

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
IN AND FOR INDIAN RIVER,  
MARTIN, OKEECHOBEE, AND  
ST. LUCIE COUNTIES, FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 96-01

IN RE:

FAMILY HEARING OFFICERS  
\_\_\_\_\_ /

WHEREAS, the Florida Supreme Court has adopted Family Law Rules of Procedure which are effective January 1, 1996; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of these family law rules requires the amendment of this Court's Administrative Order 94-11; and

WHEREAS, many matters involving child support, alimony, and maintenance are brought before the Family Division of the Circuit Court; and

WHEREAS, the interests of the public and of the litigants require a flexible and speedy resolution of such matters; and

WHEREAS, the Family Division has demonstrated a need for assistance from family hearing officers to comply with the time limitations by conducting proceedings for the establishment, enforcement, or modification of support pursuant to Rule 12.491, Fla. Fam. L. R. P.; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to maintain a record of proceedings conducted before the family hearing officers, and electronic reporting has proved to be a reliable and inexpensive method for maintaining a record;

NOW, THEREFORE, by the authority vested in me as Chief Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit of Florida and pursuant to Rules 2.050(b)(2) and 2.070(c)(1), Fla. R. Jud. Admin., and Rule 12.491, Fla. Fam. L. R. P., it is;

ORDERED as follows:

1. The Office of Family Hearing Officer of the Circuit Court of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit of Florida is hereby established. Family hearing officers shall be appointed by, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Chief Judge and a majority of Circuit Judges in the Circuit.

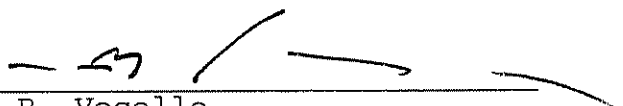
2. The family hearing officer shall be empowered to conduct proceedings and make findings of fact and recommendations of law pursuant to Rule 12.491(e), Fla. Fam. L. R. P..

3. Family hearing officers shall discharge their duties under the direction of the Administrative Judge of the Family Law Division of the Court.

4. All proceedings for the establishment, enforcement, or modification of support wherein the party seeking support is receiving services pursuant to Title IV-D of the Social Security Act; all non-Title IV-D proceedings for the establishment, enforcement, or modification of support, in which the Department of Revenue represents the moving party, and all voluntary acknowledgment of paternity to Rule 12.491(e). As support enforcement hearing officer does not have the authority to hear contested paternity cases.

5. All proceedings before the family officers shall be electronically reported. The electronic reporting of these cases shall be done in conformance with this Court's Administrative Orders dealing with electronic reporting of proceedings.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers, at Vero Beach, Indian River County, Florida, this 29 day of February, 1996.

  
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L. B. Vocelle  
Chief Judge

cc: All Circuit and County Judges  
All Clerks of Court  
All Local Bar Associations within this Circuit  
Court Administrator