



**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE**  
**EARLY CHILDHOOD COURT**  
**IN THE EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**  
**IN AND FOR BREVARD COUNTY**

In accordance with the Administrative Order No. 22-07-B entitled “In Re: Juvenile – Dependency - Establishment of Early Childhood Court Program” for the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit, Brevard County, the following policies and procedures are being established in accordance with Florida Early Childhood Court Best Practice Standards November 2019 as adopted by the Supreme Court of the State of Florida.

1. The shelter order in a dependency proceeding may refer the case to Early Childhood Court for the parents to participate in an eligibility screening with the Community Coordinator.
2. Cases may be referred to Early Childhood Court for an eligibility screening by contacting the Community Coordinator and completing a referral form. Referral forms are available from the Community Coordinator and at the following link: <https://flcourts18.org/brevardecc/>
3. Based on the discretion of the Community Coordinator that screening is appropriate, the screening should be a joint meeting with parents and their attorneys unless the attorney provides the Community Coordinator with written consent, which may be by email, that screening may occur without counsel present and the parent waives the right to have counsel present. This screening may be in-person, virtual, or telephonic at the discretion of the Community Coordinator based on the needs of the participants involved.
4. The multidisciplinary team will make an eligibility recommendation to the Dependency Judge on the suitability of a case being accepted into Early Childhood Court for the Judge to accept the transfer of that case onto the docket for Early Childhood Court.
5. Cases will be transferred to the Early Childhood Court docket by way of court order at the discretion of the Judge after conclusion of the screening process and agreement of the participating parent. Once a parent voluntarily enters into Early Childhood Court, the Judge does not discharge parents except for good cause as determined by the Judge. For parents who are unable to be successfully reunified, the Court will proceed with another permanency goal.
6. Parents who voluntarily choose to participate in Early Childhood Court will review and sign the forms, “Consent to Participation and Treatment in Early Childhood Court” and “Waiver of Confidentiality and Consent to Exchange Information.” These executed forms will be filed with the “Order Transferring Case to Early Childhood Court.”
7. Cases in Early Childhood Court will be scheduled monthly or more frequently as needed.
8. Family Team Meetings with parents, case managers, resource parents, providers, Guardians ad Litem, and attorneys of record will be scheduled monthly and/or as needed by the Coordinator for the Early Childhood Court program and attendance is expected for participation in Early Childhood Court. The Community Coordinator has discretion as to who should be included/excluded in Family Team Meetings as deemed necessary.