

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

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER M2018- 34

AMENDS AND SUPERSEDES M1999-16  
and M-1999-4

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

**WHEREAS**, an overwhelming number of people are representing themselves in family cases filed in Marion 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 Marion County is controlled by this rule, it is therefore

**ORDERED AND ADJUDGED** that:

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

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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 Marion County.

5. 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.

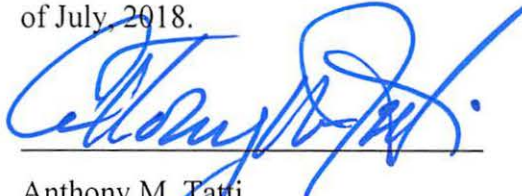
6. All contested cases may be mediated at the discretion of the presiding judge before they are set for trial.

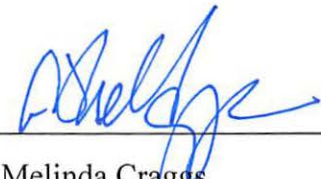
7. All self-represented litigants shall have their file reviewed by the Family Court Case Management Office/Self-Help Center before the case is set for hearing or trial to determine if the parties have complied with all requirements necessary to adjudicate their disputes.

8. This order amends and supersedes Administrative Order M1999-16 and M1999-4

9. 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 Ocala, Marion County, Florida, this 10 day of July, 2018.

  
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Anthony M. Tatti  
Marion County Administrative Judge

  
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Ann Melinda Craggs  
Family Law Administrative Judge  
Fifth Judicial Circuit