

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 5-34.1

IN RE: UNIFYING SECTION 01 WITH THE OTHER FAMILY
LAW DIVISION SECTIONS AND ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES
FOR REASSIGNING CASES WITHIN THE FAMILY LAW DIVISION

WHEREAS, the Florida Supreme Court in In re: Report of the Family Court Steering Committee, 794 So.2d 518 (Fla. 2001), directed each judicial circuit to implement a unified family court based on approved recommendations specified by the Court, in an effort to "resolv[e] family disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective manner," and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to ensure that Family Law Division cases (i.e., domestic violence cases, dissolution of marriage cases, custody cases, etc...) involving children and families are handled in a unified, timely, and efficient manner, and

WHEREAS, the number of Family Law Division cases continues to grow, making it necessary to unify the domestic violence section with the other sections of the Family Law Division so that the number of cases in the domestic violence section and the number of cases in the Family Law Division can be handled more efficiently, and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the prompt and efficient administration of justice in this circuit that there be a reassignment of Family Law Division cases by the Polk County Clerk of Courts;

It is, therefore,

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that:

1. Administrative Order No. 5-34.0 is vacated.
2. Section 01 created by Administrative Order 5-34.0 is hereby unified with the other three sections of the Family Law Division for a total of four Family Law Division sections.
3. Beginning August 4, 2003, each of the four judges making up the four Family Law Division sections shall preside one day a week in the domestic violence court.
4. After the effective date of this order, any action for dissolution of marriage, paternity, child support, child custody, etc..., filed after a petition for injunction for protection is filed, and which involves the same parties, shall be assigned to the same section that the petition for injunction for protection is assigned.
5. Prior to August 4, 2003, the Polk County Clerk of Courts shall reassign a percentage of cases, from sections 2, 5, and 9 to section 1 in an effort to equalize the number of cases in the four divisions. The reassigned cases shall be randomly selected by computer. The percentage of cases to be reassigned shall be a percentage determined by the clerk and approved by the Administrative Judge of the Family Division.
6. The Polk County Clerk of Courts shall assign cases to the four sections with the unified court concept in mind.

ORDERED on this 2nd day of July, 2003.

RONALD A. HERRING
Chief Judge