

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO.:
04-13

**IN RE: DOMESTIC RELATIONS - ESTABLISHMENT OF EDUCATION PROGRAM IN
FAMILY LAW CASES FOR SELF-REPRESENTED (PRO-SE) LITIGANTS**

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of Florida adopted Rule 12.750, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, which authorized chief judges to establish self-help programs to facilitate access to family courts, and

WHEREAS, statistics show that a large percentage of family law case filings in Florida involve at least one self-represented litigant, and

WHEREAS, the undersigned believes the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit Court should take steps to ensure that it is accessible, convenient, understandable and affordable to the citizens of the circuit;

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as Chief Judge of the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit to establish Family Self-Help programs as set forth in Family Law Rules of Procedure, Rule 12.750, and in the Eighteenth Judicial Administrative Order Number 03-22 and to better serve the citizens of the State of Florida,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

1. Pro se (self-represented) litigants are strongly urged to attend an educational family self-help program to be established in the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit for all self represented litigants in family law actions concerning issues of shared parental responsibility, child residency, child support, payment of alimony, child visitation, distribution of property, modification and enforcement of similar orders and any other domestic disputes including motions for temporary relief, effective immediately.

2. Pro se litigants are strongly urged to attend and complete an approved four (4) hour self help family educational program, as set forth herein, within sixty (60) days of service of the petition upon the respondent, or prior to scheduling of mediation or a temporary relief matter, whichever event is earlier.
3. The Clerk of the Circuit Court in the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit shall maintain a list of providers approved by the Court for providing the family self-help education program, and shall make such list available to the pro se litigants so they may attend the seminar of their choice. It shall be the responsibility of the Clerk of Court to inform pro se litigants of this educational opportunity.
4. Court Administration shall maintain a list of the court approved providers for the educational family self-help program. Additional programs may be approved by the Family Division Administrative Judge, and the Clerk of the Circuit Court shall add those programs to the list of approved agencies without the necessity of further administrative orders.
5. Services provided by the self-help educational program providers shall be in accordance with Rule 12.750, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure.
6. Instructors for the approved family self-help educational programs shall be attorneys authorized to practice law in the State of Florida for at least five (5) years.
7. All approved providers of the self-help educational programs shall submit a written annual report to court administration. The report formats shall be provided by court administration.
8. The cost to attend the self help program shall not exceed \$100.00 and special consideration shall be provided for self represented parties who are indigent.
9. The Eighteenth Judicial Circuit Court expressly disclaims any responsibility for the content of the Family Law Self-Help Educational Programs.

Done and Ordered this 10th day of March, 2004.

JAMES E.C. PERRY
JAMES E.C. PERRY
CHIEF JUDGE

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