

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 5.212-2/17\*

IN RE: ORDER TO ATTEND PARENT EDUCATION  
AND FAMILY STABILIZATION COURSE,  
AND TO FILE FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE  
AND CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINE WORKSHEET  
IN PATERNITY & DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE CASES  
WITH MINOR CHILDREN

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Florida Statute §§61.21(4), (5) and (9), Florida Statute §61.30(1)(a), and Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.285(b)(2), (e), and (k), require that parties to a dissolution of marriage proceeding with minor children or a paternity action that involves issues of parental responsibility are required to complete the Parent Education and Family Stabilization Course prior to the entry of a final judgment by the court. Each party is also required to file and serve a completed notarized Financial Affidavit and Child Support Guidelines Worksheet in order for the Court to determine and award child support for a minor child.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority conferred by Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215, it is **ORDERED** as follows:

1. All parties to dissolution of marriage proceeding with minor children or a paternity action that involves issues of parental responsibility shall attend and complete the Parent Education and Family Stabilization Course approved by the Florida Department of Children and Families.
2. A list of approved providers of such courses may be found at either the Palm Beach County Law Library or the Clerk and Comptroller's website at <http://www.mypalmbeachclerk.com/divorce.aspx>. This list may also be found on the Florida Department of Children and Families website at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/childwelfare/stabilization/>.
3. For dissolution of marriage actions, the petitioner must complete the course within 45 days after the filing of the petition, and all other parties must complete the course within 45 days after service of the petition unless excused by the court. For paternity actions, the petitioner must complete the course within 45 days after filing the petition, and any

other party must complete the course within 45 days after an acknowledgment of paternity by that party, an adjudication of paternity of that party, or an order granting time-sharing to or support from that party unless excused by the court. The parties shall be responsible for the course fees.


4. Both the Petitioner and the Respondent, or their legal counsel, must each file a "Certificate of Attendance" with the Clerk of the Court immediately after completing the class and prior to entry of a final judgment in the case. Unless the trial judge excuses a party from attending for good cause, a final judgment will not be issued until the Certificate of Attendance for both parties has been filed with the Clerk's Office.
5. The requirement to attend the course may be waived in appropriate circumstances, including instances where the parties are attending or have already completed a parenting program approved by the Florida Department of Children and Families, and the trial judge concludes that a repeat attendance is unnecessary. Any party seeking to be excused from attendance, for good cause, must file a written motion alleging the grounds constituting good cause. Unless excused by court order, the Court may hold any parent failing to attend the required course in contempt, or may order that the parent be denied shared parental responsibility or visitation, or may otherwise sanction that parent as the Court deems appropriate.
6. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to require the parties to attend an approved parenting course together.
7. Nothing in this Order shall prohibit judges from ordering parties to attend a parenting course in cases not subject to this Order.
8. Each party shall file and serve a completed, notarized Financial Affidavit in substantial conformity with Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.902(b), if the party's gross income is less than \$50,000.00 or Florida Family Rules of Procedure Form 12.902(c), if the party's gross annual income is \$50,000.00 or greater.
9. The parties shall file and serve a complete Child Support Guidelines Worksheet in substantial conformity with Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.902(e).
10. The parties cannot waive the requirement that Financial Affidavits and a Child Support Guidelines Worksheet be filed and served. No Final Judgment determining child custody and visitation may be entered absent determination of child support and child support may not be determined without the information required to be disclosed in the Financial Affidavits and Child Support Guidelines Worksheet.
11. The Financial Affidavits and Child Support Guidelines Worksheet must be served within forty-five (45) days of service of the petition on Respondent but, in any event, at least five (5) days before Court ordered mediation, absent agreement of the parties in writing or Court order.

12. In cases affected by this Order, the Clerk & Comptroller shall advise the parties of the requirements of this Order and instructions and information on how to access a list of providers by:
  - a. Posting the “Notice of Requirement” **provided by Court Administration** in all Self Help and Family Clerk of Court locations.
  - b. Providing a link on the Clerk & Comptroller’s website to the Florida Department of Children and Families website for a list of approved providers.
13. In cases in which the petitioning party is self-represented (pro se), or the pro se parties (Petitioner and Respondent) have waived service of process, the Clerk & Comptroller shall distribute this Administrative Order as follows:
  - a. If the filing party appears at the Clerk's Office at the time of filing, the Clerk shall provide a copy of this Administrative Order to the filing party and shall mail a copy to the responding party with a preaddressed stamped envelope provided to the Clerk by the filing party.
  - b. If both parties appear at time of filing, the Clerk shall provide a copy of this AO to both parties at such time.
  - c. If the filing party mails the petition to the Clerk's office for filing, the filing party shall include self addressed stamped envelopes so that the Clerk can forward copies of this AO to the Petitioner and Respondent. If the Petitioner fails to provide envelopes, the clerk shall nevertheless forward copies of this AO to the Petitioner and Respondent.
  - d. In cases in which the self-represented (pro se) parties, have designated a proper email address and have opted into email service, the Clerk & Comptroller may furnish this Administrative Order via Electronic Mail to the self-represented (pro se) party.
  - e. The Clerk & Comptroller shall docket a single copy of this Administrative Order in the court file.
14. In cases where the petitioning party is self-represented (pro se), and the Clerk & Comptroller has forwarded the petition directly to the Palm Beach County Sheriff for service, the Clerk & Comptroller shall also provide a copy of this Administrative Order, along with the summons, to the Sheriff for service upon the Respondent. The Clerk & Comptroller shall docket a single copy of this Administrative Order in the court file.
15. In cases where the petitioning party is represented by counsel at the time of case initiation, a copy of this Administrative Order shall be electronically filed at the time the

Petition is filed. A copy of this Administrative Order shall also accompany the summons to be served on the Respondent. Failure to include this Administrative Order with the summons will not affect the validity of service of the Petition.

16. A copy of this Administrative Order, which is to be included with the service packet for the respondent, can be found on the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit website at [www.15thcircuit.com/adminorders](http://www.15thcircuit.com/adminorders). Petitioner's attorney shall be responsible for establishing that Respondent was provided with a copy of this Administrative order.

**DONE AND SIGNED** in Chambers at West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida,  
this 21 day of February, 2017.

  
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Jeffrey J. Colbath  
Chief Judge

\*supersedes admin. order 5.212-11/16