

SECOND AMENDED ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER RE: PROCEDURES FOR
PRO SE LITIGANTS IN THE DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION

WHEREAS, The Circuit Court in Orange County is concerned with the effective and proper administration of domestic relations cases filed by pro se litigants in the Domestic Relations division, and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that a Family Court Intake Unit is necessary to assist pro se litigants who file domestic relations cases in the Domestic Relations Division, and

WHEREAS, such assistance by the Family Court Intake Unit will expedite domestic relations cases filed by pro se litigants, thereby providing greater convenience to these pro se litigants, and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, R. JAMES STROKER, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Chief Judge of the Ninth Judicial Circuit of Florida under Rule 2.050, Florida Rules of Judicial Administration, do hereby order that Administrative Order 07-94-39 is vacated and set aside and Administrative Order 07-94-53 shall supersede said order.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. PROCEDURES FOR PRO SE LITIGANTS IN ALL DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION MATTERS. The following procedures shall be adopted for pro se litigants filing a dissolution of marriage case or a name change case in the Domestic Relations Division with the exception of persons enrolled in The Legal Aid Society of The Orange County Bar Association, Inc.'s Pro Se Dissolution of Marriage Clinic.

a. Registering:

Prior to filing a dissolution of marriage action or a name change action in the Domestic Relations Division, all pro se petitioners shall register with the Family Court Intake Unit.

b. Scheduling of Uncontested Final Hearings:

(1) All final hearings for uncontested dissolution of marriage cases and name change cases filed on or after May 1, 1995, in the Domestic Relations Division for which both litigants are representing themselves, or for which the petitioner is representing himself/herself and believes the case is ready for final hearing, shall be coordinated by the Family Court Intake Unit.

(2) Upon belief by the pro se litigant that the case is ready to be set for final hearing, the pro se litigant shall notify the Family Court Intake Unit. Upon such notification, the Family Court Intake Unit shall review the court file prior to scheduling the final hearing.

(3) All required documents shall be filed with the Office of the Clerk of Court, Domestic Relations Division, before any hearing may be scheduled.

c. Mediation: All contested dissolution of marriage cases in which both litigants are representing themselves and their disagreement involves distribution of property, alimony, and/or primary residential responsibility, visitation and/or support of the minor child(ren) shall be referred to the court-annexed family mediation unit prior to the setting of a final hearing or trial. The parties shall not be referred to mediation if there is a history of domestic violence,

mental illness, alcoholism, or drug addiction of a chronic and ongoing nature.

2. EFFECTIVE DATE. This procedure shall be effective for all pro se litigants who file dissolution of marriage or name change cases on or after May 1, 1995.

DONE AND ORDERED at Orlando, Orange County, Florida, this 28th day of April, 1995.

/s/ R. James Stroker
R. James Stroker
Chief Judge

Copies to:

All Circuit & County Judges, Ninth Judicial Circuit
State Attorney's Office, Ninth Judicial Circuit
Public Defender's Office, Ninth Judicial Circuit
General Counsel, Orange County Sheriff's Office
Orange County Corrections
Orange County Bar Association
Bar Briefs, Orange County Bar Association
Legal Department, Orange County
Paul C. Perkins Bar Association
Hispanic Bar Association of Orange County
Clerk of Courts, Orange County
Orange County Law Library
Clerk of Courts, Osceola County
The Osceola County Bar Association
The Osceola County Sheriff's Office
The Legal Review

Administrative Order No. 07-94-53