

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER L2000-31-A

**AMENDED ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER ESTABLISHING
FAMILY LAW SELF-HELP PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, an overwhelming number of people are representing themselves in family cases filed in Lake County; and

WHEREAS, these litigants cause a substantial strain on the clerk's office and the judiciary; and

WHEREAS, the Family Court Case Management Office/Self-Help Center is assigned the responsibility of helping the judiciary process these cases efficiently; and

WHEREAS, the Family Court Case Management Office/Self-Help Center provides information on how to access forms and instructions approved by the Florida Supreme Court and reviews forms and files involving self-represented litigants; and

WHEREAS, the Family Court Case Management Office/Self-Help Center has provided access to the family court for many people who cannot afford an attorney and has improved the court's ability to process their cases; and

WHEREAS, on December 3, 1998, the Florida Supreme Court adopted Rule 12.750, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure to regulate Family Self-Help Programs and allowed chief judges to establish such programs by administrative order; and

WHEREAS, the program in Lake County is controlled by this rule, it is therefore

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that:

A Family Law Self-Help Program is established in Lake County pursuant to Rule 12.750, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure.

The self-help program may furnish Supreme Court approved forms and instructions to self-represented litigants. The litigants shall be responsible for the costs of copying any documents.

Before providing any services, employees shall inform the person seeking services of the Notice of Limitation of Services Provided disclaimer set forth in the self-help rule. R.12.750(h). The employee shall also encourage the person to seek advice from an attorney, provide information about The Florida Bar Referral Services and inform the person of possible assistance provided by the local legal aid agency.

The services provided by the self-help program are available to all self-represented litigants who are involved in, or who are filing, a family law action in Lake County.

All self-represented litigants who file a family law cause of action, other than those who electronically file their initial pleadings, shall have their initial pleadings reviewed by the Family Court Case Management Office/Self-Help Center before filing them with the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

All contested cases may be mediated at the discretion of the presiding judge before they are set for trial.

All self-represented litigants shall have their file reviewed by the Family Court Case Management Office/Self-Help Center before the case is set for hearing or trial to determine if the parties have complied with all requirements necessary to adjudicate their disputes.

The family law judges, administrative judge, and/or chief judge may establish other procedures for the program which do not conflict with the limitations of Rule 12.750.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers, at Tavares, Lake County, Florida, this 10 day of July, 2018.



Lawrence Semento
Administrative Judge
Lake County