

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR  
CITRUS, HERNANDO, LAKE, MARION AND SUMTER COUNTIES**

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO: A-2020-08-D

**IN RE: GENERAL MAGISTRATES AND  
CHILD SUPPORT HEARING OFFICERS  
(amended to correct scrivener error)**

**WHEREAS**, Rule 1.490 of the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure; Rules 12.490 and 12.491 of the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure and Rule 8.257, Florida Rules of Juvenile Procedure specify the matters which may be heard by General Magistrates and Hearing Officers upon the referral of Judges of the Circuit Court; and

**WHEREAS**, the interest of the public and the litigants require a flexible and expeditious means of resolution of cases; and

**WHEREAS**, it is necessary for the efficient disposition of justice to appoint general magistrates to hear and make recommendations on matters of civil law, domestic relations, dependency, probate and guardianship; and

**WHEREAS**, by Administrative Order dated February 27, 1998, the Supreme Court of Florida ordered that, pursuant to Rule 12.491, Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure, hearing officers may be utilized in the Fifth Judicial Circuit to consider proceedings for the establishment, enforcement and modification of support in both Title IV-D and non-Title IV-D cases;

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:**

1. Each of the following persons is hereby appointed as a General Magistrate for the Fifth Judicial Circuit, in and for Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion and Sumter counties, Florida, pursuant to Fla. R. Civ. P. 1.490; Fla. Prob. R. 5.697; Fla. R. Juv. P. 8.257; Fla. Fam. L.R. P. 12.490; and any other statutory or rule provision authorizing the appointment of a general magistrate.

Each of the following persons is also hereby appointed Child Support Enforcement Hearing Officer pursuant to Fla. Fam. L.R.P. 12.491 for the Fifth Judicial Circuit, in and for Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion and Sumter counties:

- a) Brenda Coleman
- b) Barry Dimick
- c) Barbara Kissner Kwatkosky
- d) Yolanda Romagnolo
- e) Keith Schenck
- f) George Singeltary
- g) Joshua Soileau

2. Each General Magistrate shall:

- a) Take the oath of office required of officers by the Constitution of the State of Florida,

*DBM*

and the oath shall be properly recorded in the Official Records of the Clerks of the Circuit Courts in and for Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion and Sumter Counties, Florida along with this administrative order.

- b) Perform duties in accordance with Fla. R. Civ. P. 1.490; Fla. Prob. R. 5.697; Fla. R. Juv. P. 8.257; Fla. Fam. L.R.P. 12.490; any other statutory or rule provision authorizing the appointment of a general magistrate; applicable rules of court; the Code of Judicial Conduct; and as provided herein.
- c) Be a member in good standing of The Florida Bar.
- d) Serve at the pleasure of the Chief Judge.
- e) Serve without the requirement of bond.

3. Each Child Support Enforcement Hearing Officer shall:

- a) Perform duties in accordance with rule 12.491, Fla. Fam. L.R.P., other applicable rules of court, the Code of Judicial Conduct, statutes, and as provided herein.
- b) Consider Title IV-D proceedings, including the establishment, enforcement and modification of child support.
- c) Be a member in good standing of The Florida Bar.
- d) Serve at the pleasure of the Chief Judge.

4. When performing duties as a Child Support Enforcement Hearing Officer, each General Magistrate shall:

- a) Perform duties in accordance with rule 12.491, Fla. Fam. L.R.P., other applicable rules of court, the Code of Judicial Conduct, statutes, and as provided herein.
- b) Consider Title IV-D and non-Title IV-D proceedings, including the establishment, enforcement and modification of child support.
- c) Be a member in good standing of The Florida Bar.
- d) Serve at the pleasure of the Chief Judge.

5. Each General Magistrate and Hearing Officer shall take testimony and establish a record by electronic means pursuant to Rule of Judicial Administration 2.535. The record will be made, retained, and destroyed in accordance with Rules of Judicial Administration 2.430 and any administrative orders governing court reporting in the Fifth Judicial Circuit.

6. All actions taken before this date by previously appointed general masters or general magistrates, and child support hearing officers and hereby confirmed.

7. This Order shall take effect 12:01 a.m. August 1, 2022, and will remain in full force and effect unless amended, rescinded, superseded, or replaced.

**DONE AND ORDERED** in Brooksville, Hernando County, Florida, this 26<sup>th</sup> day of July 2022.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**DANIEL B. MERRITT, JR.**  
Chief Judge of the Fifth Judicial