

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

Petitioner,

and

Case No.:

Respondent.

**STANDING FAMILY COURT ORDER
(WITHOUT CHILDREN'S ISSUES)**

It is in the best interest of the parties in a family law case to learn about their duties and responsibilities and that the parties preserve their assets and comply with court rules. This Order is entered for the purpose of economically and expeditiously resolving initial dissolutions of marriage, supplemental proceedings for modification and other proceedings. It is therefore, ORDERED as follows:

1. SERVICE, APPLICATION, AND TERM OF THIS ORDER:

1.1 This Family Court Order shall be utilized and complied with immediately upon filing of this action, except in cases where there is a written agreement by the parties to the contrary before or after this order takes effect.

1.2 The Clerk of Court shall docket and provide a copy of this Standing Family Law Order to Petitioner or to Petitioner's counsel at the time Petitioner files an original or supplemental petition that indicates there are no child-related issues in dispute.

1.3 In addition, Petitioner shall deliver a copy of this Order to the process server to be served on Respondent with the original petition or supplemental petition.

1.4 This Order is binding on Petitioner upon the filing of this action and on Respondent upon service of this order. The party serving the order shall complete a Certificate of Service for Standing Family Law Court Order (see Attachment "A").

1.5 This Order shall not supersede or modify any existing domestic violence injunction or other order by a court having jurisdiction over the parties.

1.6 This Order shall remain in full force and effect until further order of the Court such as the entry of a final judgment, a dismissal of this cause, or until the entry of a subsequent temporary order, whichever shall occur first. This Order does not preclude a Judge from modifying or amending this Order in individual cases where the Judge deems necessary. Any part of this order not changed by a subsequent order shall remain in effect.

2. DISPOSITION OF ASSETS:

Neither party may conceal, damage, or dispose of any asset, whether marital or non-marital, and neither party may dissipate the value of an asset, for example, by adding a mortgage to real estate or by failing to take care of an asset. Neither party may dispose of any asset other than in the customary conduct of business and personal affairs. The parties may spend their incomes in the ordinary course of the personal and family affairs. Neither party may conceal, hoard, or waste jointly owned funds, whether in the form of cash, bank accounts, or other liquid assets, except funds may be spent for the necessities of life. The use of funds or income after separation must be accounted for and justified as reasonable and necessary for the necessities of the party or to preserve marital assets or pay marital debts. Both parties are accountable for all money or property in their possession during the marriage and after separation.

Attorney's fees and costs are necessities and must be accounted for in the calculation of equitable distribution.

3. PERSONAL AND BUSINESS RECORDS/INSURANCE:

Neither party may, directly or indirectly, conceal from the other or destroy any family records, business records, or any records of income, debt, or other obligations. Any insurance policies in effect at the time the petition for dissolution was filed may not be terminated, allowed to lapse, concealed, modified, borrowed against, pledged, or otherwise encumbered by either of the parties or at the direction of either party. All insurance policies of every kind may not be changed, except by written agreement signed by the parties or order of the court. The parties shall continue to pay all premiums on a timely basis unless there is a written consent by both parties or an order of the court.

4. ADDITIONAL DEBT:

Neither party will incur additional debt which would bind the other party nor tie up any assets, except by written consent of the parties or order of this court. The parties are urged to temporarily stop using joint credit cards, except for absolute necessities and only as a last resort. Joint credit cards may be used only for the necessities of life, and any party using a joint credit card after separation must be prepared to justify all charges as reasonable and necessary for necessities.

5. MEDIATION:

5.1 When an answer is filed in a case and the answer contests any issue in the petition, the parties will be required to seek the services of a Florida Supreme Court Certified mediator to mediate the issues of their case.

5.2 Mediation is an informal and non-adversarial process whereby a neutral third party facilitates a resolution to a dispute between two parties. The objective is to obtain a mutually acceptable and voluntary agreement.

5.3 If the parties qualify, the Sumter County Family Court Mediation Program may be contacted to provide mediation services. Otherwise, if the parties cannot agree on the selection of a mediator, upon request of the court, the court will select one for them.

5.4 The mediator and parties shall schedule the mediation conference and within fifteen (15) days of selection or appointment by the court, written notice of the date, time and place of the first mediation conference shall be sent to all parties and the court. Absent good cause, the first mediation conference shall be held within sixty (60) days of the selection of the mediator.

5.5 All parties are required to personally attend the mediation conference and shall be completely prepared to mediate in good faith.

5.6 The parties may be assisted by counsel at the mediation conference; however, if a party is not represented by counsel, the presence of counsel at mediation is not required.

5.7 If a party either fails to appear or cancels a duly noticed mediation conference less than forty-eight (48) hours before, without good cause, the court, upon motion, shall impose sanctions including, but not limited to, an award of mediator and/or attorney's fees.

5.8 The mediator's report shall be submitted to the court within (10) days of completion of mediation.

5.9 Upon motion to request of a party, the court shall not refer any case to mediation if it finds there has been a history of domestic violence that would compromise the mediation process.

5.10 Mediation may be waived if a default has been entered.

6. MANDATORY DISCLOSURE:

Both parties must file and exchange financial affidavits and comply with mandatory disclosure pursuant to Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure 12.285.

7. NOTIFICATION OF RELATED CASES:

Attorneys and parties shall notify the court as soon as it becomes evident to them of the existence of any court proceeding in any jurisdiction that may be relevant to the subject matter before the court. A copy of any relevant orders shall be provided to the court. This obligation shall be continuing in nature throughout the proceeding.

8. EMERGENCY MOTIONS:

If either party feels he or she has an "emergency" requiring immediate action, the party or the party's counsel must file a motion for emergency relief, concurrently serve a copy on the other party, and deliver or fax a copy to the court. The court will decide if the matter is an emergency by reviewing the motion. If it is an emergency, expedited hearing time will be given and the moving party shall serve the other party with the Notice of Hearing and the Motion either by facsimile or email, and provide a copy to the court.

9. TEMPORARY HEARINGS:

At any temporary hearing in which there is a disputed issue of alimony or attorney's fees, both parties shall comply with Mandatory Financial Disclosure for temporary relief as required under Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure 12.285(b). Ten (10) days prior to the hearing on a motion for temporary relief, a party seeking relief shall file a "Notice of Specific Relief Requested" and shall include the amount of alimony and attorney's fees requested.

10. CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCES:

10.1 A Case Management Conference may be ordered by the court at any time on the court's initiative. A party may request a Case Management Conference thirty (30) days after service of a petition or complaint. Issues addressed in the Conference shall be pursuant to Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure 12.200.

10.2 A fifteen minute pretrial conference shall be scheduled at least thirty (30) days before a final hearing. Twenty (20) days notice shall be given for a pretrial conference. The purpose of the conference shall be for a determination of whether the trial may be simplified or for any other purpose pursuant to Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure 12.200. The Pretrial Catalogue of each party MUST be filed prior to the conference. Failure of counsel or a party to fully and completely comply with this process may result in the imposition of sanctions including, but not limited to, cancellation of the trial date with costs assessed to the offending party, the striking of pleadings, the entry of default, or dismissal of this action.

11. SETTING TRIAL:

11.1 Mediation is required in all cases prior to setting trial unless the court has waived mediation.

11.2 A contested final hearing shall not be scheduled until the mediator's report is filed. Once the mediation report is filed, a trial date and pretrial conference date can be scheduled. The pretrial conference and the final hearing cannot be cancelled by either party. Either party can file a Motion for Continuance and a hearing will be held to determine if the request is valid.

12. PRETRIAL CATALOGUE:

12.1 If this case is not resolved by mediation or otherwise, no later than seventy-two (72) hours prior to the time of the pretrial conference for the final hearing, a Pretrial Catalogue (see Attachment "B") in compliance with the form referenced in this Order shall be filed by each party and a copy delivered to each party and the trial judge.

12.2 The primary purpose of the Pretrial Catalogue is to provide the court with information for the consideration of a Final Judgment. Any party who applies to the court for a waiver of the Pretrial Catalogue shall make said application and schedule a hearing on the matter for a date prior to scheduling the trial (final hearing). Exhibits should not be filed with the court, however, must be delivered to the

opposing party at the time of delivery of the Pretrial Catalogue. The Pretrial Catalogue is not intended to be used to present any argument. Issues related to the form or substance of a catalogue which has been filed will be addressed at the Pretrial Conference or by prior motion.

13. DISCOVERY:

All discovery shall be completed ten (10) days prior to trial and shall be allowed thereafter only upon agreement of the parties or their counsel and upon showing of good cause. If one party requests the deposition of a witness listed in the Pretrial Catalogue and the other party does not cooperate in scheduling the same, the Court shall consider any sanctions, including excluding the witness. The parties shall fully comply with disclosure and discovery provisions of the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure and the applicable Florida Rules of Civil Procedure, unless waived or modified in writing by the parties pursuant to Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure 12.285(a)(1).

14. COURTROOM CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR

All courtroom proceedings shall be conducted with dignity, decorum, courtesy and civility.

14.1 **Dress Appropriately.** Court business is very important. People who do not dress or groom properly might give the wrong impression. Their dress and appearance may show a lack of interest in the case or a lack of respect for the court. Judges may ban persons not appropriately dressed.

14.2 **Speaking and talking.** A court proceeding is not a free for all where anyone, parties and lawyers alike, can say whatever they want whenever they feel like it. A party who is called as a witness must answer only the questions asked and may not volunteer information or make argument while testifying.

Parties may not talk unless they are directed by the Judge or a lawyer to speak, and then they may speak only to the Judge or a lawyer. A party must never talk directly to the other party in court. Judges may remove anyone who hinders the orderly conduct of business from the courtroom, including parties and lawyers.

Interruptions, sarcasm and insults will not be tolerated. Do not start arguments with or threaten anyone.

14.3 **Disruptive behavior.** While it is not unusual that parties may be upset when they come to court, all parties are expected to keep their anger and behavior under control in the courthouse and everywhere else.

It is improper to make any kind of physical gesture or facial expression that shows sarcasm, disbelief or disrespect.

14.4 **Bounds of Advocacy.** All counsel appearing before the court are expected to read and should adhere to the standards of professionalism set forth in the "Bounds of Advocacy" published by the Family Law Section of The Florida Bar, copies of which may be obtained from The Florida Bar.

14.5 **Appearing in Court without a lawyer.** A "Pro Se" litigant, a party without a lawyer, is not entitled to special treatment or privileges and must follow the same rules of procedure and ethical regulations that govern practicing lawyers.

14.6 **The court must treat a pro se party the same way it treats a lawyer.** Pro se litigants, although not expected to be as skilled and knowledgeable as lawyers, are nevertheless subject to all laws, rules and regulations of a lawyer.

Judges and their assistants are forbidden by law from giving any advice or help to unrepresented parties. Judges and their assistants must remain entirely neutral and impartial. Judges and their assistants also may not give unrepresented parties special treatment.

14.7 **What Judges and their assistants cannot do.** Neither the Judge nor the Judge's assistant can give a pro se litigant legal advice, practice tips or help in preparing court papers. Most questions that ask how to do something cannot be answered by the Judge's assistant or the Judge and should not be asked.


14.8 **Contact with the Judge's office.** A pro se party is authorized to contact the Judge's office by telephone to set hearings on the court's schedule. Personal visits to the office are discouraged because it disrupts the working routine in the office. Judicial Assistants assist Judges. It is not their job to advise or assist the parties with their case.

If any party telephones the Judicial Assistant and persists in talking about unauthorized subjects after being warned, Judicial Assistants are instructed to hang up the telephone. All requests to speak to the Judge on the telephone or have a private conference will be refused. If a party has a matter to be considered, a motion and notice of hearing must be filed in the court file by delivery to the clerk of the court and a copy of the motion and notice of hearing must be sent to the other party or the other party's lawyer, if the other party has a lawyer. Letters should not be written to the Judge. All letters addressed to the Judge are filed in the court file and copies are sent to the parties. The Judge can only consider motions filed in the court file, copies of which have been delivered to all other parties in the action with a notice of hearing, and can receive evidence about a case only at a hearing in the courtroom with all parties notified of the hearing.

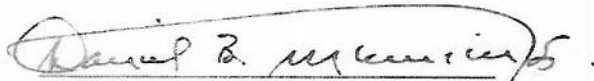
15. **SANCTIONS:**

All parties and counsel must strictly comply with this order. Failure of counsel or a party to fully and completely comply with this order may result in the imposition of sanctions including, but not limited to, cancellation of the trial date with costs assessed to the offending party, the striking of pleadings, the entry of default, or dismissal of this action.

DONE AND ORDERED in chambers at Ocala, Marion County, Florida on this 17 day of Jan, 2008.


Sue Robbins, Circuit Court Judge
Administrative Family Law Judge

DONE AND ORDERED in chambers at Brooksville, Hernando County, Florida on this _____ day of _____, 2008.


DANIEL B. MERRITT, SR.,
Chief Judge

ATTACHMENT A
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
FOR
STANDING FAMILY COURT ORDER

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a copy hereof has been furnished for personal service to

_____ on this
_____ day of _____, 20__.

Party or their attorney (if represented)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Fax: _____

Signature of party signing certificate and pleading

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Fax: _____

ATTACHMENT B
PRETRIAL CATALOGUE

The Pretrial Catalogue submitted to the court should contain the following information:

THE MARRIAGE:

1. Date and place of Marriage
2. Date of Separation
3. Attach any pre-nuptial or post-nuptial agreements between the parties.

ALIMONY:

1. Amount of alimony, if any, requested by each party
2. Nature of the alimony; permanent, rehabilitative, lump sum, or a combination of same

PERSONAL PROPERTY:

1. A list of all personal property in controversy and the name(s) on the title, if any
2. Suggested disposition of said property
3. The value of each piece of property showing any lien or obligation against said property, and who is obligated for payment
4. Life insurance policies, if any, and whether said policies are term or whole
5. List of any non-marital property. Include fair market value of any equity in non-marital assets.

REAL PROPERTY:

1. A list of all real property in controversy. Include the name(s) on the title to the property.
2. The value of each parcel of property showing any lien or obligation against said property, and who is obligated for payment
3. What interests, right of claim or equitable interest each party claims in each parcel of property
4. Suggested disposition of the property

RETIREMENT PLANS:

1. A list of all retirement plans, pensions, profit sharing, annuity, deferred compensation and/or insurance plans whether they are vested or non-vested, and identify which party is the owner
2. The present value of the retirement plans or other benefits
3. What interest, right, claim or equitable interest each party claims in the property
4. Suggested disposition of the plan or benefit

DEBTS:

1. A list of all unsecured debts and in whose name each debt was incurred
2. A list of all secured debts including the security for payment of the debt. Identify the name(s) on the debt and the name(s) on title to the security.
3. Suggested disposition of the debts

ATTORNEY'S FEES AND COURT COSTS:

1. The amount of attorney's fees and court costs sought by either party from the other (estimate to conclusion of trial)
2. Identify all motions filed by the parties that requested attorney's fees and/or costs for which the Court reserved jurisdiction to determine.

MISCELLANEOUS:

1. List of admissions and stipulations to avoid unnecessary proof
2. List of pending motions
3. Request for judicial notice
4. Estimate of time needed for trial (the parties will be expected to complete the trial within the time allotted which the court will equitably allocate between the parties)

ATTACH THE FOLLOWING TO THE PRETRIAL CATALOGUE:

1. A current, fully executed Financial Affidavit
2. A current and completed Child Support Guidelines Worksheet
3. Certificate of Completion of an approved Parent Education and Stabilization Course
4. Copies of all photographs, exhibits and documentary evidence which the party proposes to use at trial
5. A witness list which provides all witnesses' names with current mailing and physical addresses and telephone numbers, and a description of the general nature of each witness's anticipated testimony.

ATTACHMENT C
PRETRIAL CATALOGUE

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5. List of any non-marital property. Include fair market value of any equity in non-marital assets.

REAL PROPERTY:

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1. A list of all retirement plans, pensions, profit sharing, annuity, deferred compensation and/or insurance plans whether they are vested or non-vested, and identify which party is the owner
2. The present value of the retirement plans or other benefits
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