copies of everything that he or she files. **If the other party is represented by an attorney, you should serve the attorney unless service upon the other party is required by the court.**

**Electronic Service.** After the initial service of process of the petitioner or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you **must** review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at [www.flcourts.org](http://www.flcourts.org) through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

**SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO.** If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

**Default.** After being served with a petition or counterpetition, the other party has 20 days to file a response. If a response to a petition is not filed, the petitioner may file a **Motion for Default**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922(a), with the clerk. This means that you may proceed with your case and set a **final hearing**, and a **judge** will make a decision, even if the other party will not cooperate. For more information, see rule 12.080(c), Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure.

**Answer and Counterpetition.** After being served, the respondent has 20 days to file an answer admitting or denying each of the allegations contained in the petition. In addition to an answer, the respondent may also file a counterpetition. In a counterpetition, the respondent may request the same or some other relief or action not requested by the petitioner. If the respondent files a counterpetition, the petitioner should then file an **Answer to Counterpetition**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.903(d), and either admit or deny the allegations in the respondent's counterpetition.

**Mandatory disclosure.** Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires each party in a dissolution of marriage to exchange certain information and documents, and file a **Family Law Financial Affidavit**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.902(b) or (c). Failure to make this required disclosure within the time required by the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure may allow the court to dismiss the case or to refuse to consider the pleadings of the party failing to comply. This requirement also must be met in other family law cases, **except** adoptions, simplified dissolutions of marriage, enforcement proceedings, contempt proceedings, and proceedings for injunctions for domestic or repeat violence. The **Certificate of Compliance with Mandatory Disclosure**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.932, lists the documents that must be given to the other party. For more information see rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, and the instructions to the **Certificate of Compliance with Mandatory Disclosure**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.932.

**Parenting Plan.** If your case involves minor or dependent child(ren), a **Parenting Plan** shall be approved or established by the court. **Parenting Plan**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form, 12.995(a), **Safety-Focused Parenting Plan**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.995(b), or **Relocation/Long Distance Parenting Plan**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.995(c). The Parenting Plan shall be developed and agreed to by the parents and approved by a court.

**If the parents cannot agree, or if the agreed Parenting Plan is not approved, the court must establish a Parenting Plan.** The Parenting Plan shall contain a time-sharing schedule and should address the issues regarding the child(ren)'s education, health care, and physical, social, and emotional well-being.

**Setting a hearing or trial.** Generally, the court will have hearings on motions, final hearings on uncontested or default cases, and trials on contested cases. Before setting your case for **final hearing** or trial, certain requirements such as completing mandatory disclosure and filing certain papers and having them served on the other party must be met. These requirements vary depending on the type of case and the procedures in your particular jurisdiction. For further information, you should refer to the instructions for the type of form you are filing.



Next, you must obtain a hearing or trial date so that the court may consider your request. You should ask the clerk of court, or **family law intake staff** about the local procedure for setting a hearing or trial, which you should attend. These family law forms contain **orders** and **final judgments**, which the judge may use. You should ask the clerk of court or family law intake staff if you need to bring one of these forms with you to the hearing or trial. If so, you should type or print the heading, including the circuit, county, case number, division, and the parties' names, and leave the rest blank for the judge to complete at your hearing or trial.

The shaded areas below explain different parts of family law forms. Although each form you use may not contain each part explained below, all forms contain a case style which identifies the judicial circuit and county in Florida in which the case is filed, the division within that circuit to which the case is assigned, the parties in the case, and the number of the case. Some, but not all, forms require that the person signing the form state under oath that what he or she claims in the form is true; those particular forms must be signed in the presence of either a deputy clerk of the court or a notary public who witnesses your signature before notarizing the form. Most forms contain a nonlawyer clause which requests certain information be provided by any person who is not licensed to practice law in the State of Florida who has helped you to complete the form.

2

Each form that provides a blank space will have instructions on how to fill in the blank. Please follow all instructions which ask for specific information. Often these instructions appear in *italics*. [

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ (1) \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_ (3)  
Division: \_\_\_\_\_ (4)

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,  
and  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent.

- Line 1** The clerk of court can tell you the number of your judicial circuit. Type or print it here.
- Line 2** Type or print your county name on line (2).
- Line 3** If you are filing an initial petition or pleading, the Clerk of the Court will assign a case number after the case is filed. You should type or print this case number on all papers you file in this case.
- Line 4** The clerk of the court can tell you the name of the division in which your case is being filed, and you should type or print it here. Divisions vary from court to court. For example, your case may be filed in the civil division, the family division, or the juvenile division.
- Line 5** Type or print the legal name of the person who originally filed the case on line 5. This person is the petitioner because he/she is the one who filed the original petition.
- Line 6** Type or print the other party's legal name on line 6. The other party is the respondent because he/she is responding to the petition.

Some forms require that your signature be witnessed. If so, you must sign the form in the presence of a **notary public** or deputy clerk (employee of the clerk of the court's office). When signing the form, you must have a valid photo identification unless the notary knows you personally. You should completely fill in all lines (1 & 3–8) except 2 with the requested information, if applicable. **Line 2, the signature line,**

must be signed in the presence of the notary public or deputy clerk. **DO NOT SIGN OR FILL IN THE PART OF THE FORM WHICH ASKS FOR THE NOTARY'S OR CLERK'S SIGNATURE.** This section of the form is to be completed by either the deputy clerk or the notary public who is witnessing your signature.

**I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this petition and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.**

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ (1)

\_\_\_\_\_ (2)

(2)

Signature of Petitioner

Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_ (3)

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_ (4)

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ (5)

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ (6)

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_ (7)

Designated E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_ (8)

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

\_\_\_\_\_  
{Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or clerk.}

\_\_\_\_\_ Personally known

\_\_\_\_\_ Produced identification

\_\_\_\_\_ Type of identification produced \_\_\_\_\_

**Non-lawyer Clause.** The section below should be completed by anyone who helps you fill out these forms but is **not** an attorney who is a member in good standing of The Florida Bar, which means that he or she is not licensed to practice law in Florida.

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:**

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the: {either Petitioner or Respondent; or Husband or Wife}

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} \_\_\_\_\_ (1) \_\_\_\_\_,  
{name of business} \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_,  
{address} \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \_\_\_\_\_,  
{city} \_\_\_\_\_ (4) \_\_\_\_\_, {state} \_\_\_\_\_ (5) \_\_\_\_\_, {zip code} \_\_\_\_\_ (6) \_\_\_\_\_, {telephone number} \_\_\_\_\_ (7) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Line 1** The nonlawyer who helps you should type or print his or her name on line 1.

**Lines 2–7** The nonlawyer’s business name, address, (including street, city, state, zip code, and telephone number) should be typed or printed on lines 2–7.

In addition, a **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), should be completed if a nonlawyer assists you. The disclosure is available as a family law form and should be completed before the nonlawyer helps you. This is to be sure that you understand the role and limitations of a nonlawyer. You and the nonlawyer should keep a copy of this disclosure for your records.

## FAMILY LAW GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**Note:** The following definitions are intended to be helpful, BUT they are not intended to constitute legal advice or address every possible meaning of the term(s) contained in this glossary.

**Affidavit** - a written statement in which the facts stated are sworn or affirmed to be true.

**Alimony**-spousal support which may be ordered by the court in a proceeding for dissolution of marriage. Types of alimony include: bridge-the-gap, durational, rehabilitative, or retroactive, and may be either temporary or permanent. The court may order periodic payments, payments in lump sum, or both. In determining whether to award alimony, the court must determine whether either party has an actual need for alimony and whether the other party has the ability to pay. The court must consider the factors set forth in section 61.08, Florida Statutes, and must make certain written findings. An alimony award may not leave the paying party with significantly less net income than that of the receiving party without written findings of exceptional circumstances.

**Answer** - written response by a respondent that states whether he or she admits (agrees with) or denies (disagrees with) the allegations in the petition. Any allegations not specifically denied are considered to be admitted.

**Appeal** - asking a district court of appeal to review the decision in your case. There are strict procedural and time requirements for filing an appeal.

**Asset** - everything owned by you or your spouse, including property, cars, furniture, bank accounts, jewelry, life insurance policies, businesses, or retirement plans. An asset may be marital or nonmarital, but that distinction is for the court to determine if you and your spouse do not agree.

**Attorney** - a person with special education and training in the field of law who is a member in good standing of The Florida Bar and licensed to practice law in Florida. An attorney is the only person who is allowed to give you legal advice. An attorney may file your case and represent you in court, or just advise you of your rights before you file your own case. In addition to advising you of your rights, an attorney may tell you what to expect and help prepare you for court. In family law matters, you are not entitled to a court-appointed lawyer, like a public defender in a criminal case. However, legal assistance is often available for those who are unable to hire a private attorney. You may consult the yellow pages of the telephone directory for a listing of legal aid or lawyer referral services in your area, or ask your local clerk of court or family law intake staff what services are available in your area. You may also obtain information from the Florida Supreme Court's Internet site located at <http://www.flcourts.org>.

**Bond** - money paid to the clerk of court by one party in a case, to be held and paid to an enjoined party in the event that the first party causes loss or damage of property as a result of wrongfully enjoining the other party.

**Beneficiary Designation**-Florida law provides that a beneficiary designation made by or on behalf of a party providing for the payment or transference of an asset or benefit upon his or her death to the other spouse is void when the final judgment dissolving or declaring a marriage invalid is signed, unless the final judgment specifically states otherwise. Federal law and other statutory provisions may also apply. This includes, but is not limited to, such assets as life insurance policies, annuities, employee benefit plans, individual retirement accounts, and payable-on-death accounts. Whether or not to continue a beneficiary designation is a complex area of the law and you may wish to consult with an attorney.

**Bridge-the-Gap Alimony**-spousal support which is ordered to assist a party to make the transition from being married to being single. Bridge-the-Gap alimony is designed to assist a party with legitimate, identifiable short-time needs; its length cannot exceed two years and it cannot be modified.

**Central Depository**-the office of the clerk of court that is responsible for collecting and disbursing court ordered alimony and child support payments. The depository also keeps payment records and files judgments if support is not paid.

**Certificate of Service** - a document that must be filed whenever a form you are using does not contain a statement for you to fill in showing to whom you are sending copies of the form. Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914 is the certificate of service form and contains additional instructions.

**Certified Copy** - a copy of an order or final judgment, certified by the clerk of the circuit court to be an authentic copy.

**Certified Mail** - mail which requires the receiving party to sign as proof that they received it.

**Child Support** - money paid from one parent to the other for the benefit of their dependent or minor child(ren).

**Clerk of the Circuit Court** - elected official in whose office papers are filed, a case number is assigned, and case files are maintained. The clerk's office usually is located in the county courthouse.

**Concurrent Custody**-(for the purposes of a petition filed pursuant to chapter 751, Florida Statutes) means that an eligible extended family member is awarded custodial rights to care for a child or children concurrently with the child(ren)'s parent or parents.

**Constructive Service** - notification of the other party by newspaper publication or posting of notice at designated places when the other party cannot be located for personal service. You may also be able to use constructive service when the other party lives in another state. Constructive service is also called "service by publication." However, when constructive service is used, the relief the Court may grant is limited; that relief cannot include either alimony or child support. For more information on service, see the instructions for Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Forms 12.910(a) and 12.913(b) and Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Forms 12.913(a)(1) and (2).

**Contested Issues** - any or all issues upon which the parties are unable to agree and which must be resolved by the judge at a hearing or trial.

**Contingent Asset** - an asset that you **may** receive or get later, such as income, tax refund, accrued vacation or sick leave, a bonus, or an inheritance.

**Contingent Liability** - a liability that you **may** owe later, such as payments for lawsuits, unpaid taxes, or debts that you have agreed or guaranteed to pay if someone else does not.

**Counterpetition** - a written request to the court for legal action, which is filed by a respondent after being served with a petition.

**Custody Order** – a judgment or order incorporating a Parenting Plan is a child custody determination for the purposes of the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act, the International Child Abduction Remedies Act, 42 U.S.C. ss. 11601 et seq., the Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act, and the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction enacted at the Hague on October 25, 1980.

**Default** - a failure of a party to respond to the pleading of another party. This failure to respond may allow the court to decide the case without input from the party who did not appear or respond.

**Delinquent** - late.

**Dependent Child(ren)** - child(ren) who depend on their parent(s) for support either because they are under the age of 18, have a mental or physical disability that prevents them from supporting themselves, or are in high school, between the ages of 18 and 19, and performing in good faith with a reasonable expectation of graduation before the age of 19.

**Deputy Clerk** - an employee of the office of the clerk of court, which is usually located in the county courthouse or a branch of the county courthouse.

**Dissolution of Marriage** - divorce; a court action to end a marriage.

**Durational Alimony**-spousal support which is ordered to provide economic assistance for a set period of time following a marriage of short or moderate duration or following a marriage of long duration if there is no ongoing need for support on a permanent basis. Durational alimony terminates upon the death of either party or upon remarriage of the party receiving support. It may be modified or terminated, but cannot exceed the length of a marriage.

**Electronic Communication** – Contact, other than face-to-face contact, facilitated by tools such as telephones, electronic mail or email, webcams, video-conferencing equipment and software or other wired or wireless technologies, or other means of communication to supplement fact-to face contact between a parent and that parent’s minor child.

**Enjoined** - prohibited by the court from doing a specific act.

**Ex Parte** - communication with the judge by only one party. In order for a judge to speak with either party, the other party must have been properly notified and have an opportunity to be heard. If you have something you wish to tell the judge, you should ask for a hearing or file information in the clerk of court’s office, with certification that a copy was sent to the other party.

**Extended Family Member**-(for the purposes of a petition filed pursuant to chapter 751, Florida Statutes) is a person who is either:

- 1) A relative of a minor child within the third degree by blood or marriage to the parent; OR
- 2) The stepparent of a minor child if the stepparent is currently married to the parent of the child and is not a party in a pending dissolution, separate maintenance, domestic violence, or other civil or criminal proceeding in any court of competent jurisdiction involving one or both of the child’s parents as an adverse party.

**Family Law Intake Staff** - a court’s employee(s) who is (are) available to assist you in filing a family law case. Family law intake staff are not attorneys and cannot give legal advice. They may only assist you with filling out the form(s). Your local clerk’s office can tell you if your county has such assistance available.

**Filing** - delivering a petition, response, motion, or other pleading in a court case to the clerk of court’s office.

**Filing Fee** - an amount of money, set by law, that the petitioner must pay when filing a case. If you cannot afford to pay the fee, you must file an **Application for Determination of Civil Indigent Status**, to ask the clerk to file your case without payment of the fee. This form can be obtained from the clerk’s office.

**Final Hearing** - trial in your case.

**Financial Affidavit** - a sworn statement that contains information regarding your income, expenses, assets, and liabilities.

**Final Judgment** - a written document signed by a judge and recorded in the clerk of the circuit court’s office that contains the judge’s decision in your case.

**Guardian ad Litem** - a neutral person who may be appointed by the court to evaluate or investigate your child’s situation, and file a report with the court about what is in the best interests of your child(ren). Guardians do not “work for” either party. The guardian may interview the parties, visit their homes,

visit the child(ren)'s school(s) and speak with teachers, or use other resources to make their recommendation.

**Hearing** - a legal proceeding before a judge or designated officer (general magistrate or hearing officer) on a motion.

**Health Insurance** - coverage under a fee-for-service arrangement, health care maintenance organization, or preferred provider organization, and other types of coverage available to either parent, under which medical services could be provided to a minor or dependent child.

**Judge** - an elected official who is responsible for deciding matters on which you and the other parties in your case are unable to agree. A judge is a neutral person who is responsible for ensuring that your case is resolved in a manner which is fair, equitable, and legal. **A judge is prohibited by law from giving you or the other party any legal advice, recommendations, or other assistance, and may not talk to either party unless both parties are present, represented, or at a properly scheduled hearing.**

**Judicial Assistant** - the judge's personal staff assistant.

**Liabilities** - everything owed by you or your spouse, including mortgages, credit cards, or car loans. A liability may be marital or nonmarital, but that distinction is for the court to determine if you and your spouse do not agree.

**Lump Sum Alimony** - money ordered to be paid by one spouse to another in a limited number of payments, often a single payment.

**Mandatory Disclosure** - items that must be disclosed by both parties except those exempted from disclosure by Florida Family Law Rule 12.285.

**Marital Asset** - generally, anything that you and/or your spouse acquired or received (by gift or purchase) during the marriage. For example, something you owned before your marriage **may** be nonmarital. An asset may only be determined to be marital by agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

**Marital Liability** - generally, any debt that you and/or your spouse incurred during the marriage. A debt may only be determined to be nonmarital by agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

**Mediator** - a person who is trained and certified to assist parties in reaching an agreement before going to court. Mediators do not take either party's side and are not allowed to give legal advice. They are only responsible for helping the parties reach an agreement and putting that agreement into writing. In some areas, mediation of certain family law cases may be required before going to court.

**Modification** - a change made by the court in an order or final judgment.

**Motion** - a request made to the court, other than a petition.

**No Contact** - a court order directing a party not speak to, call, send mail to, visit, or go near his or her spouse, ex-spouse, child(ren), or other family member.

**Nonlawyer** - a person who is not a member in good standing of The Florida Bar.

**Nonmarital Asset** - generally, anything owned separately by you or your spouse. An asset may only be determined to be nonmarital by either agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

**Nonmarital Liability** - generally, any debt that you or your spouse incurred before your marriage or since your separation. A debt may only be determined to be nonmarital by either agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

**Nonparty** - a person who is not the petitioner or respondent in a court case.

**Notary Public** - a person authorized to witness signatures on court related forms.

**Obligee** - a person to whom money, such as child support or alimony, is owed.

**Obligor** - a person who is ordered by the court to pay money, such as child support or alimony.

**Order** - a written decision, signed by a judge and filed in the clerk of the circuit court's office that contains the judge's decision on part of your case, usually on a motion.

**Original Petition** - see **Petition**.

**Parenting Course** - a class that teaches parents how to help their child(ren) cope with divorce and other family issues.

**Parenting Plan** – a document created to govern the relationship between the parents relating to the decisions that must be made regarding the minor child(ren). The Parenting Plan must contain a time-sharing schedule for the parents and child(ren) and shall address the issues concerning the minor child(ren). The issues concerning the minor child(ren) may include, but are not limited to, the child(ren)'s education, health care, and physical, social, and emotional well-being. In creating the Plan, all circumstances between the parents, including their historic relationship, domestic violence, and other factors must be taken into consideration. The Parenting Plan must be developed and agreed to by the parents and approved by the court. If the parents cannot agree to a Parenting Plan, or if the parents agreed to a plan that is not approved by the court, a Parenting Plan will be established by the court with or without the use of **parenting plan recommendations**.

**Parenting Plan Recommendation** – A nonbinding recommendation concerning one or more elements of a Parenting Plan made by a court-appointed mental health practitioner or other professional designated pursuant to either section 61.20 or 61.401, Florida Statutes, or Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.363.

**Party** - a person involved in a court case, either as a petitioner or respondent.

**Paternity Action** - A lawsuit used to determine whether a designated individual is the father of a specific child or children.

**Payor** - an employer or other person who provides income to an obligor.

**Permanent Alimony** - spousal support ordered to provide for the needs and necessities of life as they were established during the marriage for a party who lacks the financial ability to meet his or her needs and necessities after dissolution of marriage. Permanent alimony is paid at a specified, periodic rate until: modification by a court order; the death of either party; or the remarriage of the party receiving alimony, whichever occurs first. Permanent alimony requires consideration of the factors set forth in section 61.08(2), Florida Statutes, and must include certain written findings by the court.

**Personal Service** - when a summons and a copy of a petition (or other pleading) that has been filed with the court are delivered by a deputy sheriff or private process server to the other party. Personal service is required for all petitions and supplemental petitions.

**Petition** - a written request to the court for legal action, which begins a court case.

**Petitioner** - the person who originally files a petition that begins a court case. The Petitioner remains the Petitioner throughout the duration of the case.

**Pleading** - a formal, written statement of exactly what a party wants the court to do in a lawsuit or court action.

**Pro Se or Self-Represented Litigant** - a person who appears in court without the assistance of a lawyer.

**Pro Se Coordinator** - see **Family Law Intake Staff**.

**Rehabilitative Alimony** - spousal support ordered to be paid for a limited period of time to allow one of the parties an opportunity to complete a plan of education or training, according to a rehabilitative plan accepted by the court, so that he or she may better support himself or herself after dissolution of marriage.

**Relocation**- a change in the location of the principal residence of a parent or other person in accordance with section 61.13001, Florida Statutes.



**Respondent** - the person who is served with a petition requesting some legal action against him or her. The Respondent remains the Respondent throughout the duration of the case.

**Scientific Paternity Testing** - a medical test to determine the biological father of a child

**Service** - the delivery of legal documents to a party. Service must be in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

**Shared Parental Responsibility** - an arrangement under which both parents have full parental rights and responsibilities for their child(ren), and the parents make major decisions affecting the welfare of the child(ren) jointly. Shared Parental Responsibility is presumptive in Florida.

**Sole Parental Responsibility** - a parenting arrangement under which the responsibility for the minor child(ren) is given to one parent by the court, with or without rights of time-sharing to the other parent.

**State Disbursement Unit**- the unit established and operated by the Title IV-D agency to provide one central address for the collection and disbursement of child support payments made in both Department of Revenue and non-Department of Revenue cases, in which the obligation is paid through an income deduction order.

**Supervised Time-Sharing**- a parenting arrangement under which time-sharing between a parent and his or her child(ren) is supervised by either a friend, family member, or a supervised visitation center.

**Supplemental Petition** - a petition that may be filed by either party after the judge has made a decision in a case and a final judgment or order has been entered. For example, a supplemental petition may be used to request that the court modify the previously entered final judgment or order.

**Supportive Relationship**-a relationship, defined in section 61.14(1)(b)1, Florida Statutes, existing between an obligee who receives alimony and a person with whom that obligee resides.

**Time-Sharing Schedule** – a timetable that must be included in the Parenting Plan that specifies the time, including overnights and holidays that a minor child or children will spend with each parent. The time-sharing schedule shall either be developed and agreed to by the parents of a minor child or children and is approved by the court, or established by the court if the parents cannot agree, or if their agreed-upon schedule is not approved by the court.

**Trial** - the final hearing in a contested case.

**Uncontested** - any and all issues on which the parties are able to agree and which are part of a marital settlement agreement.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Division \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,

Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_,

Respondent.

**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY FAMILY LAW DIVISION  
THE TWELVE RULES OF COURTROOM CIVILITY**

The judges, general masters and hearing officers assigned to the Family Law Division in Hillsborough County 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.

The following guidelines are meant to assist you in meeting appropriate standards of conduct when you appear in court.

1. Be truthful in all statements that you make to the court. False statements under oath constitute perjury which is a criminal offense.
2. Do not call or write to the judge. As a general rule, documents and testimony can be read or heard by the judge only in the presence of both parties.
3. Be courteous. Other than to make appropriate objections, do not interrupt anyone who is speaking. If you are representing yourself and you have an objection to something a witness says, merely say, "Objection" and the court will allow you to state the nature of your objection.
4. Treat all court personnel with respect, including bailiffs, judicial assistants, clerks, court investigators, judges, general masters and hearing officers.
5. Do not make faces or gestures at the opposing party, his or her attorney, witnesses or the judge while in the courtroom. Speak directly to the judge or your attorney, not the opposing party or a witness. You will be given an opportunity to be heard by the court.

6. Show your respect for the court by dressing appropriately and wearing clean clothes. Coats, ties, suits and dresses are welcome but not required. Shorts, blue jeans, t-shirts and sneakers are not appropriate.
7. Do not bring any food or beverage into the courtroom and do not chew gum or eat candy in the courtroom.
8. Do not bring children to the courthouse (except in adoption cases), unless the court has so ordered.
9. Be aware that witnesses you bring to court are not usually permitted to remain in the courtroom while you, your spouse or former spouse, or other witnesses testify.
10. Bring at least four (4) copies of any documents that you intend to offer into evidence.
11. All documents should be pre-marked with a case number, name, the date and a space for the judge to admit the document into evidence.
12. The courthouse is located in a congested area. Parking is limited and takes time. Plan your time so you can park and be available at least fifteen (15) minutes before the hearing is scheduled to begin.

I have read and acknowledge my responsibilities as a litigant.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Petitioner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Respondent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I have read and reviewed with my client his or her responsibilities as a litigant.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Attorney

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE  
FORM 12.900(a)  
DISCLOSURE FROM NONLAWYER (11/12)**

**When should this form be used?**

This form must be used when anyone who is **not** a lawyer in good standing with The Florida Bar helps you complete any Florida Family Law Form. Attorneys who are licensed to practice in other states but not Florida, or who have been disbarred or suspended from the practice of law in Florida, are nonlawyers for the purposes of the Florida Family Law Forms and instructions.

The nonlawyer must complete this form and both of you are to sign it before the nonlawyer assists you in completing any Family Law Form.

**In addition**, on any other form with which a nonlawyer helps you, the nonlawyer shall complete the nonlawyer section located at the bottom of the form unless otherwise specified in the instructions to the form. This is to protect you and be sure that you are informed in advance of the nonlawyer's limitations.

**What should I do next?**

A copy of this disclosure, signed by both the nonlawyer and the person, must be given to the person to retain and the nonlawyer must keep a copy in the person's file. The nonlawyer shall also keep copies for at least 6 years of all forms given to the person being assisted.

**Special Notes**

This disclosure form does **NOT** act as or constitute a waiver, disclaimer, or limitation of liability.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent.

### DISCLOSURE FROM NONLAWYER

{Name} \_\_\_\_\_ told me that he/she is a nonlawyer and may not give legal advice, cannot tell me what my rights or remedies are, cannot tell me how to testify in court, and cannot represent me in court.

Rule 10-2.1(b) of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar defines a paralegal as a person who works under the supervision of a member of The Florida Bar and who performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a member of The Florida Bar is responsible. Only persons who meet the definition may call themselves paralegals. {Name} \_\_\_\_\_, informed me that he/she is not a paralegal as defined by the rule and cannot call himself/herself a paralegal.

{Name} \_\_\_\_\_, told me that he/she may only type the factual information provided by me in writing into the blanks on the form. Except for typing, {name} \_\_\_\_\_, may not tell me what to put in the form and may not complete the form for me. However, if using a form approved by the Supreme Court of Florida, {name} \_\_\_\_\_, may ask me factual questions to fill in the blanks on the form and may also tell me how to file the form.

{Choose **one** only}

\_\_\_\_\_ I can read English.

\_\_\_\_\_ I cannot read English, but this disclosure was read to me [fill in **both** blanks] by  
{name} \_\_\_\_\_ in {language} \_\_\_\_\_, which I understand.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Party

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of **NONLAWYER**

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE  
FORM 12.928  
COVER SHEET FOR FAMILY COURT CASES (02/24)**

**When should this form be used?**

The Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases and the information contained in it does not replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other documents as required by law. This form shall be filed by the petitioner/party opening or reopening a case for the use of the **clerk of the circuit court** for the purpose of reporting judicial workload data pursuant to Florida Statutes section 25.075.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. The petitioner must **file** this cover sheet with the first pleading or motion filed to open or reopen a case in all domestic and juvenile cases.

**What should I do next?**

Follow these instructions for completing the form:

- I. Case Style. Enter the name of the court, the appropriate case number assigned at the time of filing of the original petition, the name of the judge assigned (if applicable), and the name (last, first, middle initial) of the petitioner(s) and respondent(s).
- II. Type of Action /Proceeding. Place a check beside the proceeding you are initiating. If you are filing more than one type of proceeding, (such as a modification and an enforcement proceeding) against the same party at the same time, then you must complete a separate cover sheet for each action being filed.
  - (A) Initial Action/Petition
  - (B) Reopening Case. If you check "Reopening Case," indicate whether you are filing a modification or supplemental petition or an action for enforcement by placing a check beside the appropriate action/petition.
    1. Modification/Supplemental Petition
    2. Motion for Civil Contempt/ Enforcement
    3. Other – All reopening actions not involving modification/supplemental petitions or petition enforcement.
- III. Type of Case. Place a check beside the appropriate case. If the case fits more than one category, select the most definitive. Definitions of the categories are provided below.
  - (A) Simplified Dissolution of Marriage- petitions for the termination of marriage pursuant to Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.105.
  - (B) Dissolution of Marriage - petitions for the termination of marriage pursuant to Chapter 61, Florida Statutes, other than simplified dissolution.

- (C) Domestic Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against domestic violence pursuant to section 741.30, Florida Statutes.
- (D) Dating Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against dating violence pursuant to section 784.046, Florida Statutes.
- (E) Repeat Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against repeat violence pursuant to section 784.046, Florida Statutes.
- (F) Sexual Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against sexual violence pursuant to section 784.046, Florida Statutes.
- (G) Stalking-all matters relating to injunctions for protection against stalking pursuant to section 784.0485, Florida Statutes
- (H) Support - IV-D - all matters relating to child or spousal support in which an application for assistance has been filed with the Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement under Title IV-D, Social Security Act, except for such matters relating to dissolution of marriage petitions (sections 409.2564, 409.2571, and 409.2597, Florida Statutes), paternity, or UIFSA.
- (I) Support-Non IV-D - all matters relating to child or spousal support in which an application for assistance has **not** been filed under Title IV-D, Social Security Act.
- (J) UIFSA- IV-D - all matters relating to Chapter 88, Florida Statutes, in which an application for assistance has been filed under Title IV-D, Social Security Act.
- (K) UIFSA - Non IV-D - all matters relating to Chapter 88, Florida Statutes, in which an application for assistance has **not** been filed under Title IV-D, Social Security Act.
- (L) Support for Dependent Adult Children – all matters related to support of a dependent adult child.
- (M) Other Family Court - all matters involving time-sharing and/or parenting plans relating to minor child(ren), support unconnected with dissolution of marriage, annulment, delayed birth certificates pursuant to Florida Statutes section 382.0195, expedited affirmation of parental status pursuant to Florida Statutes section 742.16, termination of parental rights proceedings pursuant to Florida Statutes section 63.087, declaratory judgment actions related to premarital, marital, post-marital agreements, or other matters not included in the categories above.
- (N) Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 63 - all matters relating to adoption pursuant to Chapter 63, Florida Statutes, excluding any matters arising out of Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.
- (O) Name Change - all matters relating to name change, pursuant to section 68.07, Florida Statutes.
- (P) Paternity/Disestablishment of Paternity – all matters relating to paternity pursuant to Chapter 742, Florida Statutes.
- (Q) Juvenile Delinquency - all matters relating to juvenile delinquency pursuant to Chapter 985, Florida Statutes.
- (R) Petition for Dependency - all matters relating to petitions for dependency.
- (S) Shelter Petition – all matters relating to shelter petitions pursuant to Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.
- (T) Termination of Parental Rights Arising Out Of Chapter 39 – all matters relating to

- (U) termination of parental rights pursuant to Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.
- (V) Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 39 – all matters relating to adoption pursuant to Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.
- (W) CINS/FINS – all matters relating to children in need of services (and families in need of services) pursuant to Chapter 984, Florida Statutes.
- (X) Petition for Temporary or Concurrent Custody by Extended Family-all matters relating to petitions for temporary or concurrent custody pursuant to Chapter 751.
- (Y) Emancipation of a Minor-all matters relating to emancipation of a minor pursuant to Chapter 743.

**ATTORNEY OR PARTY SIGNATURE.** Sign the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases. Print legibly the name of the person signing the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases. Attorneys must include a Florida Bar number. Insert the date the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases is signed. Signature is a certification that filer has provided accurate information on the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases.

**Nonlawyer** Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

A copy of this form must be filed with the court and served on the other party or his or her attorney. The copy you are serving to the other party must be either mailed, e-mailed, or hand-delivered to the opposing party or his or her attorney on the same day indicated on the certificate of service. If it is mailed, it must be postmarked on the date indicated in the certificate of service.

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING**

The Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION**

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you must



review Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at [www.flcourts.org](http://www.flcourts.org) through the link to the Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

**SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO.** If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by email, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General), Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516.

### **Where can I look for more information?**

**Before proceeding, you should read “General Information for Self-Represented Litigants” found at the beginning of these forms.** For further information, see Rule 12.100, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure.

## COVER SHEET FOR FAMILY COURT CASES

### I. Case Style

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent.

- II. Type of Action/Proceeding. Place a check beside the proceeding you are initiating. If you are filing more than one type of proceeding (such as a modification and an enforcement proceeding) against the same party at the same time, then you must complete a separate cover sheet for each action being filed. **If you are reopening a case, choose one of the three options below it.**

- (A) \_\_\_\_ Initial Action/Petition  
(B) \_\_\_\_ Reopening Case  
    1. \_\_\_\_ Modification/Supplemental Petition  
    2. \_\_\_\_ Motion for Civil Contempt/Enforcement  
    3. \_\_\_\_ Other

- III. Type of Case. If the case fits more than one type of case, select the most definitive.

- (A) \_\_\_\_ Simplified Dissolution of Marriage  
(B) \_\_\_\_ Dissolution of Marriage  
(C) \_\_\_\_ Domestic Violence  
(D) \_\_\_\_ Dating Violence  
(E) \_\_\_\_ Repeat Violence  
(F) \_\_\_\_ Sexual Violence  
(G) \_\_\_\_ Stalking  
(H) \_\_\_\_ Support IV-D (Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)  
(I) \_\_\_\_ Support Non-IV-D (**not** Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)  
(J) \_\_\_\_ UIFSA IV-D (Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)  
(K) \_\_\_\_ UIFSA Non-IV-D (**not** Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)  
(L) \_\_\_\_ Support for Dependent Adult Children – all matters related to support of a dependent adult child.  
(M) \_\_\_\_ Other Family Court  
(N) \_\_\_\_ Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 63

- (O) \_\_\_\_ Name Change
- (P) \_\_\_\_ Paternity/Disestablishment of Paternity
- (Q) \_\_\_\_ Juvenile Delinquency
- (R) \_\_\_\_ Petition for Dependency
- (S) \_\_\_\_ Shelter Petition
- (T) \_\_\_\_ Termination of Parental Rights Arising Out Of Chapter 39
- (U) \_\_\_\_ Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 39
- (V) \_\_\_\_ CINS/FINS
- (W) \_\_\_\_ Petition for Temporary or Concurrent Custody by Extended Family
- (X) \_\_\_\_ Emancipation of a Minor

**IV.** Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(d) requires that a Notice of Related Cases Form, Family Law Form 12.900(h), be filed with the initial pleading/petition by the filing attorney or self-represented litigant in order to notify the court of related cases. Is Form 12.900(h) being filed with this Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases and initial pleading/petition?

\_\_\_\_ No, to the best of my knowledge, no related cases exist.  
 \_\_\_\_ Yes, all related cases are listed on Family Law Form 12.900(h).

#### ATTORNEY OR PARTY SIGNATURE

I CERTIFY that the information I have provided in this cover sheet is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ FL Bar No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Attorney or party (Bar number, if attorney)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Type or print name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (E-mail Address(es))

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:** [fill in all blanks]

This form was prepared for the: {choose only **one**} \_\_\_\_ Petitioner \_\_\_\_ Respondent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} \_\_\_\_\_

{name of business} \_\_\_\_\_

{address} \_\_\_\_\_

{city} \_\_\_\_\_, {state} \_\_\_\_\_, {zip code} \_\_\_\_\_, {telephone number} \_\_\_\_\_.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COMPLETION OF A BLANK FAMILY LAW PETITION

The blank petition that is attached to this instruction sheet may be used to make a request for judicial action in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Tampa, Florida. **This petition should only be used when you are certain that a more suitable form has not yet been approved by the Florida Supreme Court.** Court approved form petitions are available for the following causes of action, and should be utilized instead of the blank petition (these approved forms can be found at the [Florida State Courts Self-Help website](#)):

- Petition for Simplified Dissolution of Marriage - Form 12.901(a)
- Petition for Dissolution of Marriage with Dependent or Minor Child(ren) – Form 12.901(b)(1)
- Petition for Dissolution of Marriage with Property but No Dependent or Minor Child(ren) – Form 12.901(b)(2)
- Petition for Dissolution of Marriage with No Dependent or Minor Child(ren) or Property – Form 12.901(b)(3)
- Petition for Support Unconnected with Dissolution of Marriage with Dependent or Minor Child(ren)- Form 12.904(a)
- Petition for Support Unconnected With Dissolution of Marriage with No Dependent or Minor Child(ren) – Form 12.904(b)
- Supplemental Petition to Modify Parenting Plan/Time-Sharing Schedule and Other Relief - Form 12.905(a)
- Supplemental Petition for Modification of Child Support. - Form 12.905(b)
- Supplemental Petition for Modification of Alimony – Form 12.905(c)
- Supplemental Petition for Temporary Modification of Parenting Issues for Child(ren) of Parent Activated, Deployed, or Temporarily Assigned to Military Service – Form 12.905(d)
- Petition for Injunction for Protection Against Domestic Violence - Form 12.980(a)
- Petition for Injunction for Protection Against Repeat Violence - Form 12.980(f)
- Petition for Injunction for Protection Against Dating Violence – Form 12.980(n)
- Petition for Injunction for Protection Against Sexual Violence – Form 12.980(s)
- Joint Petition for Adoption by Stepparent- Form 12.981(b)(1)
- Petition for Adoption of Adult by Stepparent – Form 12.981(c)(1)
- Petition for Adoption Information - Form 12.981(d)(1)
- Petition for Change of Name (Adult) – Form 12.982(a)
- Petition for Change of Name (Minor Child(ren) – Form 12.982(c)
- Petition for Change of Name (Family) – Form 12.982(f)
- Petition to Determine Paternity and for Related Relief – Form 12.983

Before using the blank petition, you need to determine whether you should file a petition or a motion. A petition is the pleading that begins a lawsuit, or reopens a closed lawsuit. You must use a petition to begin a lawsuit against someone, or to modify a previous court order. A motion is used to make a specific request for a court order during the course of a pending lawsuit

after a petition has already been filed, or to ask the court to enforce a previous court order or find someone in contempt of court.

If you decide to use the attached blank petition, you must set forth your current legal problem or concern in the blank numbered paragraphs. Then, in the “Wherefore” section, you must set forth exactly what you want the court to order. The court generally cannot order something for your benefit, unless you specifically request what you want the court to order. After fully stating your legal problem and your request for a court order, you must sign the petition in front of a notary public, who then must notarize the petition.

You will need to notify the other party of the pending lawsuit against them once you file your petition. This notification will be achieved through personal service of the documents upon the other party. In order to do this, you will need to complete a “Summons on Personal Service on an Individual”. ([Form 12.910\(a\)](#)); and a “[Process Service Memorandum](#)” (Form 12.910(b)).

When you are ready to file the petition, make enough extra copies so that you have a copy for your files, and so that each party to the action can be personally served with a copy of the petition by a certified process server. The original petition and accompanying documents must be filed with the court. In most cases, the court will charge you a fee for filing your petition.

As stated earlier, you are also required to have your petition served personally upon the other party. To do this, you will need to pay either the Sheriff’s Office or a private process server to personally serve the other party with process (which includes a summons and a copy of your petition). Please check with the Clerk’s Office to determine how much you have to pay in order to file the petition and also to have each party to the action served with process.

If you choose to file your petition in person, you may file at the following locations:

Edgecomb Courthouse  
800 Twiggs Street, Room 101,  
Tampa, FL 33602 Monday - Friday  
(8 AM - 5 PM)

SouthShore Regional Service Center  
410 30th St. S.E.  
Ruskin, FL 33570 Monday - Friday  
(8 AM - 5 PM)

Brandon Regional Service Center  
311 Pauls Drive  
Suite 110  
Brandon, FL 33511 Monday - Friday  
(8 AM - 5 PM)

Plant City Courthouse  
302 North Michigan Avenue  
Plant City, FL 33563 Monday - Friday  
(8 AM - 5 PM).

If you choose to file by mail, you should send your documents to: Clerk of the Court, P.O. Box 3450, Tampa, Florida 33601. The phone number for the Family Law Department is 276-8100 extension 3450. If you have questions or concerns about your petition that you cannot resolve yourself, it is strongly recommended that you consult with a lawyer before taking any further action.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA

\_\_\_\_\_, Case No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner  
AND  
Division \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.  
Respondent.

**PETITION TO/FOR \_\_\_\_\_**

The facts supporting this Petition are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Because of the above facts, the Petitioner requests that the court order the following:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this document and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.**

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Petitioner

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE OF FLORIDA  
COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH

Sworn to (or affirmed) and subscribed before me, by means of ☐ physical presence or ☐ online notarization, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ (year), by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

\_\_\_\_\_ [Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of  
notary or deputy clerk.]

\_\_\_\_\_ Personally known

\_\_\_\_\_ Produced identification / Type of identification produced: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:** [fill in **all** blanks] I, *{full legal name and trade name of nonlawyer}*

\_\_\_\_\_, a nonlawyer, whose address is *{street}*

\_\_\_\_\_, *{city}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{state}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{phone}*

\_\_\_\_\_, helped *{name}* \_\_\_\_\_, who is the  
petitioner, fill out this form.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW  
FORM 12.902(d)  
UNIFORM CHILD CUSTODY JURISDICTION AND ENFORCEMENT ACT  
(UCCJEA) AFFIDAVIT  
(02/18)**

**When should this form be used?**

This form should be used in any case involving parental responsibility for, custody of, or time-sharing or visitation with, any minor child(ren). This **affidavit** is **required** even if the parental responsibility for, custody of, or time-sharing or visitation with, the minor child(ren) is not in dispute.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should sign the form before a **notary public** or **deputy clerk**. You should then **file** it with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where the petition was filed and keep a copy for your records.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING**

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed**

**What should I do next?**

A copy of this form must be mailed, e-mailed, or hand delivered to the other party in your case, if it is not served on him or her with your initial papers.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION**

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you **must** review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at [www.flcourts.org](http://www.flcourts.org) through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the



A-Z Topical Index.

**SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO.** If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

### **Where can I look for more information?**

**Before proceeding, you should read General Information for Self-Represented Litigants found at the beginning of these forms.** The words that are in **bold underline** in these instructions are defined there. For further information, see sections 61.501-61.542, Florida Statutes.

### **Special notes...**

With this form, you must also file a **Notice of Confidential Information within Court Filing**, Florida Rules of Judicial Administration Appendix to Rule 2.420 Form.

Effective October 1, 2008, terms such as custodial parent, noncustodial parent, primary residential parent, secondary residential parent, and visitation were removed from Chapter 61, Florida Statutes; however, because the UCCJEA uses the terms, custody and visitation, they are included in this form. Parents must develop a Parenting Plan that includes, among other things, their time-sharing schedule with the minor child(ren). If the parents cannot agree, a parenting plan will be established by the Court.

If you are the petitioner in an injunction for protection against domestic violence case and you have filed a **Request for Confidential Filing of Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(h), you should write confidential in any space on this form that would require you to write the address where you are currently living.

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of a **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent.

## UNIFORM CHILD CUSTODY JURISDICTION AND ENFORCEMENT ACT (UCCJEA) AFFIDAVIT

I, {full legal name} \_\_\_\_\_, being sworn, certify that the following statements are true:

1. The number of minor child(ren) subject to this proceeding is \_\_\_\_\_. The name, place of birth, birth date, and sex of each child; the present address, periods of residence, and places where each child has lived **within the past five (5) years**; and the name, present address, and relationship to the child of each person with whom the child has lived during that time are:

### THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS TRUE ABOUT CHILD # 1 :

Child's Full Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

### Child's Residence for the past 5 years:

Dates (From/To)	Address (including city and state) where child lived	Name and present address of person child lived with	Relationship to child
_____/present*			
_____/____			
_____/____			
_____/____			

____/____			
____/____			

**\* If you are the petitioner in an injunction for protection against domestic violence case and you have filed a Request for Confidential Filing of Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(h), you should write confidential in any space on this form that would require you to enter the address where you are currently living.**

**THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS TRUE ABOUT CHILD # \_\_\_\_:**

Child's Full Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Residence for the past 5 years:**

Dates (From/To)	Address (including city and state) where child lived	Name and present address of person child lived with	Relationship to child
____/____ ____/present			
____/____			
____/____			
____/____			
____/____			
____/____			

**THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS TRUE ABOUT CHILD # \_\_\_\_:**

Child's Full Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Residence for the past 5 years:**

Dates (From/To)	Address (including city and state) where child lived	Name and present address of person child lived with	Relationship to child
____/____ ____/present			

____/____			
____/____			
____/____			
____/____			
____/____			

**2. Participation in custody or time-sharing proceeding(s):**

*[Choose only one]*

\_\_\_\_\_ I HAVE NOT participated as a party, witness, or in any capacity in any other litigation or custody proceeding in this or any other state, jurisdiction, or country, concerning parental responsibility for, custody of, or time-sharing or visitation with a child subject to this proceeding.

\_\_\_\_\_ I HAVE participated as a party, witness, or in any capacity in any other litigation or custody proceeding in this or another state, jurisdiction, or country, concerning parental responsibility for, custody of, or time-sharing or visitation with a child subject to this proceeding.

*Explain:*

- Name of each child: \_\_\_\_\_
- Type of proceeding: \_\_\_\_\_
- Court and state: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of court order or judgment (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Information about custody or time-sharing proceeding(s):**

*[Choose only one]*

\_\_\_\_\_ I HAVE NO INFORMATION of any parental responsibility, custody, time-sharing, or visitation proceeding pending in a court of this or any other state, jurisdiction, or country concerning a child subject to this proceeding.

\_\_\_\_\_ I HAVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION concerning a parental responsibility, custody, time-sharing, or visitation proceeding pending in a court of this or another state concerning a child subject to this proceeding, other than set out in item 2. *Explain:*

- Name of each child involved in said litigation: \_\_\_\_\_
- Type of proceeding: \_\_\_\_\_
- Court and state: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of court order or judgment (if any): \_\_\_\_\_
- Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Persons not a party to this proceeding:**

*[Choose only one]*

\_\_\_\_\_ I DO NOT KNOW OF ANY PERSON in this or any other state, jurisdiction, or country, who is not a party to this proceeding and who has physical custody or claims to have parental responsibility for, custody of, or time-sharing or visitation with respect to any child subject to this proceeding.

\_\_\_\_\_ I KNOW THAT THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON(S), not a party to this proceeding, has (have) physical custody or claim(s) to have parental responsibility for, custody of, or time-sharing or visitation with respect to any child subject to this proceeding:

a. Name and address of person: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ has physical custody

\_\_\_\_\_ claims parental responsibility or custody rights

\_\_\_\_\_ claims time-sharing or visitation

Name of each child: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Name and address of person: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ has physical custody

\_\_\_\_\_ claims parental responsibility or custody rights

\_\_\_\_\_ claims time-sharing or visitation

Name of each child: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Name and address of person: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ has physical custody

\_\_\_\_\_ claims parental responsibility or custody rights

\_\_\_\_\_ claims time-sharing or visitation

Name of each child: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Knowledge of prior child support proceedings:**

*[Choose only one]*

\_\_\_\_\_ The child(ren) described in this affidavit are NOT subject to existing child support order(s) in this or any other state, jurisdiction, or country..

\_\_\_\_\_ The child(ren) described in this affidavit are subject to the following existing child support order(s):

a. Name of each child: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Type of proceeding: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Court and address: \_\_\_\_\_

d. Date of court order/judgment (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

e. Amount of child support ordered to be paid and by whom: \_\_\_\_\_

6. I acknowledge that I have a continuing duty to advise this Court of any parental responsibility, custody, time-sharing or visitation , child support, or guardianship proceeding (including dissolution of marriage, separate maintenance, child neglect, or dependency) concerning the child(ren) in this state or any other state about which information is obtained during this proceeding.

7. A completed Notice of **Confidential Information within Court Filing**, Florida Rules of Judicial Administration Appendix to Rule 2.420 Form, is filed with this Affidavit.

I certify that a copy of this document was (    ) e-served (    ) mailed (    ) faxed and mailed (    ) hand delivered to the person(s) listed below on {date} \_\_\_\_\_.

**Other party or his/her attorney:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

**I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this affidavit and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.**

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Party

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or clerk.]

\_\_\_\_\_ Personally known

\_\_\_\_\_ Produced identification

Type of identification produced \_\_\_\_\_

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:**

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the {choose only **one**} \_\_\_\_\_ Petitioner \_\_\_\_\_ Respondent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} \_\_\_\_\_,

{name of business} \_\_\_\_\_,

{address} \_\_\_\_\_,

{city} \_\_\_\_\_, {state} \_\_\_\_\_, {zip code} \_\_\_\_\_, {telephone number} \_\_\_\_\_.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE  
FORM 12.910(a)  
SUMMONS: PERSONAL SERVICE ON AN INDIVIDUAL  
(10/21)**

**When should this form be used?**

This form should be used to obtain **personal service** on the other **party** when you begin your lawsuit. **Service** is required for **all** documents filed in your case. Service means giving a copy of the required papers to the other party using the procedure that the law requires. Generally, there are two ways to make service: (1) personal service, or (2) service by email, mail, or hand delivery. A third method for service is called **constructive service**; however, the relief a court may grant may be limited in a case where constructive service has been used.

The law requires that certain documents be served by **personal service** if personal service is possible. **Personal service** means that a summons (this form) and a copy of the forms you are filing with the court that must be personally served are delivered by a deputy sheriff or private process server

- a. directly to the other party, **or**
- b. to someone over the age of fifteen with whom the other party lives.

Personal service is required for **all petitions**, including petitions for modification. You cannot serve these papers on the other party yourself or by mail or hand delivery. Personal service must be made by the sheriff's department in the county where the other party lives or works or by a private process server certified in the county where the other party lives or works.

In many counties, there are private process servers who, for a fee, will personally serve the summons and other documents that require personal service. You should look under **process servers** in the yellow pages of the telephone book for a list of private process servers in your area. You may use a private process server to serve any paper required to be personally served in a family law case **except** a petition for injunction for protection against domestic or repeat violence.

**How do I start?**

When you begin your lawsuit, you need to complete this form (summons) and a **Process Service Memorandum**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b). The forms should be typed or printed legibly in black ink. Next, you will need to take these forms and, if you have not already done so, **file** your petition with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where you live. You should keep a copy of the forms for your records. The clerk will sign the summons, and then the summons, a copy of the papers to be served, and the process service memorandum must be delivered to the appropriate sheriff's office or to a private process server for service on the other party.



**IF THE OTHER PARTY LIVES IN THE COUNTY WHERE SUIT IS FILED:** Ask the clerk in your county about any local procedures regarding service. Generally, if the other party lives in the county in which you are filing suit and you want the sheriff's department to serve the papers, you will file the summons along with a **Process Service Memorandum**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b), with the clerk and the clerk will forward those papers to the sheriff for service. Make sure that you attach a copy of the papers you want personally served to the summons. You may also need to provide the sheriff with a stamped envelope addressed to you. This will allow the sheriff to send the proof of service to you, after the sheriff serves your papers on the other party. However, in some counties the sheriff may send the proof of service directly to the clerk. If you are instructed to supply a self-addressed, stamped envelope and you receive the proof of service, you should file the proof of service with the clerk after you receive it from the sheriff. Also, you will need to find out how much the sheriff charges to serve the papers. Personal checks are not accepted. You should attach to the summons a cashier's check or money order made payable to the sheriff, and either give it to the clerk for delivery to the sheriff or send all of the paperwork and the fee to the sheriff yourself. The clerk will tell you which procedure to use. The costs for service may be waived if you are indigent.

If you want a private process server to serve the other party, you should still bring the summons to the clerk's office and have the clerk sign it for you. You should deliver the summons, along with the copy of your initial petition and any other papers to be served, and a **Process Service Memorandum**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b), to the private process server. The private process server will charge you a fee for serving the papers. After service is complete, proof of service by the private process server must be filed with the clerk. You should discuss how this will occur with the private process server.

**IF THE OTHER PARTY LIVES IN ANOTHER COUNTY:** If the other party lives in another county, service needs to be made by a sheriff in the county where the other party lives or by a private process server certified in the county where the other party lives. Make sure that you attach a copy of the papers you want personally served to the summons as well as the **Process Service Memorandum**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b). If you want the sheriff to serve the papers, the clerk may send your papers to that sheriff's office for you, or you may have to send the papers yourself. The clerk will tell you which procedure to use. Either way, you will need to provide the sheriff with a stamped envelope addressed to you. This will allow the sheriff to send the proof of service to you, after the sheriff serves your papers on the other party. You should file the proof of service with the clerk after you receive it from the sheriff. Also, you will need to find out how much the sheriff charges to serve the papers. Personal checks are not accepted. You should attach to the summons a cashier's check or money order made payable to the sheriff, and either give it to the clerk for delivery to the sheriff or send all of the paperwork and the fee to the sheriff yourself. The clerk will tell you which procedure to use. The costs for service may be waived if you are indigent.

If you want a private process server to serve the other party, you should still bring the summons to the clerk's office where the clerk will sign it for you. You should deliver the summons, along with the copy of your initial petition and any other papers to be served, and a **Process Service Memorandum**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b), to the private process server. The private process server will charge you a fee for serving the papers. After service is complete, proof of service by the private process server must be filed with the clerk. You should discuss how this will occur with the private process server.

**IF THE OTHER PARTY CANNOT BE LOCATED OR DOES NOT LIVE IN FLORIDA:** If, after you have made a diligent effort to locate the other party, you absolutely cannot locate the other party, you may serve the other party by publication. Service by publication is also known as **constructive service**. You may also be able to use constructive service if the other party does not live in Florida. **However, Florida courts have only limited jurisdiction over a party who is served by constructive service and may have only limited jurisdiction over a party living outside of Florida regardless of whether that party is served by constructive or personal service;** that is, the judge's power to order the other party to do certain things may be limited. For example, the judge may be able to grant your request for a divorce, but the judge may not be able to address issues such as child support, spousal support (alimony), or division of property or debts.

Regardless of the type of service used, if the other party once lived in Florida but is living outside of Florida now, you should include in your petition a statement regarding the length of time the party lived in Florida, if any, and when. For example: "Respondent last lived in Florida from {date} \_\_\_\_\_ to {date} \_\_\_\_\_."

**This area of the law is very complex and you may need to consult with an attorney regarding the proper type of service to be used in your case if the other party does not live in Florida or cannot be located.**

### **What happens when the papers are served on the other party?**

The date and hour of service are written on the original summons and on all copies of it by the person making the service. The person who delivers the summons and copies of the petition must file a proof of service with the clerk or provide a proof of service to you for filing with the court. **It is your responsibility to make sure the proof of service has been returned to the clerk and placed in your case file.**

### **What should I do next?**

A copy of this form must be filed with the court and served on the other party or his or her attorney. The copy you are serving to the other party must be either mailed, e-mailed, or hand-delivered to the opposing party or his or her attorney on the same day indicated on the certificate of service. If it is mailed, it must be postmarked on the date indicated in the certificate of service. Service must be in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516.

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING**

The Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you must review Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at [www.flcourts.org](http://www.flcourts.org) through the link to the Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

**SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO.** If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by email, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516.

### Where can I look for more information?

**Before proceeding, you should read “General Information for Self-Represented Litigants” found at the beginning of these forms.** For further information regarding service of process, see chapters 48 and 49, Florida Statutes, and Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.070, as well as the instructions for **Notice of Action for Dissolution of Marriage (No Child or Financial Support)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a)(1), **Notice of Action for Family Cases with Minor Child(ren)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a)(2), **Affidavit of Diligent Service and Inquiry**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(b), and **Affidavit of Diligent Search**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(c).

### Special notes . . .

If you have been unable to obtain proper service on the other party within **120 days** after filing your lawsuit, the court will dismiss your lawsuit against the other party unless you can show the court a good reason why service was not made within **120 days**. For this reason, if you had the local sheriff serve the papers, you should check with the clerk every couple of weeks after completing the service papers to see if service has been completed. You may need to supply the sheriff with a new or better address. If you had a private process server or a sheriff in another county serve the papers, you should be in contact with that person or sheriff until you receive proof of service from that person or sheriff. You should then file the proof of service with the clerk immediately.

Instructions for Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a), Summons: Personal Service on an Individual (10/21)

If the other party fails to respond, i.e., fails to file a written response with the court, within **20 days** after the service of the summons, you are entitled to request a **default**. See the instructions to **Motion for Default**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922 (a), and **Default**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922(b), for further information. You will need to file an **Affidavit of Military Service**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.912(b), before a default may be granted.

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent.

**SUMMONS: PERSONAL SERVICE ON AN INDIVIDUAL**  
**ORDEN DE COMPARECENCIA: SERVICIO PERSONAL EN UN INDIVIDUO**  
**CITATION: L'ASSIGNATION PERSONAL SUR UN INDIVIDUEL**

TO/PARA/A: {enter other party's full legal name} \_\_\_\_\_  
{address (including city and state)/location for service} \_\_\_\_\_.

**IMPORTANT**

A lawsuit has been filed against you. You have **20 calendar days** after this summons is served on you to file a written response to the attached complaint/petition with the clerk of this circuit court, located at: {street address} \_\_\_\_\_.

A phone call will not protect you. Your written response, including the case number given above and the names of the parties, must be **filed** if you want the Court to hear your side of the case.

**If you do not file your written response on time, you may lose the case, and your wages, money, and property may be taken thereafter without further warning from the Court.** There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may call an attorney referral service or a legal aid office (listed in the phone book).

If you choose to file a written response yourself, at the same time you file your written response to the Court, you must also serve a copy of your written response on the party serving this summons at:

{Name and address of party serving summons} \_\_\_\_\_

**If the party serving summons has designated email address(es) for service or is represented by an attorney, you may designate email address(es) for service by or on you. Service must be in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516.**

**Copies of all court documents in this case, including orders, are available at the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office. You may review these documents, upon request.**

**You must keep the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office notified of your current address. (You may file Designation of Current Mailing and Email Address, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915.) Future papers in this lawsuit will be mailed to the address on record at the clerk's office.**

**WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleadings.**

## **IMPORTANTE**

Usted ha sido demandado legalmente. Tiene veinte (20) días, contados a partir del recibo de esta notificación, para contestar la demanda adjunta, por escrito, y presentarla ante este tribunal. Localizado en: \_\_\_\_\_. Una llamada telefónica no lo protegerá. Si usted desea que el tribunal considere su defensa, debe presentar su respuesta por escrito, incluyendo el número del caso y los nombres de las partes interesadas. Si usted no contesta la demanda a tiempo, pudiese perder el caso y podría ser despojado de sus ingresos y propiedades, o privado de sus derechos, sin previo aviso del tribunal. Existen otros requisitos legales. Si lo desea, usted puede consultar a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a una de las oficinas de asistencia legal que aparecen en la guía telefónica.

Si desea responder a la demanda por su cuenta, al mismo tiempo en que presente su respuesta ante el tribunal, usted debe enviar por correo o entregar una copia de su respuesta a la persona denominada abajo.

Si usted elige presentar personalmente una respuesta por escrito, en el mismo momento que usted presente su respuesta por escrito al Tribunal, usted debe enviar por correo o llevar una copia de su respuesta por escrito a la parte entregando esta orden de comparecencia a:

Nombre y dirección de la parte que entrega la orden de comparecencia: \_\_\_\_\_

**Copias de todos los documentos judiciales de este caso, incluyendo las ordenes, están disponibles en la oficina del Secretario de Juzgado del Circuito [Clerk of the Circuit Court's office]. Estos documentos pueden ser revisados a su solicitud.**

**Usted debe de mantener informada a la oficina del Secretario de Juzgado del Circuito de su dirección actual. (Usted puede presentar \_\_\_\_ el Formulario: Ley de Familia de la Florida 12.915, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, [Designation of Current Mailing and Email Address].) Los papeles que se presenten en el futuro en esta demanda judicial serán enviados por correo a la dirección que este registrada en la oficina del Secretario.**

**ADVERTENCIA: Regla 12.285 (Rule 12.285), de las Reglas de Procedimiento de Ley de Familia de la Florida [Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure], requiere cierta revelación automática de documentos e información. El incumplimiento, puede resultar en sanciones, incluyendo la desestimación o anulación de los alegatos.**

## **IMPORTANT**

Des poursuites judiciaires ont été entreprises contre vous. Vous avez 20 jours consécutifs à partir de la date de l'assignation de cette citation pour déposer une réponse écrite à la plainte ci-jointe auprès de ce

tribunal. Qui se trouve a: {L'Adresse} \_\_\_\_\_. Un simple coup de telephone est insuffisant pour vous proteger; vous etes obliges de deposter votre reponse ecrite, avec mention du numero de dossier ci-dessus et du nom des parties nommees ici, si vous souhaitez que le tribunal entende votre cause. Si vous ne deposez pas votre reponse ecrite dans le delai requis, vous risquez de perdre la cause ainsi que votre salaire, votre argent, et vos biens peuvent etre saisis par la suite, sans aucun preavis ulterieur du tribunal. Il y a d'autres obligations juridiques et vous pouvez requerir les services immediats d'un avocat. Si vous ne connaissez pas d'avocat, vous pourriez telephoner a un service de reference d'avocats ou a un bureau d'assistance juridique (figurant a l'annuaire de telephones).

Si vous choisissez de deposter vous-meme une reponse ecrite, il vous faudra egalement, en meme temps que cette formalite, faire parvenir ou expedier une copie au carbone ou une photocopie de votre reponse ecrite a la partie qui vous depose cette citation.

Nom et adresse de la partie qui depose cette citation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Les photocopies de tous les documents tribunaux de cette cause, y compris des arrêts, sont disponibles au bureau du greffier. Vous pouvez consulter ces documents, sur demande.**

**Il faut aviser le greffier de votre adresse actuelle. (Vous pouvez déposer Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, Designation of Current Mailing and Email Address.) Les documents de l'avenir de ce procès seront envoyés à l'adresse que vous donnez au bureau du greffier.**

**ATTENTION: La règle 12.285, des règles de procédure du droit de la famille de la Floride exige que l'on remette certains renseignements et certains documents à la partie adverse. Tout refus de les fournir pourra donner lieu à des sanctions, y compris le rejet ou la suppression d'un ou de plusieurs actes de procédure.**

THE STATE OF FLORIDA

TO EACH SHERIFF OF THE STATE: You are commanded to serve this summons and a copy of the complaint in this lawsuit on the above-named person.

DATED: \_\_\_\_\_

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

(SEAL)

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.910(b), PROCESS SERVICE MEMORANDUM (11/15)

## When should this form be used?

You should use this form to give the sheriff's department (or private process server) instructions for serving the other party in your case with the **Summons: Personal Service on an Individual**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a), and other papers to be served. On this form you can tell the sheriff's department the best times to find the person at work and/or at home. You can also include a map to the other person's home or work place to help the sheriff find the person and deliver the summons. Do not forget to attach to the summons a copy of your initial petition and any other papers you want personally served on the other party.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should **file** the original with the clerk of the circuit court in the county where your petition was filed and attach a copy to the **Summons: Personal Service on an Individual**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a). You should also keep a copy for your records.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

## Where can I look for more information?

**Before proceeding, you should read General Information for Self-Represented Litigants found at the beginning of these forms.** You should read the instructions for **Summons: Personal Service on an Individual**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a), for additional information.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you **must** review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at [www.flcourts.org](http://www.flcourts.org) through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

**SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT**



**REQUIRED TO DO SO.** If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

### **Special notes...**

If you fear that disclosing your address would put you in danger because you are the victim of sexual battery, aggravated child abuse, stalking, aggravated stalking, harassment, aggravated battery, or domestic violence, you should complete a **Request for Confidential Filing of Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(h), file it with the clerk, and write confidential in the space provided on the petition.

**Nonlawyer.** Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent,

### PROCESS SERVICE MEMORANDUM

**TO:** \_\_\_\_\_ Sheriff of \_\_\_\_\_ County, Florida; \_\_\_\_\_ Division  
\_\_\_\_\_ Private process server: \_\_\_\_\_

Please serve the *{name of document(s)}* \_\_\_\_\_

in the above-styled cause upon:

Party: *{full legal name}* \_\_\_\_\_

Address or location for service: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_

If the party to be served owns, has, and/or is known to have guns or other weapons, describe what type of weapon(s): \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Party

\*Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\*City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Designated E-mail Address(es) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**\* Please see the Special Notes section in the instructions to this form regarding Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(h), Request for Confidential Filing of Address, which may be used if you need to keep your addresses or telephone numbers confidential for safety reasons.**

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:**

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the Petitioner. This form was completed with the assistance of:

*{name of individual}* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{name of business}* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{address}* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{city}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{state}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{zip code}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{telephone number}* \_\_\_\_\_

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE FORM 12.900(h), NOTICE OF RELATED CASES (02/24)

## When should this form be used?

Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(d) requires the **petitioner** in a family law case to file with the court a notice of related cases, if any. Your circuit may also require this form to be filed even if there are no related cases. A case is considered related if:

- it involves the same parties, children, or issues and is pending when the family law case is filed; or
- it affects the court's jurisdiction to proceed; or
- an order in the related case may conflict with an order on the same issues in the new case; or
- an order in the new case may conflict with an order in the earlier case.

This form is used to provide the required notice to the court.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. It must be **filed** with the **clerk of the circuit court** with the initial pleading in the family law case.

## What should I do next?

A copy of the form must be served on the presiding judge, either the chief judge or the family law administrative judge, and all parties in the related cases. You should also keep a copy for your records. **Service** must be in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516.

## Where can I look for more information?

**Before proceeding, you should read "General Information for Self-Represented Litigants" found at the beginning of these forms.** The words that are in "**bold and underline**" in these instructions are defined there. For further information, see Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(d).

## Special notes . . .

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of a **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms **must** also put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,  
and  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent.

### NOTICE OF RELATED CASES

1. Petitioner submits this Notice of Related Cases as required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(d). A related case may be an open or closed civil, criminal, guardianship, domestic violence, juvenile delinquency, juvenile dependency, or domestic relations case. A case is "related" to this family law case if it involves any of the same parties, children, or issues and it is pending at the time the party files a family case; if it affects the court's jurisdiction to proceed; if an order in the related case may conflict with an order on the same issues in the new case; or if an order in the new case may conflict with an order in the earlier litigation.

[check **one** only]

\_\_\_\_ **There are no related cases.**

\_\_\_\_ **The following are the related cases (add additional pages if necessary):**

#### Related Case No. 1

Case Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner \_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent \_\_\_\_\_  
Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Proceeding: [check **all** that apply]

____ Dissolution of Marriage	____ Paternity
____ Custody	____ Adoption
____ Child Support	____ Support for Dependent Adult Children
____ Modification/Enforcement/Contempt Proceedings	
____ Juvenile Dependency	____ Juvenile Delinquency
____ Termination of Parental Rights	____ Criminal
____ Domestic/Sexual/Dating/Repeat	____ Mental Health
____ Violence or Stalking Injunctions	____ Other {specify} _____

State where case was decided or is pending: \_\_\_\_ Florida \_\_\_\_ Other: {specify} \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Court where case was decided or is pending (for example, Fifth Circuit Court, Marion County, Florida): \_\_\_\_\_

Title of last Court Order/Judgment (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Court Order/Judgment (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship of cases check **all** that apply]:

\_\_\_\_ pending case involves same parties, children, or issues;

\_\_\_\_ may affect court's jurisdiction;

\_\_\_\_ order in related case may conflict with an order in this case;

\_\_\_\_ order in this case may conflict with previous order in related case.

Statement as to the relationship of the cases: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Related Case No. 2**

Case Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Petitioner \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent \_\_\_\_\_

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Proceeding: [check **all** that apply]

\_\_\_\_ Dissolution of Marriage

\_\_\_\_ Paternity

\_\_\_\_ Custody

\_\_\_\_ Adoption

\_\_\_\_ Child Support

\_\_\_\_ Support for Dependent Adult Children

\_\_\_\_ Modification/Enforcement/Contempt Proceedings

\_\_\_\_ Juvenile Dependency

\_\_\_\_ Juvenile Delinquency

\_\_\_\_ Termination of Parental Rights

\_\_\_\_ Criminal

\_\_\_\_ Domestic/Sexual/Dating/Repeat

\_\_\_\_ Mental Health

\_\_\_\_ Violence or Stalking Injunctions

\_\_\_\_ Other {specify} \_\_\_\_\_

State where case was decided or is pending: \_\_\_\_ Florida \_\_\_\_ Other: {specify} \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Court where case was decided or is pending (*for example, Fifth Circuit Court, Marion County, Florida*): \_\_\_\_\_

Title of last Court Order/Judgment (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Court Order/Judgment (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship of cases check all that apply]:

\_\_\_\_ pending case involves same parties, children, or issues.

\_\_\_\_ may affect court's jurisdiction;

\_\_\_\_ order in related case may conflict with an order in this case;

\_\_\_\_ order in this case may conflict with previous order in related case.

Statement as to the relationship of the cases: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Related Case No. 3**

Case Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Petitioner \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent \_\_\_\_\_

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Proceeding: [check **all** that apply]

<input type="checkbox"/> Dissolution of Marriage	<input type="checkbox"/> Paternity
<input type="checkbox"/> Custody	<input type="checkbox"/> Adoption
<input type="checkbox"/> Child Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Support for Dependent Adult Children
<input type="checkbox"/> Modification/Enforcement/Contempt Proceedings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Dependency	<input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Delinquency
<input type="checkbox"/> Termination of Parental Rights	<input type="checkbox"/> Criminal
<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic/Sexual/Dating/Repeat	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health
<input type="checkbox"/> Violence or Stalking Injunctions	<input type="checkbox"/> Other {specify} _____

State where case was decided or is pending: \_\_\_\_\_ Florida \_\_\_\_\_ Other: {specify} \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Court where case was decided or is pending (*for example, Fifth Circuit Court, Marion County, Florida*): \_\_\_\_\_

Title of last Court Order/Judgment (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Court Order/Judgment (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship of cases check all that apply]:

☐ pending case involves same parties, children, or issues;  
☐ may affect court's jurisdiction;  
☐ order in related case may conflict with an order in this case;  
☐ order in this case may conflict with previous order in related case.

Statement as to the relationship of the cases: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. [check **one** only]

☐ I **do not** request coordination of litigation in any of the cases listed above.

☐ I **do** request coordination of the following cases: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. [check **all** that apply]

☐ Assignment to one judge

☐ Coordination of existing cases will conserve judicial resources and promote an efficient determination of these case because: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. The Petitioner acknowledges a continuing duty to inform the court of any cases in this or any other state that could affect the current proceeding.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner's Signature

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I **CERTIFY** that I delivered a copy of this Notice of Related Cases to the \_\_\_\_\_ County Sheriff's Department or a certified process server for service on the Respondent, and [**check all used**] ( ) e-mailed ( ) mailed ( ) hand delivered, a copy to {name} \_\_\_\_\_, who is the [**check all that apply**] ( ) judge assigned to new case, ( ) chief judge or family law administrative judge, ( ) {name} \_\_\_\_\_ a party to the related case, ( ) {name} \_\_\_\_\_, a party to the related case on {date} \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Petitioner/Attorney for Petitioner

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

Florida Bar Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the {choose **only one**}: ( ) Petitioner ( ) Respondent.

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} \_\_\_\_\_

{name of business} \_\_\_\_\_

{address} \_\_\_\_\_

{city} \_\_\_\_\_ {state} \_\_\_\_\_, {telephone number} \_\_\_\_\_.



# INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.912(b), AFFIDAVIT OF MILITARY SERVICE (11/15)

## When should this form be used?

An Affidavit of Military Service is required in every case where the Respondent has not filed an answer or appearance. The purpose is to protect the men and women serving in the U.S. military from having a court judgment entered against them without first receiving notice of the lawsuit and a chance to defend the case.

### You should use this form when ALL of the following statements are true:

- The other person in your case has been served, whether by personal service or constructive service.
- The other person in your case has not responded to your petition.
- You are requesting that the court enter a default judgment against the other person.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should sign the form before a notary public or deputy clerk. You must file the original of this form with the clerk of the circuit court when you file your **Motion for Default**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922(a). You must also attach copies of all verifications of nonmilitary service that you received from each branch of the United States' military service. You should keep a copy for your records.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you **must** review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at [www.flcourts.org](http://www.flcourts.org) through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

**SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO.** If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

### **Special notes...**

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent,

### **AFFIDAVIT OF MILITARY SERVICE**

I, {full legal name} \_\_\_\_\_, am the Petitioner in this case. To support my application for a default judgment and to comply with the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) (formerly known as Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940), I swear or affirm that the following information is true:

***{Please choose only one}***

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I know of my own personal knowledge that the Respondent **IS** on active duty in the military service of the United States.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I know of my own personal knowledge that Respondent **IS NOT** now on active duty in the military service of the United States, nor has the Respondent been on active military service of the United States within a period of thirty (30) days immediately before this date. "Active Service" includes reserve members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Marines who have been ordered to report for active duty and members of the Florida National Guard who have been ordered to report to active duty for a period of more than thirty (30) days.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I have contacted the military services of the United States and the U.S. Public Health Service and have obtained certificates showing that the Respondent is not on active duty status. These certificates are attached.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I have attempted to determine the military status of the Respondent, but do not have sufficient information. This is what I have done to determine whether or not Respondent is on active duty in the United States military:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I have no reason to believe that s/he is on active duty at this time.

I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this affidavit and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Petitioner

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

\_\_\_\_\_  
*[Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or clerk.]*

\_\_\_\_\_ Personally known

\_\_\_\_\_ Produced identification

\_\_\_\_\_ Type of identification produced \_\_\_\_\_.

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:**

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the Petitioner.

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual}, \_\_\_\_\_,

{name of business} \_\_\_\_\_,

{address} \_\_\_\_\_,

{city} \_\_\_\_\_, {state} \_\_\_\_\_, {zip code} \_\_\_\_\_, {telephone number} \_\_\_\_\_.

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORMS 12.922(a), MOTION FOR DEFAULT, AND 12.922(b), DEFAULT (11/15)

## When should these forms be used?

If the other **party** has failed to **file** or **serve** any documents within 20 days after the date of service of your **petition**, you may ask the **clerk of the circuit court** to enter a **default** against him or her by filling out this form and filing it with the court. Generally, a default allows you to obtain an earlier **final hearing** to finish your case. Once the default is signed by the clerk, you can request a **trial** or final hearing in your case.

To obtain a default, you will need to complete **Motion for Default**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922(a). You will then need to file your motion for default along with the **Default**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922(b), so that the clerk can enter a default for you if your motion is proper.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should file the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where you filed your petition and keep a copy for your records.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

## What should I do next?

After the default has been entered, you must ask for a hearing, so that the **judge** can consider your petition. To do this, you must contact the clerk's office, **family law intake staff**, or **judicial assistant** to schedule a hearing and file a **Notice of Hearing (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.923, with the clerk. A copy of the notice of hearing must be mailed, e-mailed, or hand-delivered to each party in the case. **You must send a notice of final hearing to the defaulted party.**

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you **must**

review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at [www.flcourts.org](http://www.flcourts.org) through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

**SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO.** If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

### **Where can I look for more information?**

**Before proceeding, you should read General Information for Self-Represented Litigants found at the beginning of these forms.** For further information, see Florida Rules of Civil Procedure 1.500, concerning defaults and Rule 1.140, concerning the time within which a party can file an answer or other responsive pleading to a petition. See also Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.080.

### **Special notes...**

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent,

## MOTION FOR DEFAULT

TO THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT:

**PLEASE ENTER A DEFAULT AGAINST RESPONDENT WHO HAS FAILED TO RESPOND TO THE PETITION.**

I certify that a copy of this document was ( ) mailed ( ) faxed and mailed ( ) e-mailed ( ) hand-delivered to the person(s) listed below on {date} \_\_\_\_\_.

**Other party or his/her attorney:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Party

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:**

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the: {choose only **one**} (    ) Petitioner (    ) Respondent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual } \_\_\_\_\_,

{name of business} \_\_\_\_\_,

{address} \_\_\_\_\_,

{city} \_\_\_\_\_, {state} \_\_\_\_\_, {zip code} \_\_\_\_\_, {telephone number} \_\_\_\_\_.



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent,

## DEFAULT

A default is entered in this action against Respondent for failure to serve or file a response or any paper as is required by law.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

(SEAL)

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk

I certify that a copy of this document was ( ) mailed ( ) faxed and mailed ( ) e-mailed ( ) hand-delivered to the person(s) listed below on {date} \_\_\_\_\_.

### Other party or his/her attorney:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Party

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:**

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the: *{choose only one}* (    ) Petitioner (    ) Respondent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

*{name of individual }* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{name of business}* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{address}* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{city}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{state}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{zip code}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{telephone number}* \_\_\_\_\_.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent.

**DEFAULT (D1271)**

A default is entered in this action against Respondent for failure to serve or file a response or any paper as is required by law.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

(SEAL)

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk

I certify that a copy of this document was [ ☒ **one** only ] ( ☐ ) mailed ( ☐ ) faxed and mailed ( ☐ ) hand delivered to the person(s) listed below on {date} \_\_\_\_\_.

**Other party or his/her attorney:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Petitioner

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE  
BLANKS BELOW:** [ ☒ fill in **all** blanks ]

I, {full legal name and trade name of nonlawyer} \_\_\_\_\_,  
a nonlawyer, located at {street} \_\_\_\_\_, {city} \_\_\_\_\_,  
{state} \_\_\_\_\_, {phone} \_\_\_\_\_, helped {name} \_\_\_\_\_,  
who is the petitioner, fill out this form.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE  
FORMS 12.920(a), MOTION FOR REFERRAL TO GENERAL MAGISTRATE,  
12.920(b), ORDER OF REFERRAL TO GENERAL MAGISTRATE, and  
12.920(c), NOTICE OF HEARING BEFORE GENERAL MAGISTRATE  
(04/22)**

**When should these forms be used?**

A **general magistrate** is an attorney appointed by a **judge** to take testimony and recommend orders on certain matters connected with a divorce. These recommended orders are then reviewed and entered by the judge unless contrary to the law or the facts of the case. The primary purposes of having general magistrates hear family law matters are to reduce the costs of litigation and to speed up cases. Either **party** may request that their case, or portions of their case, be heard by a general magistrate by filing **Motion for Referral to General Magistrate**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.920(a). You must also prepare an **Order of Referral to General Magistrate**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.920(b), to submit to the judge assigned to your case.

Many times, the court, either on its own motion or under current administrative orders of the court, may refer your case to a general magistrate. Even in those instances, you may be required to prepare and submit an **Order of Referral to General Magistrate**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.920(b), to the judge.

Once a general magistrate has been appointed to your case, the general magistrate will assign a time and place for a **hearing** as soon as reasonably possible after the referral is made. The general magistrate will give notice of that hearing to each of the parties directly or will direct a party or attorney in the case to file and serve a notice of hearing on the other party. If you are asked to send the notice of hearing, you will need to use the form entitled **Notice of Hearing Before General Magistrate**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.920(c). Regardless of who prepares the notice of hearing, the moving party (the one who requested referral to the general magistrate) is required to have the notice properly served on the other party.

These forms should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should **file** these documents with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where your case is filed and keep a copy for your records.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING**

**THIS LANGUAGE APPLIES ONLY TO FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE FORMS 12.920(a) and 12.920(c) BUT DOES NOT APPLY TO FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULE OF PROCEDURE FORM 12.920(b).**

The Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented**

**litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically, however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.

The copy you are providing to the other party must be either mailed, e-mailed, or hand-delivered to the opposing party or his or her attorney on the same day indicated on the certificate of service. If it is mailed, it must be postmarked on the date indicated in the certificate of service.

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION**

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration. If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by e-mail, or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you must review Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at [www.flcourts.org](http://www.flcourts.org) through the link to Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

**SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL, HOWEVER THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO.** If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail address by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516.

### **What should I do next?**

If you are filing a **Motion for Referral to General Magistrate**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.920(a), you need to send or deliver your motion directly to the judge assigned to your case, along with an **Order of Referral to General Magistrate**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.920(b), and an addressed, stamped envelope for each party in the case. The judge will then either grant or deny the motion, usually without a hearing.

If you are required to submit an **Order of Referral to General Magistrate**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.920(b), to the judge assigned to your case, you will need to send or deliver the order directly to the judge, along with addressed, stamped envelopes for each party in the case.

The party who prepares any of these forms must file this document with the clerk of the circuit court. A copy of the motion must be served on any other party in your case. **Service** must be in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516.

### **Where can I look for more information?**

**Before proceeding, you should read General Information for Self-Represented Litigants found at the beginning of these forms.** The words that are in **bold underline** in these instructions are defined there. For further information, see Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.490.

### **Special notes...**

**IMPORTANT:** After the judge refers your case to a general magistrate, either party (including the party who was required to prepare and submit the Order of Referral) may object to the referral within 10 days of the date that the referral is made (if the Order of Referral is served by mail, the parties have an additional 5 days within which to object to the referral). Every litigant is entitled to have his or her case heard by a judge. However, before you decide to object to an Order of Referral to General Magistrate, you should consider the potential extra costs and time delays that may result from having a judge hear your case instead of a general magistrate. You may want to speak with an attorney in your area who can assist you in making a more informed decision regarding whether you should file an objection to an Order of Referral to General Magistrate.

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent.

### MOTION FOR REFERRAL TO GENERAL MAGISTRATE

I, {full legal name} \_\_\_\_\_, request that the Court enter an order referring this case to a general magistrate. The case should be referred to a general magistrate on the following issues: {explain}

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I certify that a copy of this document was [check all used]: ( ) emailed ( ) mailed ( ) faxed  
( ) hand delivered to the person(s) listed below on {date} \_\_\_\_\_.

**Other party or his/her attorney:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Party or his/her attorney:

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_  
Florida Bar Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:**

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the: *{choose only one}* (    ) Petitioner (    ) Respondent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

*{name of individual}* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{name of business}* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{address}* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{city}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{state}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{telephone number}* \_\_\_\_\_.



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner,  
and

\_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent.

### ORDER OF REFERRAL TO GENERAL MAGISTRATE

THIS CASE IS REFERRED TO THE GENERAL MAGISTRATE on the following issues:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

AND ANY OTHER MATTER RELATED THERETO.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the above issues are referred to General Magistrate

{name} \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
for further proceedings, under rule 12.490 of the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure and current administrative orders of the Court. Financial Affidavits, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.902(b) or (c), shall be filed in accordance with Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.285. The General Magistrate is authorized to administer oaths and conduct hearings, which may include taking of evidence, and shall file a recommended order that contains findings of fact, conclusions of law, and the name of the court reporter, if any.

The General Magistrate shall assign a time for the proceedings as soon as reasonably possible after this referral is made and shall give notice to each of the parties either directly or by directing counsel or a party to file and serve a notice of hearing.

Counties within the State of Florida may have different rules. Please consult the (.....) Clerk of the Court (.....) Family Law Intake Staff (.....) other \_\_\_\_\_ relating to this procedure.

**A REFERRAL TO A GENERAL MAGISTRATE REQUIRES THE CONSENT OF ALL PARTIES. YOU ARE ENTITLED TO HAVE THIS MATTER HEARD BY A JUDGE. IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO HAVE THIS MATTER HEARD BEFORE THE GENERAL MAGISTRATE, YOU MUST FILE A WRITTEN OBJECTION TO THE REFERRAL WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE TIME OF SERVICE OF THIS ORDER. IF THE TIME SET FOR THE HEARING IS LESS**

**THAN 10 DAYS AFTER SERVICE OF THIS ORDER, THE OBJECTION MUST BE FILED BEFORE COMMENCEMENT OF THE HEARING. IF THIS ORDER IS SERVED WITHIN THE FIRST 20 DAYS AFTER SERVICE OF PROCESS, THE TIME TO FILE AN OBJECTION IS EXTENDED TO THE TIME WITHIN WHICH A RESPONSIVE PLEADING IS DUE. FAILURE TO FILE A WRITTEN OBJECTION WITHIN THE APPLICABLE TIME PERIOD IS DEEMED TO BE A CONSENT TO THE REFERRAL.**

If either party files a timely objection, this matter shall be returned to the undersigned judge with a notice stating the amount of time needed for hearing.

**REVIEW OF THE RECOMMENDED ORDER MADE BY THE GENERAL MAGISTRATE MUST BE BY A MOTION TO VACATE AS PROVIDED IN RULE 12.490(e), FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE. A RECORD, WHICH INCLUDES A TRANSCRIPT, IS REQUIRED TO SUPPORT THE MOTION TO VACATE, UNLESS WAIVED BY ORDER OF THE COURT PRIOR TO ANY HEARING ON THE MOTION TO VACATE.**

YOU ARE ADVISED THAT IN THIS CIRCUIT:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ electronic recording is provided by the court. A party may provide a court reporter at that party's expense.
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ a court reporter is provided by the court.
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ no electronic recording is provided by the court and the court does not provide a court reporter. A party may provide a court reporter at that party's expense.

**SHOULD YOU WISH TO SEEK REVIEW OF THE RECOMMENDED ORDER MADE BY THE GENERAL MAGISTRATE, YOU MUST FILE A MOTION TO VACATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULE 12.490(e), FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE THE COURT WITH A RECORD SUFFICIENT TO SUPPORT YOUR MOTION TO VACATE, OR YOUR MOTION WILL BE DENIED. A RECORD ORDINARILY INCLUDES A WRITTEN TRANSCRIPT OF ALL RELEVANT PROCEEDINGS UNLESS WAIVED BY ORDER OF THE COURT PRIOR TO ANY HEARING ON THE MOTION TO VACATE. THE PERSON SEEKING REVIEW MUST HAVE THE TRANSCRIPT PREPARED FOR THE COURT'S REVIEW.**

ORDERED on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CIRCUIT JUDGE

COPIES TO:

Petitioner (or his or her attorney)  
Respondent (or his or her attorney)  
General Magistrate

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No: \_\_\_\_\_  
Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent.

## NOTICE OF HEARING BEFORE GENERAL MAGISTRATE

[fill in **all** blanks]

TO: \_\_\_\_\_

There will be a hearing before General Magistrate *{name of general magistrate}* \_\_\_\_\_,  
on *{date}* \_\_\_\_\_, at *{time}* \_\_\_\_\_ m., in Room \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Courthouse, on the following issues: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ hour(s)/ \_\_\_\_\_ minutes have been reserved for this hearing.

PLEASE GOVERN YOURSELF ACCORDINGLY.

**If the matter before the General Magistrate is a Motion for Civil Contempt/Enforcement, FAILURE TO APPEAR AT THE HEARING MAY RESULT IN THE COURT ISSUING A WRIT OF BODILY ATTACHMENT FOR YOUR ARREST. IF YOU ARE ARRESTED, YOU MAY BE HELD IN JAIL UP TO 48 HOURS BEFORE A HEARING IS HELD.**

**IF THIS IS A CONTEMPT PROCEEDING:**

**YOUR ABILITY TO PAY IS A CRITICAL ISSUE IN A CONTEMPT PROCEEDING;**

**YOU ARE STRONGLY URGED TO PREPARE AND FILE A FAMILY LAW FINANCIAL AFFIDAVIT PRIOR TO THE HEARING IN ORDER FOR THE COURT TO BE ABLE TO ELICIT RELEVANT FINANCIAL INFORMATION FROM YOU; YOU WILL BE PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY AT THE HEARING TO RESPOND TO STATEMENTS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR FINANCIAL STATUS; AND**

**TO BE HELD IN CONTEMPT, THE COURT MUST MAKE AN EXPRESS FINDING THAT YOU HAVE THE ABILITY TO PAY.**

PLEASE GOVERN YOURSELF ACCORDINGLY.

This part to be filled out by the court or filled in with information you have obtained from the court:

**If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact:**

---

***{identify applicable court personnel by name, address, and telephone number}***  
**at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.**

**SHOULD YOU WISH TO SEEK REVIEW OF THE RECOMMENDED ORDER MADE BY THE GENERAL MAGISTRATE, YOU MUST FILE A MOTION TO VACATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULE 12.490(e), FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE THE COURT WITH A RECORD SUFFICIENT TO SUPPORT YOUR MOTION TO VACATE, OR YOUR MOTION WILL BE DENIED. A RECORD ORDINARILY INCLUDES A WRITTEN TRANSCRIPT OF ALL RELEVANT PROCEEDINGS UNLESS WAIVED BY ORDER OF THE COURT PRIOR TO ANY HEARING ON THE MOTION TO VACATE. THE PERSON SEEKING REVIEW MUST HAVE THE TRANSCRIPT PREPARED FOR THE COURT'S REVIEW.**

YOU ARE HEREBY ADVISED THAT IN THIS CIRCUIT:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ electronic recording is provided by the court. A party may provide a court reporter at that party's expense.
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ a court reporter is provided by the court.
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ no electronic recording is provided by the court and the court does not provide a court reporter. A party may provide a court reporter at that party's expense.

If you are represented by an attorney or plan to retain an attorney for this matter you should notify the attorney of this hearing.

If this matter is resolved, the moving party shall contact the General Magistrate's Office to cancel this hearing.

I certify that a copy of this document was [check **one** only]: ( ) mailed ( ) faxed and mailed ( ) hand delivered to the person(s) listed below on {date} \_\_\_\_\_.

**Other party or his/her attorney:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Party or his/her Attorney

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

Florida Bar Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:**

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the: *{choose only one}* (    ) Petitioner (    ) Respondent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

*{name of individual}* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{name of business}* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{address}* \_\_\_\_\_,

*{city}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{state}* \_\_\_\_\_, *{telephone number}* \_\_\_\_\_.

## General Magistrate / Hearing Officer Division Referral Assignment Table

Last 2 Digits of Case No	GM Division	Last 2 Digits of Case No	GM Division	Last 2 Digits of Case No	GM Division	Last 2 Digits of Case No	GM Division
00	GM-1	01	GM-3	03	GM-4	09	GM-5
04	GM-1	02	GM-3	07	GM-4	17	GM-5
08	GM-1	05	GM-3	11	GM-4	25	GM-5
12	GM-1	06	GM-3	15	GM-4	33	GM-5
16	GM-1	10	GM-3	19	GM-4	41	GM-5
20	GM-1	13	GM-3	23	GM-4	49	GM-5
24	GM-1	14	GM-3	27	GM-4	50	GM-5
28	GM-1	18	GM-3	31	GM-4	54	GM-5
32	GM-1	21	GM-3	35	GM-4	57	GM-5
36	GM-1	22	GM-3	39	GM-4	58	GM-5
40	GM-1	26	GM-3	43	GM-4	62	GM-5
44	GM-1	29	GM-3	47	GM-4	65	GM-5
48	GM-1	30	GM-3	51	GM-4	66	GM-5
52	GM-1	34	GM-3	55	GM-4	70	GM-5
56	GM-1	37	GM-3	59	GM-4	73	GM-5
60	GM-1	38	GM-3	63	GM-4	74	GM-5
64	GM-1	42	GM-3	67	GM-4	78	GM-5
68	GM-1	45	GM-3	71	GM-4	81	GM-5
72	GM-1	46	GM-3	75	GM-4	82	GM-5
76	GM-1	53	GM-3	79	GM-4	86	GM-5
80	GM-1	61	GM-3	83	GM-4	89	GM-5
84	GM-1	69	GM-3	87	GM-4	90	GM-5
88	GM-1	77	GM-3	91	GM-4	94	GM-5
92	GM-1	85	GM-3	95	GM-4	97	GM-5
96	GM-1	93	GM-3	99	GM-4	98	GM-5

The general magistrate/hearing officer assigned is determined by **the last two digits of your case number.**

**GM-1** = Magistrate **Wartenberg** (Phone: 272-5351) / **GM-3** = Magistrate **Blume** (Phone: 276-2337)

**GM-4** = Magistrate **Sarmiento** (Phone: 272-6435) / **GM-5** = Magistrate **Mason** (Phone: 272-5525)

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.923, NOTICE OF HEARING (GENERAL) (11/15)

## When should this form be used?

Anytime you have set a hearing before a judge, you must send notice of the hearing to the other party.

**IMPORTANT:** If your hearing has been set before a general magistrate, you should use **Notice of Hearing Before General Magistrate**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.920(c). If your hearing has been set before a child support enforcement hearing officer, you should use **Notice of Hearing (Child Support Hearing Officer)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.921.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should file the original with the clerk of the circuit court in the county where your case was filed and keep a copy for your records.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

## What should I do next?

A copy of this form must be mailed, e-mailed, or hand delivered to the other party in your case. If a default has been entered, you must still send this form to the other party to notify the other party of the final hearing.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of Judicial Administration.** If you elect to participate in electronic service, which means serving or receiving pleadings by electronic mail (e-mail), or through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, you **must** review Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at [www.flcourts.org](http://www.flcourts.org) through the link to the Rules of Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

**SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO.** If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

### **Where can I look for more information?**

**Before proceeding, you should read General Information for Self-Represented Litigants found at the beginning of these forms.** For further information on serving notices of hearing, see rule 1.090(d), Florida Civil Rules of Procedure.

### **Special notes...**

To set a hearing date and time, you will usually have to make a good-faith effort to coordinate a mutually convenient date and time for you, the other parties in the case, and the judge, except in certain emergency situations. Some circuits may have additional procedural requirements that you must follow when you notify the court and other parties of your scheduled hearing. Therefore, before you complete this form, you should contact the clerk's office, family law intake staff, or judicial assistant for information regarding the proper procedure to follow.

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_,  
Respondent,

### NOTICE OF HEARING (GENERAL)

[fill in **all** blanks]

TO: *{name of other party}*: \_\_\_\_\_

There will be a hearing before Judge *{name}* \_\_\_\_\_,

on *{date}* \_\_\_\_\_ at *{time}* \_\_\_\_\_ m., in Room \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_

County Courthouse, on the following issues: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ hour(s)/ \_\_\_\_\_ minutes have been reserved for this hearing.

**This part is to be filled out by the court or to be filled in with information you obtained from the court:**

**If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
***{identify applicable court personnel by name, address, and telephone number}* at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.**

If you are represented by an attorney or plan to retain an attorney for this matter, you should notify the attorney of this hearing.

If this matter is resolved, the moving party shall contact the judge's office to cancel this hearing.

I certify that a copy of this document was (    ) e-mailed (    ) mailed (    ) faxed (    ) hand-delivered to the person(s) listed below on {date} \_\_\_\_\_.

**Other party or his/her attorney:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Party

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:**

[fill in all blanks] This form was prepared for the: {choose only **one**} (    ) Petitioner (    ) Respondent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} \_\_\_\_\_,

{name of business} \_\_\_\_\_,

{address} \_\_\_\_\_,

{city} \_\_\_\_\_, {state} \_\_\_\_\_, {zip code} \_\_\_\_\_, {telephone number} \_\_\_\_\_

## **Fee Schedule For Family Law Cases**

*(These fees are effective June 1, 2019)*

### **Clerk fees (payable to The Clerk of the Circuit Court):**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Fee</b>	<b>Statute Reference</b>
Adoption *	\$400.00	63.102 & 28.241(1)(a)
Termination of Parental Rights *	\$400.00	63.087 & 28.241(1)(a)
Delayed Birth Certificate *	\$400.00	682.0195 & 28.241(1)(a)
Disabilities of nonage; removed (Emancipation) *	\$400.00	743.015 & 28.241(1)(a)
Temporary Custody by Extended Family Member *	\$400.00	751.03 & 28.241(1)(a)
Name Change *	\$414.00	68.07 & 28.241(1)(a)
Counter Petition <i>for case indicated with *</i>	\$395.00	28.101 & 28.241(1)(c)
Dissolution of Marriage **	\$408.00	28.241 & 28.101
All other Family Law actions not listed above **	\$300.00	28.241(1)(a)
Counter Petition <i>for case indicated with **</i>	\$295.00	28.101 & 28.241(1)(c)
Sealing Fee	\$42.00	28.24(25)
Attorney appearing Pro Hac Vice	\$100.00	28.241(6)
Notice of Appeal <i>(Requires 2 separate checks: (1) \$300.00 made payable to the <u>Second District Court of Appeals</u>; (2) \$100.00 +\$1.00 per page of entire Notice of Appeal and \$2.00 for certifying made payable to Clerk of the Circuit Court)</i>	\$300.00 (Second DCA) \$100.00 plus copy and certification fee (Clerk)	28.241(2); 28.24(3); 28.24(5)(a); 35.22
Reopen fee	\$50.00	28.241(1)(b)
Writ of Garnishment issued	\$188.00	28.241(1)(a)
Issuing a Summons (Initial, Alias, and Pluries)	\$10.00	28.241(1)(d)
Issue & filing a subpoena	\$7.00	28.241(18)(a)
Signing and sealing a subpoena	\$2.00	28.24(18)(b)
Copies	\$1.00 (per page)	28.24(5)(a)
Certification	\$2.00	28.24(3)
Notary fee	\$10.00 (each )	117.05(2)(a)
Approving Bond	\$8.50	28.24(19)
Administering oath	\$3.50	38.25(13)
Exemplified certificate	\$7.00	28.24(16)
Clerk Certificate	\$7.00	28.24(8)
<b><i>Child Support Fees</i></b>		
Judgment payoff statement (Child Support)	\$25.00	61.14(6)(f)1
Payment History (Child Support, Alimony)	\$1.00 - \$2.00 per year	28.24(5)(a)
Affidavit of Delinquency	\$7.00	28.24(8)
Notice of Delinquency fee	\$25.00	61.14(6)(b)1.b.
Driver License/Non Payment of Child Support	\$25.00	61.14(6)(f)1.
Verification form	\$7.00	28.24(8)

### **Mediation (payable to The Clerk of the Circuit Court)**

Family income greater than \$50,000 but less than \$100,000 per year	\$120.00	44.108(2)(b)
Family income less than \$50,000 per year	\$60.00	44.108(2)(b)

Print Form

**IN THE CIRCUIT/COUNTY COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Plaintiff/Petitioner

Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_

vs

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant/Respondent

**NOTICE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION WITHIN COURT FILING**

Under Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.420(d)(2), I certify:

☐ (1) I am filing the attached document containing confidential information as described in Rule 2.420(d)(1)(B) and that:

(a) The title/type of document is \_\_\_\_\_, and:

(b) ☐ the entire document is confidential, or

☐ the confidential information within the document is precisely located at:

\_\_\_\_\_.

OR

☐ (2) A document was previously filed in this case that contains confidential information as described in Rule 2.420(d)(1)(B), but a Notice of Confidential Information within Court Filing was not filed with the document and the confidential information was not maintained as confidential by the clerk of the court. I hereby notify the clerk that this confidential information is located as follows:

(a) Title/type of document: \_\_\_\_\_ ;

(b) Date of filing (if known): \_\_\_\_\_ ;

(c) Date of document: \_\_\_\_\_ ;

(d) Docket entry number: \_\_\_\_\_ ;

(e) ☐ Entire document is confidential, or

☐ Precise location of confidential information in document: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Filer's Signature

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a copy of the foregoing was furnished by ☐ e-mail ☐ delivery ☐ mail ☐ fax on (All parties and Affected Non-Parties. Note: If the name or address of a Party or Affected Non-Party is confidential DO NOT include such information in this Certificate of Service. Instead, serve the State Attorney or request Court Service. See Rule 2.420(k)) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Florida Bar No. (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: The clerk of court must review filings identified as containing confidential information to determine whether the information is facially subject to confidentiality under subdivision (d)(1)(B). The clerk must notify the filer in writing within 5 days if the clerk determines that the information is NOT subject to confidentiality, and the records must not be held as confidential for more than 10 days, unless a motion is filed under subdivision (d)(3) of the Rule. Fla. R. Gen. Prac. & Jud. Admin. 2.420(d)(2).

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.915

## DESIGNATION OF CURRENT MAILING AND E-MAIL ADDRESS (08/23)

### When should this form be used?

This form should be used to inform the clerk and the other **party** of your current mailing and e-mail address(es) or **any change of address**. It is very important that the court and the other party in your case have your correct address.

A party not represented by an attorney is required to designate a primary e-mail address for **service** unless excused pursuant to Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516(b)(1)(D). A primary and up to two secondary e-mail addresses can be designated. If you do so and the other party is represented by an attorney or has also designated e-mail address(es) for service, e-mail will be the **exclusive means of service**.

If there is any change in your mailing or e-mail address(es), you must complete a new form, file it with the clerk, and serve a copy on any other party or parties in your case.

### What should I do next?

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should **file** the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where your case is filed and keep a copy for your records. A copy of this form must be served on any other party in your case. **Service** must be in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516.

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration now require that all

documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration** and you **must** review Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516. You may find this rule at [www.flcourts.org](http://www.flcourts.org) through the link to the Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration provided under either Family Law Forms: Getting Started, or Rules of Court in the A-Z Topical Index.

**SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MUST SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL UNLESS EXCUSED BY THE CLERK.**

If a self-represented litigant has been excused from serving documents by e-mail and then elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once that election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.516.

### **Where can I look for more information?**

**Before proceeding, you should read General Information for Self-Represented Litigants found at the beginning of these forms.** The words that are in **bold underline** in these instructions are defined there.

### **Special notes...**

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner,

and

\_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent.

## DESIGNATION OF CURRENT MAILING AND E-MAIL ADDRESS

I, {full legal name}, \_\_\_\_\_, certify that:

### **MAILING ADDRESS:**

My current mailing address is:

{Street or Post Office Box} \_\_\_\_\_

{Apartment, lot, etc.} \_\_\_\_\_

{City}, \_\_\_\_\_, {State}, \_\_\_\_\_, {Zip} \_\_\_\_\_.

{Telephone No.} \_\_\_\_\_ {Fax No.} \_\_\_\_\_.

### **E-MAIL ADDRESS:**

The following is/are my e-mail address(es) for purposes of serving and receiving documents:

Primary e-mail address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Secondary e-mail address No.1:

\_\_\_\_\_

Secondary e-mail address No. 2:

\_\_\_\_\_



I understand that I must keep the clerk's office and the opposing party or parties notified of my current mailing and e-mail address(es) and that all future papers in this lawsuit will be served at the address(es) on record at the clerk's office.

I certify that a copy of this document was [check all used] ( ) e-mailed ( ) mailed ( ) faxed ( ) hand-delivered to the person(s) listed below on {date}\_\_\_\_\_.

**Other party or his/her attorney:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

I HAVE READ EVERY STATEMENT MADE IN THIS DOCUMENT AND EACH STATEMENT IS TRUE AND CORRECT. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE STATEMENTS MADE IN THIS DOCUMENT ARE BEING MADE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY, PUNISHABLE AS PROVIDED IN SECTION 837.02, FLORIDA STATUTES.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Petitioner

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated E-Mail Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

**IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:**

[fill in **all** blanks] This form was prepared for the: {choose only **one**} \_\_\_\_\_ Petitioner \_\_\_\_\_ Respondent

This form was completed with the assistance of:

{name of individual} \_\_\_\_\_,

{name of business} \_\_\_\_\_,

{street} \_\_\_\_\_,

{city} \_\_\_\_\_, {state} \_\_\_\_\_, {zip code} \_\_\_\_\_, {telephone number} \_\_\_\_\_