

THE ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CASE NO. 25-1
(Court Administration)

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
NO. 25-20
(Rescinding Administrative Order
Nos. 17-08 and 17-08 A1)

IN RE: REAFFIRMATION OF
UNIFIED FAMILY COURT PLAN AND
ESTABLISHMENT OF PROCEDURES
FOR THE UNIFIED FAMILY COURT
DIVISION IN THE ELEVENTH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

WHEREAS, the Florida Supreme Court, in *In re Report of the Family Court Steering Committee*, 794 So. 2d 518 (Fla. 2001), endorsed the guiding principles and characteristics of the model family court developed by the Family Court Steering Committee and reaffirmed its goal of the creation of a fully integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases involving children and families; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Supreme Court, in *In re Amendments to the Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration and In re Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure*, 132 So. 3d 1114 (Fla. 2014), adopted proposed amendments of the Steering Committee providing for case management of open related family cases through the filing of a Notice of Related Cases, for all related family cases involving the same family and/or children to be handled before one judge (“one family, one judge”), for a more formal manner of coordination of related cases and hearings, and for the access and review of related family files by the judiciary and parties; and

WHEREAS, the policies and procedures outlined in Administrative Order Nos. 17-08 and 17-08 A1 were meant to be elastic so as to provide the greatest degree of flexibility and allow for fine-tuning to the extent necessary to effectuate efficient and proper procedures for the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court and thus subject to change at any time; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the advancement of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit's Unified Family Court model in accordance with the aforementioned Florida Supreme Court opinions, this Court Division will hereby be referred to as the Eleventh Judicial Circuit's Unified Family Court Division from this point forward.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Chief Judge of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida under Rule 2.215 of the Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration, it is hereby ordered that:

I. UNIFIED FAMILY COURT DIVISION STRUCTURE AND JURISDICTION

A. The following types of Related Cases are included in the Unified Family Court Division (*referred herein as the UFC Division*):

1. dissolution of marriage
2. division and distribution of property arising out of a dissolution of marriage
3. annulment
4. support unconnected with dissolution of marriage
5. paternity, including, but not limited to, disestablishment of paternity
6. child support
7. Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act/ Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (URES/UIFS)
8. custodial care of and access to children, including, but not limited to, relocation and temporary or concurrent custody of minor children by extended family
9. adoption
10. name change
11. declaratory judgment actions related to premarital, marital, or post marital agreements
12. civil domestic, repeat, dating, stalking and sexual violence injunctions
13. juvenile dependency
14. termination of parental rights
15. juvenile delinquency
16. emancipation of a minor
17. Children in Need of Services/Families in Need of Services (CINS/FINS)
18. truancy
19. modification and enforcement of orders entered in these cases

- B. The following types of cases are included in the UFC Division, whether or not there is a Related Case involving any of the same parties, children, or issues: juvenile dependency, termination of parental rights pursuant to Chapter 39, Florida Statutes, unaccompanied refugee minor(s), juvenile delinquency, Children in Need of Services/Families in Need of Services (CINS/FINS), and juvenile marchman cases, and petitions for civil domestic violence, stalking, dating violence, sexual violence, and repeat violence injunctions for protection filed by a parent or guardian on behalf of (OBO) a child(ren) against a parent, caretaker, paramour, family member, or fictive kin involving allegations of child maltreatment, also including related injunction for protection cases involving the same parties, children, or issues.
- C. For the purposes of this Administrative Order, the case type and Division traditionally referred to statutorily as Domestic Relations, will be referred to herein as Family.

II. **ADMINISTRATION/JUDICIAL ASSIGNMENTS**

- A. In order to achieve the goals of the model family court endorsed by the Florida Supreme Court in *In re Report of the Family Court Steering Committee*, 794 So. 2d 518 (Fla. 2001), and *In re Amendments to the Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration and In re Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure*, 132 So. 2d 1114 (Fla. 2014), the Eleventh Judicial Circuit's Unified Family Court (UFC) Division will be comprised of Circuit Court Judges, who will be assigned the case types as set forth herein.
- B. All Administrative Orders pertaining to the Domestic Violence and Family Divisions will be effective, if applicable, to the case types assigned to the UFC Division.
- C. All Circuit Court Judges who are assigned to the UFC Division for the first time and who have not served a minimum of two years in the Family or Domestic Violence Divisions respectively, should receive training, preferably before or within 6 months of assuming the assignment, in accordance with course availability. This training shall consist of the legal fundamentals of family, domestic violence, juvenile dependency, juvenile delinquency and child development of both healthy and maltreated children. The training includes, but is not limited to, fundamentals at Phase II of

Judicial College, and the 16 hour domestic violence training provided by the Office of the State Courts Administrator, or other state or nationally accredited domestic violence course.

- D. All UFC Division Judges will be cross-trained and cross-designated for the purpose of handling all assigned matters.

III. OPERATIONAL PROTOCOL AND TRANSFER OF RELATED CASES

- A. **Operational Protocol**—The operational protocol for handling Related Cases will be followed as established by the Clerk of the Court and Comptroller and Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), in conjunction with those protocols established by the UFC, Family, and Domestic Violence Divisions. However, all protocols of the respective Divisions are subject to revision and modification to effectuate efficient procedures and to ensure that the mandates of the Florida Supreme Court are being followed by this Circuit.

- 1. **Definition**— A **Related Case** is defined as two or more Family and/or Domestic Violence Injunction, and/or Juvenile Dependency and/or Delinquency case(s), which involve any of the same parties, children, or issues. Related Cases involving the same family shall be handled before one judge in order that they shall be coordinated, heard and determined in a manner that will minimize the number of times and places that a family has to appear in court, and will minimize the possibility of conflicting determinations of the same or Related Case.

- 2. **Identification**- Related Cases will be identified by:

- a. **Notice of Related Cases**— In accordance with Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(d)(4), a fully completed Notice of Related Cases shall be filed with the initial pleading by the filing attorney or self-represented petitioner in each of the Related Cases that are currently open and pending with the court and served on all other parties in each of the Related Cases. Parties may file joint notices. To the extent that any issues of confidentiality apply, all legal requirements shall be observed, including any requirements as set forth in Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial

Administration 2.420. Parties shall file supplemental notices as Related Cases become known or reasonably ascertainable.

- b. The AOC UFC Division staff, in conjunction with the Clerk of the Court and Comptroller, shall be responsible for identifying Related Cases upon the filing of a new case or one reopened post-judgment when provided with notice or court order. Upon identification, the Clerk's Office shall enter Related Cases into the Related Case and Case Cross Reference fields in the Circuit's Court Case Management System(s) and link all Related Cases together in the respective system(s).
 - c. Judges and court staff, including, but not limited to, the Family Court Self Help Program.
 - d. Court system and agency partners.
- 3. **Notification-** The AOC UFC staff shall be notified of these Related Cases by any of the methods indicated herein and will take appropriate action as delineated in this Administrative Order.
- 4. **Reassignment/Transfer Timeframes-** Until such time as a Related Case is officially transferred by the Clerk's Office to the UFC Division within reasonable time constraints, the assigned Division Judge shall continue to hear all matters in that case to ensure compliance with all state and federal statutes, rules, and regulations, including through disposition of cases in an appellate posture.
- 5. **Reassignment/Transfer Order-** A Reassignment/Transfer Order shall be issued only by the UFC Division Administrative Judge, or his/her designee, at the Miami-Dade Children's Courthouse, in instances where Related Cases have not been initially blind filed into the UFC Division.

A Reassignment/Transfer Order shall be issued only by the Family or Domestic Violence Division Administrative Judge, or either of his/her respective designees, at the Lawson E. Thomas Courthouse Center, in instances where Related Cases have not been initially blind filed into the respective Division for Related Cases not

otherwise transferred by a Reassignment/Transfer Order issued by the UFC Administrative Judge, or his/her designee.

6. **Reassignment/Transfer Errors-** If the transfer of a case is conducted in error, upon clarification of no open Related Cases, the case shall be reassigned/transferred to the appropriate Division. If a reassignment/ transfer order was entered in error, the order shall be vacated, and the case shall be reassigned/assigned to the appropriate Division.
7. **Closed Cases/Post-Judgment Matters-** When all UFC issues have been resolved, the matter will be closed and remain in the UFC Division. Any Related Cases that are reopened which are part of the UFC matter will remain in the UFC Division through case disposition and for all post-judgment activity.
8. **Subsequent Related Case Filings-** Any subsequent Related Case filings involving the same parties, children, or issues shall be assigned by the Clerk's Office to the same UFC judicial section, to be handled through case disposition, including when any Related Cases open post-judgment.

B. Related Case Type Categories– Generally, the operational protocol for assignment of Related Cases will be as follows:

1. **Family/Juvenile Dependency and/or Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) (pursuant to Chapter 39, Florida Statutes) Cases**
 - a. **Dependency/TPR case filed where there is an open or closed Family case, or a Family case filed where there is an open or closed Dependency/TPR case.** All Related Cases shall be filed in or transferred to the UFC Division to be heard before an assigned UFC Judge, through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.
 - b. **Open Dependency/TPR case where there is an open Related Adoption Case.** The Adoption case shall be filed in or transferred to the UFC Division to be heard by the assigned UFC Judge, through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.

2. **Family/Juvenile Delinquency Cases**
Delinquency case filed where there is an open or closed Family case, or a Family case filed where there is an open or closed Delinquency case. All Related Cases shall be filed in or transferred to the UFC Division to be heard before an assigned UFC Judge, through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.
3. **Family/Domestic Violence Injunction Cases**– All references to civil Domestic Violence Injunction cases herein include all statutory Injunction for Protection case types pursuant to Sections §741.30, §784.046, and §784.0485, Florida Statutes, including Petitions filed for Injunctions for Protection Against Domestic Violence, Stalking, Dating Violence, Sexual Violence, and Repeat Violence.
 - a. **DV Injunction case filed, where there is an open or closed Family case (pre or post-judgment), and either or both cases involve Children.** All Related Cases shall be filed in or transferred to the UFC Division to be heard before an assigned UFC Judge, through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters, subject to internal protocols.
 - b. **Family case filed, where there is an open DV Injunction case or closed DV Injunction case with a Permanent Injunction in effect, and either or both cases involve Children.** All Related Cases shall be filed in or transferred to the UFC Division to be heard before an assigned UFC Judge, through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.
 - c. **Motions for Modification/Extension/Vacating of DV Permanent Injunction filed, where there is an open or closed Family case (pre or post-judgment), and either or both cases involve Children.** All DV Injunction cases with motions for modification/extension/vacate shall be set for hearing before the assigned UFC Judge, to be handled together with the Related Family Case through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.
 - d. **Open Family case, where there is a subsequently filed DV Injunction case, and neither of the cases involve Children.** The DV Injunction case shall be filed in or transferred to the

Family Division to be heard before the assigned Family Judge through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.

- e. **Open DV Injunction case, where there is a subsequently filed Family case, and neither of the cases involve Children.** The DV Injunction case shall be transferred to the Family Division and heard before the assigned Family Judge, through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.

4. Juvenile Dependency and/or TPR/Delinquency Cases

- a. **Delinquency case filed, where there is an open Dependency/TPR case.** The subsequently filed Delinquency case shall be assigned to the UFC Judge presiding over the Related Dependency/TPR Case and handled together through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.
- b. **Dependency/TPR case filed, where there is an open Delinquency case.** The subsequently filed Dependency/TPR case shall be assigned to the UFC Judge presiding over the Related Delinquency Case and handled together through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.

5. Domestic Violence Injunction/Dependency and/or TPR Cases

- a. **DV Injunction case filed where there is an open Dependency/TPR case, or Dependency/TPR case filed where there is either an open DV Injunction case or closed DV Injunction case with a Permanent Injunction in effect.** The DV Injunction case shall be filed in or transferred to the UFC Division and set for final hearing before the assigned UFC Judge presiding over the Related Dependency Case, to be handled together with the related Dependency/TPR case through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.
- b. **DV Injunction case filed, where there is a closed Dependency/TPR case.** The Related DV Injunction Case shall be filed in or transferred to the UFC Division to be heard before the assigned UFC Judge, through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.

c. **Motions for Modification/Extension/Vacating of DV Permanent Injunction filed, where there is an open Dependency/TPR case.** The DV Injunction case shall be set for hearing before the assigned UFC Judge, to be handled together with the Related Dependency/TPR Case, through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.

6. **DV Injunction case filed by parent or guardian on behalf of (OBO) a child(ren) against a parent, caretaker, paramour, family member, or fictive kin, where there is no open Related Case in the Family or UFC Division at the time of filing.** The (“stand-alone”) DV OBO Injunction case shall be filed in or transferred to the UFC Division to be heard before an assigned UFC Judge, through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters.

All Related DV Injunction Cases involving the same parties, children, or issues shall also be filed in or transferred to the UFC Division to be heard before an assigned UFC Judge, through case disposition and for all post-judgment matters. At the time of filing, the DV Clerk’s Intake Office will add a flag in Odyssey with the Description of OBO Against Parent/Guardian in order for courtMAP to recognize the case as an OBO filing.

This Order shall take effect March 2, 2026, and shall remain in effect until further order of this Court. Administrative Order Nos. 17-08, and 17-08 A1, and any amendments thereto, are hereby rescinded. The Clerk of Court and Comptroller are hereby directed to file a copy of this Administrative Order No. 25-20 in Case 25-1 (Court Administration).

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers at Miami-Dade County, Florida, this 26th day of December 2025.

**ARIANA FAJARDO ORSHAN, CHIEF JUDGE
ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA**

**IN RE: REAFFIRMATION OF UNIFIED FAMILY COURT PLAN
AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PROCEDURES FOR THE UNIFIED FAMILY COURT DIVISION
IN THE ELVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO 25-20/CASE NO. 25-1
APPENDIX**

**QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR
RELATED CASE TYPE MATTERS DIVISION ASSIGNMENTS**

CASE TYPE FILED 1 ST & CASE POSTURE (OPEN/CLOSED)		SUBSEQUENT (OPEN) RELATED CASE TYPE FILED		ASSIGNED COURT DIVISION
Family/Juvenile Dependency and/or Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) (pursuant to Chapter 39, Fla. Stat. Cases- Page 6- III.B.(1)(a) & (b)				
FAM + DEP/TPR				
III.B.(1)(a) Open or Closed FAM	+	DEP/TPR	→	UFC
Open DEP/TPR	+	FAM	→	UFC
III.B.(1)(b) Open DEP/TPR	+	ADOPTION	→	UFC
Family/Juvenile Delinquency Cases- Page 7- III.B.(2)				
FAM + DEL				
Open or Closed FAM	+	DEL	→	UFC
Open or Closed DEL	+	FAM	→	UFC
Family/DV Injunction Cases- Pages 7-8- III.B.(3)(a)-(e)				
FAM + DV				
III.B.(3)(a) NOTE: <u>Either or both</u> related cases <u>with children only</u>				
Open or Closed FAM	+	DV	→	UFC* <i>*subject to internal protocols</i>
III.B.(3)(b) NOTE: <u>Either or both</u> related cases <u>with children only</u>				
Open DV or Closed DV with Perm Inj in effect	+	FAM	→	UFC
III.B.(3)(c) NOTE: <u>Either or both</u> related cases <u>with children only</u>				
Open or Closed FAM	+	Open DV PJ	→	UFC

III.B.(3)(d) NOTE: <u>Both</u> related cases <u>without</u> <u>children only</u> Open FAM	+	DV	→	FAMILY
III.B.(3)(e) NOTE: <u>Both</u> related cases <u>without</u> <u>children only</u> Open DV	+	FAM	→	FAMILY
Juvenile Dependency and/or TPR/Delinquency Cases- Page 8 III.B.(4)(a) & (b) DEP/TPR + DEL				
III.B.(4)(a) Open DEP/TPR	+	DEL	→	UFC
III.B.(4)(b) Open DEL	+	DEP/TPR	→	UFC
DV Injunction/Juvenile Dependency and/or TPR Cases- Pages 8-9 III.B.(5)(a) - (c) DV + DEP/TPR				
III.B.(5)(a) Open DEP/TPR	+	DV	→	UFC
Open DV or Closed DV with Perm Inj in effect	+	DEP/TPR	→	UFC
III.B.(5)(b) Closed DEP/TPR	+	DV	→	UFC
III.B.(5)(c) Open DEP/TPR	+	Open DV PJ	→	UFC
“Stand-alone” DV OBO Cases involving allegations of child maltreatment with No Open Related Case in Family or UFC Divisions, <u>with or without</u> a Companion/Related DV Case- Page 9- III.B.(6) DV OBO ± DV				
III.B.(6) “Stand-alone” Child Maltreatment DV OBO	±	Companion/Related DV	→	UFC