Family Law Forms

Package 4(b) Petition for Adoption of Adult by Stepparent

What this package contains:

- ❑ Petition for adoption of an adult by a stepparent married to one of the natural parents.
- ❑ Consent forms, service of process forms.
- ❑ Notice of hearing.

How this package may be used:

- ❑ These forms are specifically to be used by a stepparent who is adopting the adult child of his/her spouse.

How this package may NOT be used:

- ❑ This package may not be used in any other adoption situation except adoption by a stepparent.

LAST UPDATE
7-2006

Forms For Use With

Petition For Adoption Of Adult By Stepparent – 4(b)

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- **Appendix - General Information for Pro Se Litigants**
- **How can I keep my address confidential in a court case if I am in fear of domestic violence?**
- **Address and telephone number list**

Form No.	Name of Form
FFLF 12.900(a)	**Disclosure From Nonlawyer**
FFLF-L	**Civil Cover Sheet**
FFLF 12.981(c)(1)	**Petition for Adoption of Adult by Stepparent**
FFLF 12.981(c)(2)	**Consent of Adult Adoptee's Spouse**
FFLF 12.981(a)(2)	**Consent of Adoptee**

Service of Process:

FFLF 12.910(b)	**Process Service Memorandum***
FFLF 12.910(a)	**Summons: Personal Service on an Individual***
	*** One for each party being served**

Miscellaneous forms:

FFLF 12.923	**Notice of Hearing (General)**

Final Order:

A supreme court approved final order for this type of adoption is not available. You will need to locate one in a law library or have a lawyer assist you in preparing your final order.

FFLF = Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form/Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form
FFLF-L = Sixth Judicial Circuit Local Form

Updated 7-2006

FAMILY LAW FORMS, COMMENTARY, AND INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS

You should read this General Information thoroughly before taking any other steps to file your case or represent yourself in court. Most of this information is **not** repeated in the attached forms. This information should provide you with an overview of the court system, its participants, and its processes. It should be useful whether you want to represent yourself in a pending matter or have a better understanding of the way family court works. **This is not intended as a substitute for legal advice from an attorney. Each case has its own particular set of circumstances, and an attorney may advise you of what is best for you in your individual situation.**

These instructions are not the only place that you can get information about how a family case works. You may want to look at other books for more help. The Florida Statutes, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, Florida Rules of Civil Procedure, and other legal information or books may be found at the public library or in a law library at your county courthouse or a law school in your area. If you are filing a petition for **Name Change** and/or **Adoption**, these instructions may not apply.

If the word(s) is printed in **bold**, this means that the word is being emphasized. Throughout these instructions, you will also find words printed in **bold** and **underlined**. This means that the definitions of these words may be found in the glossary of common family law terms at the end of this general information section.

Commentary

1995 Adoption. To help the many people in family law court cases who do not have attorneys to represent them (pro se litigants), the Florida Supreme Court added these simplified forms and directions to the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure. The directions refer to the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure or the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure. Many of the forms were adapted from the forms accompanying the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure. Practitioners should refer to the committee notes for those forms for rule history.

The forms were adopted by the Court pursuant to *Family Law Rules of Procedure*, 667 So. 2d 202 (Fla. 1995); *In re Petition for Approval of Forms Pursuant to Rule 10-1.1(b) of the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar—Stepparent Adoption Forms*, 613 So. 2d 900 (Fla. 1992); *Rules Regulating the Florida Bar—Approval of Forms*, 581 So. 2d 902 (Fla. 1991).

Although the forms are part of these rules, they are not all inclusive and additional forms, as necessary, should be taken from the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure as provided in Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure. Also, the following notice has been included to strongly encourage individuals to seek the advice, when needed, of an attorney who is a member in good standing of the Florida Bar.

1997 Amendment. In 1997, the Florida Family Law Forms were completely revised to simplify and correct the forms. Additionally, the appendices were eliminated, the instructions contained in the appendices were incorporated into the forms, and the introduction following the Notice to Parties was created. Minor changes were also made to the Notice to Parties set forth below.

NOTICE TO PARTIES WHO ARE NOT REPRESENTED BY AN ATTORNEY WHO IS A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING OF THE FLORIDA BAR

If you have questions or concerns about these forms, instructions, commentary, the use of the forms, or your legal rights, it is strongly recommended that you talk to an attorney. If you do not know an attorney, you should call the lawyer referral service listed in the yellow pages of the telephone book under "Attorney." If you do not have the money to hire an attorney, you should call the legal aid office in your area.

Because the law does change, the forms and information about them may have become outdated. You should be aware that changes may have taken place in the law or court rules that would affect the accuracy of the forms or instructions.

In no event will the Florida Supreme Court, The Florida Bar, or anyone contributing to the production of these forms or instructions be liable for any direct, indirect, or consequential damages resulting from their use.

FAMILY LAW PROCEDURES

Communication with the court... **Ex parte** communication is communication with the judge with only one party present. Judges are not allowed to engage in ex parte communication except in very limited circumstances, so, absent specific authorization to the contrary, you should not try to speak with or write to the judge in your case unless the other **party** is present or has been properly notified. **If you have something you need to tell the judge, you must ask for a hearing and give notice to the other party or file a written statement in the court file and send a copy of the written statement to the other party.**

Filing a case... A case begins with the filing of a **petition**. A petition is a written request to the court for some type of legal action. The person who originally asks for legal action is called the **petitioner** and remains the petitioner throughout the case.

A petition is given to the **clerk of the circuit court**, whose office is usually located in the county courthouse or a branch of the county courthouse. A case number is assigned and an official court file is opened. Delivering the petition to the clerk's office is called **filing** a case. A **filing fee** is usually required.

Once a case has been filed, a copy must be given to (served on) the respondent. The person against whom the original legal action is being requested is called the **respondent**, because he or she is expected to respond to the petition. The respondent remains the respondent throughout the case.

Service... When one party files a **petition**, **motion**, or other **pleading**, the other party must be "served" with a copy of the document. This means that the other party is given proper notice of the pending action(s) and any scheduled hearings. **Personal service** of the petition and summons on the respondent by a deputy sheriff or private process server is required in all **original petitions** and **supplemental petitions**, unless **constructive service** is permitted by law. Personal service may also be required in other actions by some judges. After initial service of the original or supplemental petition and summons by a deputy sheriff or private process server, service of most motions and other documents or papers filed in the case generally may be made by regular U.S. mail or hand delivery. However, service by **certified mail** is required at other times so you have proof that the other party actually received the papers. The instructions with each form will advise you of the type of **service** required for that form. **If the other party is represented by an attorney, you should serve the attorney and send a copy to the other party, except for original or supplemental petitions, which must be personally served on the respondent.**

Other than the initial original or supplemental petitions, anytime you file additional pleadings or motions in your case, you must provide a copy to the other party and include a **certificate of service**. Likewise, the other party must provide you with copies of everything that he or she files. Service of additional documents is usually completed by U.S. mail. For more information, see the instructions for **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914.

Forms for service of process are included in the Florida Family Law Forms, along with more detailed instructions and information regarding service. The instructions to those forms should be read carefully to ensure that you have the other party properly served. **If proper service is not obtained, the court cannot hear your case.**

Note: If you absolutely do not know where the other party to your case lives or if the other party resides in another state, you may be able to use **constructive service**. However, if constructive service is used, other than granting a divorce, the court may only grant limited relief. For more information on constructive service, see **Notice of Action for Dissolution of Marriage**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a), and **Affidavit of Diligent Search and Inquiry**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(b). Additionally, if the other party is in the military service of the United States, additional steps for service may be required. See, for example, **Memorandum for Certificate of Military Service**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.912(a). In sum, the law regarding constructive service and service on an individual in the military service is very complex and you may wish to consult an attorney regarding these issues.

Default... After being served with a petition or **counterpetition**, the other party has 20 days to file a response. If a response to a petition is not filed, the petitioner may file a **Motion for Default**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922(a), with the clerk. This means that you may proceed with your case and set a **final hearing**, and a **judge** will make a decision, even if the other party will not cooperate. For more information, see rule 12.080(c), Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure.

Answer and counterpetition... After being served, the respondent has 20 days to file an answer admitting or denying each of the allegations contained in the petition. In addition to an answer, the respondent may also file a counterpetition. In a counterpetition, the respondent may request the same or some other relief or action not requested by the petitioner. If the respondent files a counterpetition, the petitioner should then file an **Answer to Counterpetition**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.903(d), and either admit or deny the allegations in the respondent's counterpetition.

Mandatory disclosure... Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires each party in a **dissolution of marriage** to exchange certain information and documents, and file a **Family Law Financial Affidavit**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.902(b) or (c). Failure to make this required disclosure within the time required by the Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure may allow the court to dismiss the case or to refuse to consider the pleadings of the party failing to comply. This requirement also must be met in other family law cases, **except** adoptions, simplified dissolutions of marriage, enforcement proceedings, contempt proceedings, and proceedings for injunctions for domestic or repeat violence. The **Certificate of Compliance with Mandatory Disclosure**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.932, lists the documents that must be given to the other party. For more information see rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, and the instructions to the **Certificate of Compliance with Mandatory Disclosure**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.932.

Setting a hearing or trial... Generally, the court will have hearings on motions, final hearings on **uncontested** or **default** cases, and trials on contested cases. Before setting your case for **final hearing** or trial, certain requirements such as completing mandatory disclosure and filing certain papers and having them served on the other party must be met. These requirements vary depending on the type of case and the procedures in your particular jurisdiction. For further information, you should refer to the instructions for the type of form you are filing.

Next, you must obtain a hearing or trial date so that the court may consider your request. You should ask the clerk of court, or **family law intake staff** about the local procedure for setting a hearing or trial, which you should attend. These family law forms contain **orders** and **final judgments**, which the judge may use. You should ask the clerk of court or family law intake staff if you need to bring one of these forms with you to the hearing or trial. If so, you should type or print the heading, including the circuit, county, case number, division, and the parties' names, and leave the rest blank for the judge to complete at your hearing or trial.

Below are explanations of symbols or parts of different family law forms...

{specify}, {date}, {name(s)}, {street}, {city}, {state}, {phone}

Throughout these forms, you will find hints such as those above. These tell you what to put in the blank(s).

[✓**one** only] [✓ **all** that apply]

These show how many choices you should check. Sometimes you may check only one, while other times you may check several choices. ( ) This also shows an area where you must make a choice. Check the ( ) in front of the choice that applies to you or your case.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____(1)_____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____(2)_____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____(3)_____
Division: _____(4)_____

_____(5)_____ ,
Petitioner,

and
_____(6)_____ ,
Respondent.

Line 1 The clerk of court can tell you the number of your judicial circuit. Type or print it here.
Line 2 Type or print your county name on line (2).
Line 3 If you are filing an initial petition or pleading, the Clerk of the Court will assign a case number after the case is filed. You should type or print this case number on all papers you file in this case.
Line 4 The clerk of the court can tell you the name of the division in which your case is being filed, and you should type or print it here. Divisions vary from court to court. For example, your case may be filed in the civil division, the family division, or the juvenile division.
Line 5 Type or print the legal name of the person who originally filed the case on line 5. This person is the petitioner because he/she is the one who filed the original petition.
Line 6 Type or print the other party's legal name on line 6. The other party is the respondent because he/she is responding to the petition.

I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this petition and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.

Dated: _____(1)_____

_____(2)_____
Signature of Petitioner
Printed Name: _____(3)_____
Address: _____(4)_____
City, State, Zip: _____(5)_____
Telephone Number: _____(6)____
Fax Number: _____(7)_____

Some forms require that your signature be witnessed. You must sign the form in the presence of a **notary public** or deputy clerk (employee of the clerk of the court's office). When signing the form, you must have a valid photo identification unless the notary knows you personally. You should completely fill in all lines (1 3–7) except 2 with the requested information, if applicable. **Line 2, the signature line, must be signed in the presence of the notary public or deputy clerk.**

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF _____

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on _____ by _____.

_____
NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

_____
[Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or clerk.]

____ Personally known
____ Produced identification
____ Type of identification produced _____

DO NOT SIGN OR FILL IN THIS PART OF ANY FORM. This section of the form is to be completed by the notary public who is witnessing your signature.

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW: [✍ fill in **all** blanks]
I, *{full legal name and trade name of nonlawyer}* _____(1)_____,

a nonlawyer, located at *{street}*_____ (2)_____ , *{city}*___(3)_____ *{state}*_____ (4)_____ , *{phone}*_____ (5)_____ , helped *{name}*_____ (6)_____, who is the petitioner, fill out this form.

This section should be completed by anyone who helps you fill out these forms but is **not** an attorney who is a member in good standing of The Florida Bar, which means that he or she is not licensed to practice law in Florida.

Line 1 The **nonlawyer** who helps you should type or print his or her name on line 1.
Lines 2–5 The nonlawyer's address and telephone number should be typed or printed on lines 2–5.
Line 6 Your name should be typed or printed on line 6.

In addition, a **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), should be completed if a nonlawyer assists you. The disclosure is available as a family law form and should be completed before the nonlawyer helps you. This is to be sure that you understand the role and limitations of a nonlawyer. You and the nonlawyer should keep a copy of this disclosure for your records.

FAMILY LAW GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Note: The following definitions are intended to be helpful, BUT they are not intended to constitute legal advice or address every possible meaning of the term(s) contained in this glossary.

Affidavit - a written statement in which the facts stated are sworn or affirmed to be true.

Answer - written response by a respondent that states whether he or she admits (agrees with) or denies (disagrees with) the allegations in the petition. Any allegations not specifically denied are considered to be admitted.

Appeal - asking a district court of appeal to review the decision in your case. There are strict procedural and time requirements for filing an appeal.

Asset - everything owned by you or your spouse, including property, cars, furniture, bank accounts, jewelry, life insurance policies, businesses, or retirement plans. An asset may be marital or nonmarital, but that distinction is for the court to determine if you and your spouse do not agree.

Attorney - a person with special education and training in the field of law who is a member in good standing of The Florida Bar and licensed to practice law in Florida. An attorney is the only person who is allowed to give you legal advice. An attorney may file your case and represent you in court, or just advise you of your rights before you file your own case. In addition to advising you of your rights, an attorney may tell you what to expect and help prepare you for court. In family law matters, you are not entitled to a court-appointed lawyer, like a public defender in a criminal case. However, legal assistance is often available for those who are unable to hire a private attorney. You may consult the yellow pages of the telephone directory for a listing of legal aid or lawyer referral services in your area, or ask your local clerk of court or family law intake staff what services are available in your area. You may also obtain information from the Florida Supreme Court's Internet site located at http://www.flcourts.org/courts/supct.

Bond - money paid to the clerk of court by one party in a case, to be held and paid to an enjoined party in the event that the first party causes loss or damage of property as a result of wrongfully enjoining the other party.

Central Governmental Depository - the office of the clerk of court that is responsible for collecting and disbursing court-ordered alimony and child support payments. The depository also keeps payment records and files judgments if support is not paid.

Certificate of Service - a document that must be filed whenever a form you are using does not contain a statement for you to fill in showing to whom you are sending copies of the form. Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914 is the certificate of service form and contains additional instructions.

Certified Copy - a copy of an order or final judgment, certified by the clerk of the circuit court to be an authentic copy.

Certified Mail - mail which requires the receiving party to sign as proof that they received it.

Child Support - money paid from one parent to the other for the benefit of their dependent or minor child(ren).

Clerk of the Circuit Court - elected official in whose office papers are filed, a case number is assigned, and case files are maintained. The clerk's office usually is located in the county courthouse.

Constructive Service - notification of the other party by newspaper publication or posting of notice at designated places when the other party cannot be located for personal service. You may also be able to use constructive service when the other party lives in another state. Constructive service is also called "service by publication." However, when constructive service is used, the relief the Court may grant is limited. For more information on service, see the instructions for Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Forms 12.910(a) and 12.913(b) and Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a).

Contested Issues - any or all issues upon which the parties are unable to agree and which must be resolved by the judge at a hearing or trial.

Contingent Asset - an asset that you **may** receive or get later, such as income, tax refund, accrued vacation or sick leave, a bonus, or an inheritance.

Contingent Liability - a liability that you **may** owe later, such as payments for lawsuits, unpaid taxes, or debts that you have agreed or guaranteed to pay if someone else does not.

Counterpetition - a written request to the court for legal action, which is filed by a respondent after being served with a petition.

Default - a failure of a party to respond to the pleading of another party. This failure to respond may allow the court to decide the case without input from the party who did not appear or respond.

Delinquent - late.

Dependent Child(ren) - child(ren) who depend on their parent(s) for support either because they are under the age of 18, they have a mental or physical disability that prevents them from supporting themselves, or they are in high school while between the ages of 18 and 19 and are performing in good faith with reasonable expectation of graduation before the age of 19.

Deputy Clerk - an employee of the office of the clerk of court, which is usually located in the county courthouse or a branch of the county courthouse.

Dissolution of Marriage - divorce; a court action to end a marriage.

Enjoined - prohibited by the court from doing a specific act.

Ex Parte - communication with the judge by only one party. In order for a judge to speak with either party, the other party must have been properly notified and have an opportunity to be heard. If you have something you wish to tell the judge, you should ask for a hearing or file information in the clerk of court's office, with certification that a copy was sent to the other party.

Family Law Intake Staff - a court's employee(s) who is (are) available to assist you in filing a family law case. Family law intake staff are not attorneys and cannot give legal advice. They may only assist you with filling out the form(s). Your local clerk's office can tell you if your county has such assistance available.

Filing – delivering a petition, response, motion, or other pleading in a court case to the clerk of court's office.

Filing Fee - an amount of money, set by law, that the petitioner must pay when filing a case. If you cannot afford to pay the fee, you must file an **Application for Determination of Civil Indigent Status**, to ask the clerk to file your case without payment of the fee. This form can be obtained from the clerk's office.

Final Hearing - trial in your case.

Financial Affidavit - a sworn statement that contains information regarding your income, expenses, assets, and liabilities.

Final Judgment - a written document signed by a judge and recorded in the clerk of the circuit court's office that contains the judge's decision in your case.

Guardian ad Litem - a neutral person who may be appointed by the court to evaluate or investigate your child's situation, and file a report with the court about what is in the best interests of your child(ren). Guardians do not "work for" either party. The guardian may interview the parties, visit their homes, visit the child(ren)'s school(s) and speak with teachers, or use other resources to make their recommendation.

Hearing - a legal proceeding before a judge or designated officer (general magistrate or hearing officer) on a motion.

Judge - an elected official who is responsible for deciding matters on which you and the other parties in your case are unable to agree. A judge is a neutral person who is responsible for ensuring that your case is resolved in a manner which is fair, equitable, and legal. **A judge is prohibited by law from giving you or the other party any legal advice, recommendations, or other assistance, and may not talk to either party unless both parties are present, represented, or at a properly scheduled hearing.**

Judicial Assistant - the judge's personal staff assistant.

Liabilities - everything owed by you or your spouse, including mortgages, credit cards, or car loans. A liability may be marital or nonmarital, but that distinction is for the court to determine if you and your spouse do not agree.

Lump Sum Alimony - money ordered to be paid by one spouse to another in a limited number of payments, often a single payment.

Mandatory Disclosure - items that must be disclosed by both parties except those exempted from disclosure by Florida Family Law Rule 12.285.

Marital Asset - generally, anything that you and/or your spouse acquired or received (by gift or purchase) during the marriage. For example, something you owned before your marriage **may** be nonmarital. An asset may only be determined to be marital by agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

Marital Liability - generally, any debt that you and/or your spouse incurred during the marriage. A debt may only be determined to be nonmarital by agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

Mediator - a person who is trained and certified to assist parties in reaching an agreement before going to court. Mediators do not take either party's side and are not allowed to give legal advice. They are only responsible for helping the parties reach an agreement and putting that agreement into writing. In some areas, mediation of certain family law cases may be required before going to court.

Modification - a change made by the court in an order or final judgment.

Motion - a request made to the court, other than a petition.

No Contact - a court order directing a party not speak to, call, send mail to, visit, or go near his or her spouse, ex-spouse, child(ren), or other family member.

Nonlawyer - a person who is not a member in good standing of The Florida Bar.

Nonmarital Asset - generally, anything owned separately by you or your spouse. An asset may only be determined to be nonmarital by either agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

Nonmarital Liability - generally, any debt that you or your spouse incurred before your marriage or since your separation. A debt may only be determined to be nonmarital by either agreement of the parties or determination of the judge.

Nonparty - a person who is not the petitioner or respondent in a court case.

Notary Public - a person authorized to witness signatures on court related forms.

Obligee - a person to whom money, such as child support or alimony, is owed.

Obligor - a person who is ordered by the court to pay money, such as child support or alimony.

Order - a written decision signed by a judge and filed in the clerk of the circuit court's office, that contains the judge's decision on part of your case, usually on a motion.

Original Petition - see **Petition**.

Parenting Course - a class that teaches parents how to help their child(ren) cope with divorce and other family issues.

Party - a person involved in a court case, either as a petitioner or respondent.

Paternity Action - A lawsuit used to determine whether a designated individual is the father of a specific child or children.

Payor - an employer or other person who provides income to an obligor.

Permanent Alimony - spousal support ordered to be paid at a specified, periodic rate until modified by a court order, the death of either party, or the remarriage of the Obligee, whichever occurs first.

Personal Service - when a summons and a copy of a petition (or other pleading) that has been filed with the court are delivered by a deputy sheriff or private process server to the other party. Personal service is required for all petitions and supplemental petitions.

Petition - a written request to the court for legal action, which begins a court case.

Petitioner - the person who files a petition that begins a court case.

Pleading - a formal written statement of exactly what a party wants the court to do in a lawsuit or court action.

Primary Residence - the home in which the child(ren) spends most of his/her (their) time.

Pro Se Litigant - a person who appears in court without the assistance of a lawyer.

Pro Se Coordinator - see **Family Law Intake Staff**.

Reasonable Visitation - visitation between the nonresidential parent and child(ren) that provides frequent and unhampered contact with the child(ren). Such visitation is designed to encourage a close and continuing relationship with due regard for educational commitments of child(ren), any health or social factors of the child(ren), business and personal commitments of both parents, and home arrangements of both parents.

Rehabilitative Alimony - spousal support ordered to be paid for a limited period of time to allow one of the parties an opportunity to complete a plan of education or training, according to a rehabilitative plan accepted by the court, so that he or she may better support himself or herself.

Respondent - the person who is served with a petition requesting some legal action against him or her.

Rotating Custody - physical custody of child(ren) after divorce, which is alternated between the mother and father at specified periods of time, as determined by the court. Rotating custody allows each parent equal time with the child(ren).

Scientific Paternity Testing - a medical test to determine who is the father of a child.

Secondary Residential Responsibility (Visitation) - the time that the parent with whom the child(ren) does (do) not have primary residence spends with the child(ren).

Service - the delivery of legal documents to a party. This must be accomplished as directed by Florida Family Law Rules 12.070 and 12.080.

Shared Parental Responsibility - an arrangement under which both parents have full parental rights and responsibilities for their child(ren), and the parents make major decisions affecting the welfare of the child(ren) jointly. Shared Parental Responsibility is presumptive in Florida.

Sole Parental Responsibility - a parenting arrangement under which the responsibility for the minor child(ren) is given to one parent by the court, with or without rights of visitation to the other parent.

Specified Visitation - a parenting arrangement under which a specific schedule is established for the visitation and exchange of the child(ren).

Spouse - a husband or wife.

Supervised Visitation - a parenting arrangement under which visitation between a parent and his or her child(ren) is supervised by either a friend, family member, or a supervised visitation center.

Supplemental Petition - a petition that may be filed by either party after the judge has made a decision in a case and a final judgment or order has been entered. For example, a supplemental petition may be used to request that the court modify the previously entered final judgment or order.

Trial - the final hearing in a contested case.

Uncontested - any and all issues on which the parties are able to agree and which are part of a marital settlement agreement.

Administrative Office of the Courts
The Sixth Judicial Circuit of Florida
(727)582-7200

How can I keep my address confidential in a court case if I am in fear of domestic violence?

Question: I am in fear of domestic violence from my spouse or another party in my court case. What do I have to do if I want to keep my address confidential?

Answer: In a domestic or repeat violence injunction case, the clerk of court has procedures in place to keep your address confidential. If a party in the injunction case properly files their pleadings at the domestic violence desk, the clerk will send you the copies of their pleadings so that you are properly notified of the filing and the hearing.

In most types of proceedings, the confidential address procedure through the clerk is not available because parties are required to copy other parties with pleadings filed in the case. In addition to sending copies of all pleadings, the moving party must prepare a notice of hearing and send it to all parties in the case.

If you do not want the other party(s) to have your home address you can consider the following:

1. Obtain a post office box. The post office cannot reveal the true address of a post office box owner, who is a private person and not a business, without a court order.

2. Ask your employer if you may use your work address to receive mail on your court case and as your service address for personal service.

3. If you are a victim of domestic violence or the guardian of an adult, minor child or impaired person who is a victim of domestic violence, you may inquire about the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) with the Florida Attorney General's Office. You will be interviewed for acceptance into the program. Please call the Florida Attorney General at 1-800-226-6667 (local # 850-414-3300, TDD/TTY users may use the Florida Relay service at 1-800-955-8771) for information on setting up the interview.

   How the program works: If you are accepted into the ACP program you will be given a substitute address to use for your mailing and legal process service address. The Attorney General will be the only one who has your real address. All first class mail sent, or legal process served, to the substitute ACP address will be forwarded to you by the Attorney General's Office. Your acceptance into the program is for a set period of time, is revocable, and must be renewed upon expiration. If you are accepted into the ACP program you will be given an identification card. It is your responsibility to determine who will get your actual address and who will get your ACP address. Government agencies are required to accept your ACP address but if you have previously given your actual address, they may not have to replace it with your substitute address.

   The courts may order you to reveal your true address during a court case. Be aware that many government agencies share information and if you have given your true address to one, it may be shared with other agencies. Federal agencies and private businesses are not required to accept your ACP address but many will do so. Certain agencies, such as law enforcement, have the right to access your true address for certain reasons. A false or incorrect application under this program constitutes a second degree misdemeanor.

South Pinellas County(St. Petersburg)		
Name	Address	Telephone Number(s) or other information
Courts Information and Resource Center	Family law procedural assistance & information on approved forms.	727-582-7200 (walk-in assistance is not available) Office hours 8 a.m .to Noon, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday.
Lawyer Referral Service		727-821-5450 (30 min. consultation with a lawyer for a small fee)
Legal Aid St. Petersburg	Bay Area Legal Services-West 2600-9th Street North, Ste. 401 St. Petersburg, FL 33704	Bay Area Legal Services-West: 727-490-4040 Gulfcoast Legal Services: 727-821-0726 Community Law Program: 727-582-7402
St. Petersburg Courthouse	545-1st Avenue North St. Petersburg, FL 33701	Clerk of Court: 727-582-7771 Child Support Automated Information Line: 727-464-4845
Alternative Dispute Resolution Programs	Court ordered civil mediation and arbitration services.	Mediation/Arbitration: 727-464-4943, Family Mediation: 727-464-4947
North Pinellas County(Clearwater)		
Clearwater Courthouse	315 Court Street Clearwater, FL 33756	Clerk of Court: 727-464-3267 Child Support Automated Information Line: 727-464-4845 Clearwater Courthouse Legal Assistance Program: 727-464-3267
Courts Information and Resource Center	Family law procedural assistance & information on approved forms.	727-582-7200 (walk-in assistance is not available) Office hours 8 a.m. to Noon, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday.
Lawyer Referral Service		727-461-4880 (30 minute consultation for a small fee)
Legal Aid Clearwater	Gulfcoast Legal Services 314 S. Missouri Avenue, #109 Clearwater, FL 33756	727-443-0657
Pinellas County Information	315 Court Street Clearwater, FL 33756	727-464-3000
Alternative Dispute Resolution Programs	Court ordered mediation and arbitration services.	Mediation/Arbitration: 727-464-4943, Family Mediation: 727-464-4947
Pasco County (New Port Richey & Dade City)		
Clerk of Court-Civil (New Port Richey)	7530 Little Road New Port Richey, FL 34654	727-847-8176 727-847-2411
Clerk of Court-Civil (Dade City)	38053 Live Oak Avenue Dade City, FL 33523-3805	352-521-4517
Legal Aid-Pasco	Bay Area Legal Services Offices in New Port Richey and Dade City	New Port Richey: 727-847-5494 Dade City: 352-567-9044
Pasco County General Information	38053 Live Oak Avenue Dade City, FL 33523-3805	352-521-4274
Miscellaneous		
Florida Dept. of Revenue	Many offices statewide	Child Support Enforcement: 800-622-5437
211	Information and referral for a variety of state, local and private services in the areas of health care, psychological services, domestic violence, support groups, tutoring and more.	Dial 211 (24 hours per day, 7 days per week) Multilingual Internet page: http://www.211tampabay.com
Internet Pages	Florida Supreme Court http://www.flcourts.org, Pinellas County Clerk of Court http://clerk.co.pinellas.fl.us/ Sixth Judicial Circuit Court http://www.jud6.org, Sixth Judicial Circuit Family Division http://www.jud6.org/GeneralInfo/AboutTheCircuit/AOC/Courtprograms/familyLaw/familylaw.htm	
State of Florida FLSDU	SDU P.O. Box 8500 Tallahassee, FL 32314-8500	For income deducted support payments 1-877-769-0251 Toll free (you will need your case number and social security number)

Instruction Sheet For Filing A Notice Of Related Cases, Pinellas County

When should this form be used?

Rule of Judicial Administration 2.085(d) requires the **petitioner** in a family case to file with the court a **notice of related cases**, if the petitioner is aware that related cases exist or if the petitioner should be able to reasonably determine that related cases exist.

A related case is a case that is **separate** from the new case to be filed by the petitioner that:

A) involves any of the same parties, children, or issues, and it is pending at the time the party files a family case; or

B) affects the court's authority to proceed; or

C) has an order in the related case that may conflict with an order on the same issues in the new case; or

D) may cause an order in the new case to be entered that may conflict with an order in the earlier case.

Family cases include:

- dissolution of marriage (divorce),
- annulment,
- support unconnected with dissolution of marriage,
- paternity,
- child support,
- UIFSA,
- custodial care of and access to children,
- adoption,
- name change,
- declaratory judgment actions related to premarital, marital, or post-marital agreements,
- civil domestic violence, repeat violence, dating violence, and sexual violence injunctions,
- juvenile dependency,
- termination of parental rights,
- juvenile delinquency,
- emancipation of a minor,
- CINS/FINS,
- truancy, and
- modification and enforcement of orders entered in these cases.

The party filing a case, should review the above list, and if that party has or had another court case that fits under one of the categories listed above, that case should be listed on the Notice of Related Cases.

Instruction Sheet For Filing A Notice Of Related Cases, Pinellas County

The Notice of Related Cases should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing the form, you should **file** the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where your case is filed and keep a copy for your records. A copy of the form must be mailed or hand delivered to any other party in your case. **You must do this and show the date that you did it.**

Rule of Judicial Administration 2.085(d) requires the petitioner to serve the Notice of Related Cases on the chief judge or family administrative judge. In this Circuit, this shall be done by sending or faxing this form to:

Debra Leiman, Unified Family Court Staff Director,
Administrative Office of the Courts, Criminal Justice
Center, 14250 49th Street North, Clearwater, FL 33762
Fax: _____.

What should I do next?

Each party, whether the petitioner or the respondent has a **continuing duty** to inform the court of any cases in this or any other state that could affect the current case.

Where can I look for more information?

Read the "General Information for Self-Represented Litigants" found at the beginning of the Family Law Forms in the Florida Rules of Court, Family Law Rules. You may also refer to Rule of Judicial Administration 2.085(d).

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA, IN AND FOR PINELLAS COUNTY
FAMILY LAW DIVISION

UCN: 52-200__DR0_____XX____FD Ref. No.: _____Division: _____

_____,
Petitioner,

and

_____,
Respondent.

NOTICE OF RELATED CASES

I, *(full legal name)* _____, certify the following:

☐ I am aware of the following case(s) which are or may be related to the current case above:

(Attach additional sheets as necessary.)

Related Case

Case No.:_____

Case Name:_____
(e.g., Smith v. Jones; In Re: the matter of R. S.; State v. Smith; etc.)

Case Type: { } Dissolution of Marriage { } Paternity { } Child Support { } UIFSA { } Juvenile Dependency
{ } Juvenile Delinquency { } Domestic Violence Injunction { } CINS/FINS
{ } Other Petition:_____

How are the cases related? { }Same Parties { } One Party the Same: _____ { } Same Children
{ }Same Issues

Related Case

Case No.:_____

Case Name:_____
(e.g., Smith v. Jones; In Re: the matter of R. S.; State v. Smith; etc.)

Case Type: { } Dissolution of Marriage { } Paternity { } Child Support { } UIFSA { } Juvenile Dependency
{ } Juvenile Delinquency { } Domestic Violence Injunction { } CINS/FINS
{ } Other Petition:_____

How are the cases related? { }Same Parties { } One Party the Same: _____ { } Same Children
{ }Same Issues

Related Case

Case No.:_____

Case Name:_____
(e.g., Smith v. Jones; In Re: the matter of R. S.; State v. Smith; etc.)

Case Type: { } Dissolution of Marriage { } Paternity { } Child Support { } UIFSA { } Juvenile Dependency
{ } Juvenile Delinquency { } Domestic Violence Injunction { } CINS/FINS
{ } Other Petition:_____

How are the cases related? { }Same Parties { } One Party the Same: _____ { } Same Children
{ }Same Issues

[√any that apply.]

☐ I believe assignment of the cases to one judge or another method of coordination will conserve judicial resources and promote an efficient determination of the actions.

☐ I believe assignment of the cases to one judge or another method of coordination will not conserve judicial resources nor promote an efficient determination of the actions because _____.

☐ I request coordination of the following above-listed cases: (Note: Out-of-county cases cannot be coordinated.)

_____

_____.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE CIRCUIT COURT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DECIDE WHEN AND HOW TO COORDINATE FILED CASES.

I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE A CONTINUING DUTY TO INFORM THE COURT OF ANY CASES IN THIS OR ANY OTHER STATE THAT COULD AFFECT THE CURRENT CASE.

THIS FORM SHALL BE USED FOR CASE MANAGEMENT PURPOSES ONLY AND MAY BE SEALED BY THE CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT IF IT IS DETERMINED CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION IS INCLUDED IN THIS FORM.

I certify that a copy of this document was [✓ **one** only]: ☐ mailed ☐ faxed and mailed
☐ hand-delivered to the person(s) listed below on *{date}*_____.

☐ Other party or his/her attorney:
Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Fax Number: _____

☐ Other party or his/her attorney:
Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Fax Number: _____

Dated: _____ Signature of Party: _____

Instruction Sheet For Filing A Notice Of Related Cases, Pasco County

When should this form be used?

Rule of Judicial Administration 2.085(d) requires the **petitioner** in a family case to file with the court a **notice of related cases**, if the petitioner is aware that related cases exist or if the petitioner should be able to reasonably determine that related cases exist.

A related case is a case that is **separate** from the new case to be filed by the petitioner that:

A) involves any of the same parties, children, or issues, and it is pending at the time the party files a family case; or

B) affects the court's authority to proceed; or

C) has an order in the related case that may conflict with an order on the same issues in the new case; or

D) may cause an order in the new case to be entered that may conflict with an order in the earlier case.

Family cases include:

- dissolution of marriage (divorce),
- annulment,
- support unconnected with dissolution of marriage,
- paternity,
- child support,
- UIFSA,
- custodial care of and access to children,
- adoption,
- name change,
- declaratory judgment actions related to premarital, marital, or post-marital agreements,
- civil domestic violence, repeat violence, dating violence, and sexual violence injunctions,
- juvenile dependency,
- termination of parental rights,
- juvenile delinquency,
- emancipation of a minor,
- CINS/FINS,
- truancy, and
- modification and enforcement of orders entered in these cases.

The party filing a case, should review the above list, and if that party has or had another court case that fits under one of the categories listed above, that case should be listed on the Notice of Related Cases.

Instruction Sheet For Filing A Notice Of Related Cases, Pasco County

The Notice of Related Cases should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing the form, you should **file** the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where your case is filed and keep a copy for your records. A copy of the form must be mailed or hand delivered to any other party in your case. **You must do this and show the date that you did it.**

Rule of Judicial Administration 2.085(d) requires the petitioner to serve the Notice of Related Cases on the chief judge or family administrative judge. In this Circuit, this shall be done by sending or faxing this form to:

In West Pasco: _____, Unified Family Court, Administrative Office of the Courts, West Pasco Judicial Center, 7530 Little Road, New Port Richey, FL, 34654
Fax: _____.

In East Pasco: _____, Unified Family Court, Administrative Office of the Courts, West Pasco Judicial Center, 38053 Live Oak Avenue, Dade City, FL, 33525
Fax: _____.

What should I do next?

Each party, whether the petitioner or the respondent has a **continuing duty** to inform the court of any cases in this or any other state that could affect the current case.

Where can I look for more information?

Read the "General Information for Self-Represented Litigants" found at the beginning of the Family Law Forms in the Florida Rules of Court, Family Law Rules. You may also refer to Rule of Judicial Administration 2.085(d).

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA, IN AND FOR PASCO COUNTY
FAMILY LAW DIVISION

UCN: 51-200_____ Pasco Case No.: _____Division: _____

_____,
Petitioner,

and

_____,
Respondent.

NOTICE OF RELATED CASES

I, *{full legal name}* _____, certify the following:

☐ I am aware of the following case(s) which are or may be related to the current case above:

(Attach additional sheets as necessary.)

Related Case

Case No.:_____

Case Name:_____
(e.g., Smith v. Jones; In Re: the matter of R. S.; State v. Smith; etc.)

Case Type: { } Dissolution of Marriage { } Paternity { } Child Support { } UIFSA { } Juvenile Dependency
{ } Juvenile Delinquency { } Domestic Violence Injunction { } CINS/FINS
{ } Other Petition:_____

How are the cases related? { }Same Parties { } One Party the Same: _____ { } Same Children
{ }Same Issues

Related Case

Case No.:_____

Case Name:_____
(e.g., Smith v. Jones; In Re: the matter of R. S.; State v. Smith; etc.)

Case Type: { } Dissolution of Marriage { } Paternity { } Child Support { } UIFSA { } Juvenile Dependency
{ } Juvenile Delinquency { } Domestic Violence Injunction { } CINS/FINS
{ } Other Petition:_____

How are the cases related? { }Same Parties { } One Party the Same: _____ { } Same Children
{ }Same Issues

Related Case

Case No.:_____

Case Name:_____
(e.g., Smith v. Jones; In Re: the matter of R. S.; State v. Smith; etc.)

Case Type: { } Dissolution of Marriage { } Paternity { } Child Support { } UIFSA { } Juvenile Dependency
{ } Juvenile Delinquency { } Domestic Violence Injunction { } CINS/FINS
{ } Other Petition:_____

How are the cases related? { }Same Parties { } One Party the Same: _____ { } Same Children
{ }Same Issues

[√*any that apply.*]

☐ I believe assignment of the cases to one judge or another method of coordination will conserve judicial resources and promote an efficient determination of the actions.

☐ I believe assignment of the cases to one judge or another method of coordination will not conserve judicial resources nor promote an efficient determination of the actions because _____.

☐ I request coordination of the following above-listed cases: (Note: Out-of-county cases cannot be coordinated.)

_____

_____

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE CIRCUIT COURT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DECIDE WHEN AND HOW TO COORDINATE FILED CASES.

I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE A CONTINUING DUTY TO INFORM THE COURT OF ANY CASE IN THIS OR ANY OTHER STATE THAT COULD AFFECT THE CURRENT CASE.

THIS FORM SHALL BE USED FOR CASE MANAGEMENT PURPOSES ONLY AND MAY BE SEALED BY THE CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT IF IT IS DETERMINED CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION IS INCLUDED IN THIS FORM.

I certify that a copy of this document was [✓ **one** only]: ☐ mailed ☐ faxed and mailed
☐ hand-delivered to the person(s) listed below on *{date}*_____.

☐ Other party or his/her attorney:
Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Fax Number: _____

☐ Other party or his/her attorney:
Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Fax Number: _____

Dated: _____ Signature of Party: _____

Attorney Instruction Sheet For Filing A Notice Of Related Cases, Pinellas County

Per Rule of Judicial Administration 2.085(d), the petitioner in a family case shall file with the court a notice of related cases, if related cases are known or reasonably ascertainable.

A case is related when:

A) it involves any of the same parties, children, or issues and it is pending at the time the party files a family case; or

B) it affects the court's authority to proceed; or

C) an order in the related case that may conflict with an order on the same issues in the new case; or

D) an order in the new case may conflict with an order in the earlier litigation.

Family cases include:

- dissolution of marriage,
- annulment,
- support unconnected with dissolution of marriage,
- paternity,
- child support,
- UIFSA,
- custodial care of and access to children,
- adoption,
- name change,
- declaratory judgment actions related to premarital, marital, or post-marital agreements,
- civil domestic violence, repeat violence, dating violence, and sexual violence injunctions,
- juvenile dependency,
- termination of parental rights,
- juvenile delinquency,
- emancipation of a minor,
- CINS/FINS,
- truancy, and
- modification and enforcement of orders entered in these cases.

The Notice of Related Cases shall be filed with the initial pleading by the filing attorney or self-represented petitioner.

Each party has a continuing duty to inform the court of any proceedings in this or any other state that could affect the current proceeding.

Attorney Instruction Sheet For Filing A Notice Of Related Cases, Pinellas County

This Notice of Related Cases shall be filed with the Clerk of the Circuit Court and copies of this notice shall be served on all parties in the related cases.

Rule of Judicial Administration 2.085(d) requires the petitioner to also serve the Notice of Related Cases on the chief judge or family administrative judge. In this Circuit, this shall be accomplished by sending or faxing this form to:

Debra Leiman, Unified Family Court Staff Director,
Administrative Office of the Courts, Criminal Justice
Center, 14250 49th Street North, Clearwater, FL 33762
Fax: _____.

Attorney Instruction Sheet For Filing A Notice Of Related Cases, Pasco County

Per Rule of Judicial Administration 2.085(d), the petitioner in a family case shall file with the court a notice of related cases, if related cases are known or reasonably ascertainable.

A case is related when:

A) it involves any of the same parties, children, or issues and it is pending at the time the party files a family case; or

B) it affects the court's authority to proceed; or

C) an order in the related case that may conflict with an order on the same issues in the new case; or

D) an order in the new case may conflict with an order in the earlier litigation.

Family cases include:

- dissolution of marriage,
- annulment,
- support unconnected with dissolution of marriage,
- paternity,
- child support,
- UIFSA,
- custodial care of and access to children,
- adoption,
- name change,
- declaratory judgment actions related to premarital, marital, or post-marital agreements,
- civil domestic violence, repeat violence, dating violence, and sexual violence injunctions,
- juvenile dependency,
- termination of parental rights,
- juvenile delinquency,
- emancipation of a minor,
- CINS/FINS,
- truancy, and
- modification and enforcement of orders entered in these cases.

The Notice of Related Cases shall be filed with the initial pleading by the filing attorney or self-represented petitioner.

Each party has a continuing duty to inform the court of any proceedings in this or any other state that could affect the current proceeding.

Attorney Instruction Sheet For Filing A Notice Of Related Cases, Pasco County

This Notice of Related Cases shall be filed with the Clerk of the Circuit Court and copies of this notice shall be served on all parties in the related cases.

Rule of Judicial Administration 2.085(d) requires the petitioner to also serve the Notice of Related Cases on the chief judge or family administrative judge. In this Circuit, this shall be accomplished by sending or faxing this form to:

In West Pasco: _____, Unified Family Court, Administrative Office of the Courts, West Pasco Judicial Center, 7530 Little Road, New Port Richey, FL, 34654
Fax: _____.

In East Pasco: _____, Unified Family Court, Administrative Office of the Courts, West Pasco Judicial Center, 38053 Live Oak Avenue, Dade City, FL, 33525
Fax: _____.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE FORM 12.900(a), DISCLOSURE FROM NONLAWYER

When should this form be used?

This form must be used when anyone who is **not** a lawyer in good standing with The Florida Bar helps you complete any Florida Family Law Form. Attorneys who are licensed to practice in other states but not Florida, or who have been disbarred or suspended from the practice of law in Florida, are nonlawyers for the purposes of the Florida Family Law Forms and instructions.

The nonlawyer must complete this form and both of you are to sign it before the nonlawyer assists you in completing any Family Law Form.

In addition, on any other form with which a nonlawyer helps you, the nonlawyer shall complete the nonlawyer section located at the bottom of the form unless otherwise specified in the instructions to the form. This is to protect you and be sure that you are informed in advance of the nonlawyer's limitations.

What should I do next?

A copy of this disclosure, signed by both the nonlawyer and the person, must be given to the person and the nonlawyer must keep a copy in the person's file. The nonlawyer must keep copies for at least six years of all forms given to the person being assisted.

Special notes…

This disclosure form does NOT act as or constitute a waiver, disclaimer, or limitation of liability.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____
Division: _____

_____,
Petitioner,

and

_____,
Respondent.

DISCLOSURE FROM NONLAWYER

*{Name}*_____, told me that he/she is a nonlawyer and may not give legal advice, cannot tell me what my rights or remedies are, cannot tell me how to testify in court, and cannot represent me in court.

Rule 10-2.1(b) of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar defines a paralegal as a person who works under the supervision of a member of The Florida Bar and who performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a member of The Florida Bar is responsible. Only persons who meet the definition may call themselves paralegals. *{Name}*_____, informed me that he/she is not a paralegal and cannot call himself/herself a paralegal.

*{Name}*_____, told me that he/she may only type the factual information provided by me in writing into the blanks on the form. *{Name}*_____, may not help me fill in the form and may not complete the form for me. If using a form approved by the Supreme Court of Florida, *{name}*_____, may ask me factual questions to fill in the blanks on the form and may also tell me how to file the form.

[√ **one** only]
___ I can read English.
___ I cannot read English, but this disclosure was read to me [fill in **both** blanks] by *{name}* _____ in *{language}* _____, which I understand.

Dated: _____

_____
Signature of Party

_____
Signature of **NONLAWYER**
Printed Name: _____
Name of Business: _____
Address: _____
_____
Telephone Number: _____

CIRCUIT/COUNTY COURT, PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA
CIVIL DIVISION

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law. This form is required for use of the clerk of Court for the purpose of reporting judicial workload data pursuant to Florida Statute 25.075.

I. CASE STYLE

(Name of Court)_____

Plaintiff _____ Ref. _____

_____ UCN:_____

Defendant _____ Judge:_____

_____

II. TYPE OF CASE (Place an X in one box only. If the case fits more than one type of case, select the most definitive.

Domestic Relations	Torts	Other Civil
❑ Simplified Dissolution	❑ Professional Malpractice	❑ Contracts
❑ Uncontested Dissolution	❑ Products liability	❑ Condominium
❑ Contested Dissolution	❑ Auto negligence	❑ Real property / Mortgage foreclosure
❑ Support IV-D	❑ Other negligence	❑ Eminent Domain
❑ Support – Non IV-D		❑ Other
❑ URESA - IV-D		
❑ URESA – Non IV-D		
❑ Domestic Violence		
❑ Other Domestic Relations		
	Specific Case Type	
	❑ (per Administrative order 86-44	

III. Is Jury Trial Demanded in Complaint?

❑ Yes ❑ No

DATE: _____ SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY FOR PARTY INITIATING ACTION:

_____

ATTORNEY'S SPN NUMBER: _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.981(c)(1),
PETITION FOR ADOPTION OF ADULT BY STEPPARENT

When should this form be used?

This form should be used when a stepparent is adopting his or her **spouse's adult** child. You must obtain the written consent of the adult child to be adopted, as well as the written consent of his or her spouse (if married).

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. The name to be given to the adoptee **after** the adoption should be used in the heading of the **petition**. The stepparent is the **petitioner**, because he or she is the one who is asking the court for legal action. You must have your signature witnessed by a **notary public** or **deputy clerk**.

After completing this form, you should **file** the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where either you or the adoptee live and keep a copy for your records.

What should I do next?

For your case to proceed, you must have the written consent of the adoptee, and his or her spouse if married. Consent of the birth parent is not required, but written notice of the final hearing on the adoption must be provided to the parents, if any, or proof of service of process must be filed showing notice has been served on the parents. If you know where they live, you must use **personal service**. If you absolutely do not know where they live, you may use **constructive service**. For more information about personal and constructive service, you should refer the **"General Instructions for Self-Represented Litigants"** found at the beginning of these forms and the instructions to ✎❑ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Forms 12.910(a) and 12.913(b) and ✎❑ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a). However, the law regarding constructive service is very complex and you may wish to consult an attorney regarding that issue.

When you have filed all of the required forms and met the requirements for consent as outlined above, you are ready to set a **hearing** on your petition. You should check with the clerk of court, **family law intake staff**, or **judicial assistant** to set a **final hearing**, and notify the other party(ies) using a **Notice of Hearing (General)**, ✎❑ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.923, or other appropriate notice of hearing form.

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read "General Information for Self-Represented Litigants" found at the beginning of these forms. See Chapter 63, Florida Statutes, and Florida Family Law Rule 12.200(a)(2) for further information.

Special notes...

With this petition you must file the following:

- **Stepparent Adoption: Consent of Adoptee**, ✎❑ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.981(a)(2)
- **Stepparent Adoption: Consent of Adult Adoptee's Spouse**, ✎❑ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.981(c)(2), if the adoptee is married

THIS ADOPTION MAY AFFECT THE ADOPTEE'S INHERITANCE.

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of a **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, ✎❑ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____
Division: _____

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION OF

_____,
{use name to be given to adult} Adoptee.

PETITION FOR ADOPTION OF ADULT BY STEPPARENT

Petitioner, *{full legal name}* _____, files this petition for adoption of the above-named adult, pursuant to Chapter 63, Florida Statutes, and states:

1. This is an action for adoption of an adult by the adult's stepparent, Petitioner.

2. I desire to adopt *{adult's full legal name}* _____, who was born on *{date}* _____, at *{city, county and state}* _____ _____.

3. I desire to adopt the adult because: _____ _____ _____.

4. I am _____ years old, and I have resided at *{address}* _____, Florida for _____ years.

5. The adoptee's name shall be: _____.

6. The adoptee's birth parents are:

_____ _____
Father's Name Birth date

_____
Address

_____ _____
Mother's Name Birth date

_____
Address

7. **Notice.** Notice to the birth parents was made by: _____.

8. **Consent.**
[√ **all** that apply]
___ a. The consent of the adoptee is attached.
___ b. The adoptee is married to *{full legal name of adoptee's spouse}* _____, and the consent of the spouse is attached.
___ c. The adoptee is not married.

9. Written notice of this final hearing was provided to the parents or proof of service of process showing notice has been served on the parents is attached.

WHEREFORE, I request that this Court enter a Final Judgment of Adoption of the adult by Petitioner Stepparent and change the name of the adoptee.

I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this petition and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.

Dated: _____

_____
Signature of Party
Printed Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Fax Number: _____

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF _____

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on _____ by _____.

_____
NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

_____
[Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or clerk.]

___ Personally known

___ Produced identification
Type of identification produced _____

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW: [✍ fill in **all** blanks]
I, *{full legal name and trade name of nonlawyer}*_____,
a nonlawyer, located at *{street}* _____, *{city}* _____,
{state} _____, *{phone}* _____, helped *{name}* _____,
who is the petitioner, fill out this form.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.981(c)(2),
STEPPARENT ADOPTION: CONSENT OF ADULT ADOPTEE'S SPOUSE

When should this form be used?

This form must be completed by the **spouse** of an adult who is being adopted.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, the spouse of the adoptee should sign the form before a **notary public** or **deputy clerk**. You should **file** the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where the **petition** for adoption of an adult was filed and keep a copy for your records.

Special notes...

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, ✎❑ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____
Division: _____

IN RE: THE ADOPTION OF

_____ ,
{use name to be given to child(ren)} Adoptee(s).

STEPPARENT ADOPTION: CONSENT OF ADULT ADOPTEE'S SPOUSE

1. I, *{full legal name}* _____, am the ( ) wife ( ) husband of *{full legal name}* _____, who Petitioner, *{full legal name}* _____ wishes to adopt.

2. I consent to the adoption of my spouse by Petitioner.

3. I understand my right to choose a person who does not have an employment, professional, or personal relationship with the adoption entity or the prospective adoptive parents to be present when this affidavit is executed and to sign it as a witness. The witness I selected is: *{full legal name}*_____.

I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this consent and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.

Dated: _____

_____
Signature of Spouse
Printed Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Fax Number: _____

_____
Signature of Witness
Printed Name: _____
Business Address:_____
Home Address: _____
Driver's License or
State ID Card No.:_____

_____
Signature of Witness
Printed Name: _____
Business Address:_____
Home Address: _____
Driver's License or
State ID Card No.:_____

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF _____

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on _____ by _____.

_____
NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

_____
[Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or deputy clerk.]

____ Personally known
____ Produced identification
Type of identification produced _____

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW: [✍ fill in **all** blanks]
I, *{full legal name and trade name of nonlawyer}* _____,
a nonlawyer, located at *{street}* _____, *{city}* _____,
{state} _____, *{phone}* _____, helped *{name}* _____,
who is the _____, fill out this form.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.981(a)(2),
STEPPARENT ADOPTION: CONSENT OF ADOPTEE

When should this form be used?

This form must be completed and signed by the person being adopted, the adoptee, if he or she is **over 12 years of age**, unless the court, in the best interest of the minor excuses the minor's consent. It must be signed in the presence of a **notary public** or **deputy clerk** and two witnesses other than the notary public or deputy clerk.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should **file** the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where the **Joint Petition for Adoption by Stepparent**, ✎❑ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.981(b)(1) is filed and keep a copy for your records.

Special notes...

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, ✎❑ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____
Division: _____

IN THE MATTER OF THE ADOPTION OF

_____,
Adoptee(s).

CONSENT OF ADOPTEE

1. I, *{full legal name}* _____, being over the age of 12, consent to my adoption by *{name}* _____, to be his/her legal child and heir at law.

2. I have been told of my right to choose a person who does not have an employment, professional, or personal relationship with the adoption entity or prospective adoptive parents to be present when this affidavit is executed and to sign it as a witness. The witness I selected is: *{full legal name}*_____.

3. [√ only one]

( ) I consent to my name being legally changed to *{specify}* _____.

( ) I do not consent to a name change.

I understand that I am swearing or affirming under oath to the truthfulness of the claims made in this consent and that the punishment for knowingly making a false statement includes fines and/or imprisonment.

Dated: _____ _____
Signature of Adoptee
Printed Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Fax Number: _____

_____
Signature of Witness
Printed Name: _____
Business Address: _____
Home Address: _____

_____
Signature of Witness
Printed Name: _____

Business Address: _____
Home Address: _____

Driver's License or
State ID Card No.:_____

Driver's License or
State ID Card No.:_____

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF _____

Sworn to or affirmed and signed before me on _____ by _____.

_____
NOTARY PUBLIC or DEPUTY CLERK

_____
[Print, type, or stamp commissioned name of notary or clerk.]

____ Personally known
____ Produced identification
Type of identification produced _____

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW: [✍ fill in **all** blanks]
I, *{full legal name and trade name of nonlawyer}* _____,
a nonlawyer, located at *{street}* _____, *{city}* _____,
{state} _____, *{phone}* _____, helped *{name}* _____,
who is the adoptee, fill out this form.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.910(b),

PROCESS SERVICE MEMORANDUM

When should this form be used?

You should use this form to give the sheriff's department (or private process server) instructions for serving the other **party** in your case with the **Summons: Personal Service on an Individual**, ✎❒ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a), and other papers to be served. On this form, you can tell the sheriff's department the best times to find the person at work and/or at home. You can also include a map to the other person's home or work place to help the sheriff find the person and deliver the summons. Do not forget to attach to the summons a copy of your initial petition and any other papers you want personally served on the other party.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should **file** the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where your petition was filed and attach a copy to the **Summons: Personal Service on an Individual**, ✎❒ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a). You should also keep a copy for your records.

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read "General Information for Self-Represented Litigants" found at the beginning of these forms. You should read the instructions for **Summons: Personal Service on an Individual**, ✎❒ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.910(a), for additional information.

Special notes...

If this is a domestic violence case and you want to keep your address confidential for safety reasons, do not enter your address, telephone, and fax information at the bottom of this form. Instead, write "confidential" in the spaces provided for that information and file **Petitioner's Request for Confidential Filing of Address**, ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(i).

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, ✎❒ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____
Division: _____

_____,
Petitioner,

and

_____,
Respondent.

PROCESS SERVICE MEMORANDUM

TO: ( ) Sheriff of _____ County, Florida; _____ Division
( ) Private process server: _____
Please serve the *{name of document(s)}* _____
_____
in the above-styled cause upon:
Party: *{full legal name}* _____
Address or location for service: _____
_____
Work Address: _____
_____

If the party to be served owns, has, and/or is known to have guns or other weapons, describe what type of weapon(s): _____

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: _____
_____
_____
_____

Dated: _____ _____
Signature of Party
*Printed Name: _____
*Address: _____
*City, State, Zip: _____
*Telephone Number: _____
*Fax Number: _____

*** If this is a domestic violence case, do not enter this information if your address or telephone number need to be kept confidential for safety reasons; instead write "confidential" in the spaces provided and file ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.980(i), Petitioner's Request for Confidential Filing of Address.**

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW: [✍ fill in **all** blanks]

I, *{full legal name and trade name of nonlawyer}*_____,
a nonlawyer, located at *{street}* _____, *{city}* _____,
{state} _____, *{phone}* _____, helped *{name}* _____,
who is the petitioner, fill out this form.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE FORM 12.910(a),
SUMMONS: PERSONAL SERVICE ON AN INDIVIDUAL

When should this form be used?

This form should be used to obtain **personal service** on the other **party** when you begin your lawsuit. **Service** is required for **all** documents filed in your case. Service means giving a copy of the required papers to the other party using the procedure that the law requires. Generally, there are two ways to make service: (1) personal service, or (2) service by mail or hand delivery. A third method for service is called **constructive service**; however, the relief a court may grant may be limited in a case where constructive service has been used.

The law requires that certain documents be served by **personal service** if personal service is possible. **Personal service** means that a summons (this form) and a copy of the forms you are filing with the court that must be personally served are delivered by a deputy sheriff or private process server

- directly to the other party, **or**
- to someone over the age of fifteen with whom the other party lives.

Personal service is required for **all petitions**, including petitions for modification. You cannot serve these papers on the other party yourself or by mail or hand delivery. Personal service must be made by the sheriff's department in the county where the other party lives or works or by a private process server certified in the county where the other party lives or works.

In many counties, there are private process servers who, for a fee, will personally serve the summons and other documents that require personal service. You should look under "**process servers**" in the yellow pages of the telephone book for a list of private process servers in your area. You may use a private process server to serve any paper required to be personally served in a family law case **except** a petition for injunction for protection against domestic or repeat violence.

How do I start?

When you begin your lawsuit, you need to complete this form (summons) and a **Process Service Memorandum**, ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b). The forms should be typed or printed legibly in black ink. Next, you will need to take these forms and, if you have not already done so, **file** your petition with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where you live. You should keep a copy of the forms for your records. The clerk will sign the summons, and then the summons, a copy of the papers to be served, and the process service memorandum must be delivered to the appropriate sheriff's office or to a private process server for service on the other party.

IF THE OTHER PARTY LIVES IN THE COUNTY WHERE SUIT IS FILED: Ask the clerk in your county about any local procedures regarding service. Generally, if the other party lives in the county in which you are filing suit and you want the sheriff's department to serve the papers, you will file the summons along with a **Process Service Memorandum**, ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b), with the clerk and the clerk will forward those papers to the sheriff for service. Make sure that you attach a copy of the papers you want personally served to the summons. You may also need to provide the sheriff with a stamped envelope addressed to you. This will allow the sheriff to send the proof of service to you,

after the sheriff serves your papers on the other party. However, in some counties the sheriff may send the proof of service directly to the clerk. If you are instructed to supply a self-addressed, stamped envelope and you receive the proof of service, you should file the proof of service with the clerk after you receive it from the sheriff. Also, you will need to find out how much the sheriff charges to serve the papers. Personal checks are not accepted. You should attach to the summons a cashier's check or money order made payable to the sheriff, and either give it to the clerk for delivery to the sheriff or send all of the paperwork and the fee to the sheriff yourself. The clerk will tell you which procedure to use. The costs for service may be waived if you are indigent.

If you want a private process server to serve the other party, you should still bring the summons to the clerk's office and have the clerk sign it for you. You should deliver the summons, along with the copy of your initial petition and any other papers to be served, and a **Process Service Memorandum**, ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b), to the private process server. The private process server will charge you a fee for serving the papers. After service is complete, proof of service by the private process server must be filed with the clerk. You should discuss how this will occur with the private process server.

IF THE OTHER PARTY LIVES IN ANOTHER COUNTY: If the other party lives in another county, service needs to be made by a sheriff in the county where the other party lives or by a private process server certified in the county where the other party lives. Make sure that you attach a copy of the papers you want personally served to the summons as well as the **Process Service Memorandum**, ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b). If you want the sheriff to serve the papers, the clerk may send your papers to that sheriff's office for you, or you may have to send the papers yourself. The clerk will tell you which procedure to use. Either way, you will need to provide the sheriff with a stamped envelope addressed to you. This will allow the sheriff to send the proof of service to you, after the sheriff serves your papers on the other party. You should file the proof of service with the clerk after you receive it from the sheriff. Also, you will need to find out how much the sheriff charges to serve the papers. Personal checks are not accepted. You should attach to the summons a cashier's check or money order made payable to the sheriff, and either give it to the clerk for delivery to the sheriff or send all of the paperwork and the fee to the sheriff yourself. The clerk will tell you which procedure to use. The costs for service may be waived if you are indigent.

If you want a private process server to serve the other party, you should still bring the summons to the clerk's office where the clerk will sign it for you. You should deliver the summons, along with the copy of your initial petition and any other papers to be served, and a **Process Service Memorandum**, ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.910(b), to the private process server. The private process server will charge you a fee for serving the papers. After service is complete, proof of service by the private process server must be filed with the clerk. You should discuss how this will occur with the private process server.

IF THE OTHER PARTY CANNOT BE LOCATED OR DOES NOT LIVE IN FLORIDA: If, after you have made a diligent effort to locate the other party, you absolutely cannot locate the other party, you may serve the other party by publication. Service by publication is also known as **constructive service**. You may also be able to use constructive service if the other party does not live in Florida. **However, Florida courts have only limited jurisdiction over a party who is served by constructive service and may have only limited jurisdiction over a party living outside of Florida regardless of whether that party is served by constructive or personal service**; that is, the judge's power to order the other party to do certain things may be limited. For example, the judge may be able to grant your request for a divorce, but the judge may not be able to address issues such as child support, spousal support (alimony), or division of

property or debts.

Regardless of the type of service used, if the other party once lived in Florida but is living outside of Florida now, you should include in your petition a statement regarding the length of time the party lived in Florida, if any, and when. For example: "Respondent last lived in Florida from *{date}* _____ to *{date}* _____."

This area of the law is very complex and you may need to consult with an attorney regarding the proper type of service to be used in your case if the other party does not live in Florida or cannot be located.

What happens when the papers are served on the other party?

The date and hour of service are written on the original summons and on all copies of it by the person making the service. The person who delivers the summons and copies of the petition must file a proof of service with the clerk or provide a proof of service to you for filing with the court. **It is your responsibility to make sure the proof of service has been returned to the clerk and placed in your case file.**

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read "General Information for Self-Represented Litigants" found at the beginning of these forms. For further information regarding service of process, see chapters 48 and 49, Florida Statutes, and rule 1.070, Florida Rules of Civil Procedure, as well as the instructions for **Notice of Action for Dissolution of Marriage**, ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a), and **Affidavit of Diligent Service and Inquiry**, ✎❒ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(b).

Special notes...

If you have been unable to obtain proper service on the other party within **120 days** after filing your lawsuit, the court will dismiss your lawsuit against the other party unless you can show the court a good reason why service was not made within **120 days**. For this reason, if you had the local sheriff serve the papers, you should check with the clerk every couple of weeks after completing the service papers to see if service has been completed. You may need to supply the sheriff with a new or better address. If you had a private process server or a sheriff in another county serve the papers, you should be in contact with that person or sheriff until you receive proof of service from that person or sheriff. You should then file the proof of service with the clerk immediately.

If the other party fails to respond, i.e., fails to file a written response with the court, within **20 days** after the service of the summons, you are entitled to request a **default**. See the instructions to **Motion for Default**, ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922 (a), and **Default**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.922(b), for further information. You will need to file a **Nonmilitary Affidavit**, ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.912(b), before a default may be granted.

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these

forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, ✎❒ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____
Division: _____

_____,
Petitioner,

and

_____,
Respondent.

SUMMONS: PERSONAL SERVICE ON AN INDIVIDUAL
ORDEN DE COMPARECENCIA: SERVICIO PERSONAL EN UN INDIVIDUO
CITATION: L'ASSIGNATION PERSONAL SUR UN INDIVIDUEL

TO/PARA/A: *{enter other party's full legal name}* _____,
{address(including city and state)/location for service} _____.

IMPORTANT

A lawsuit has been filed against you. You have **20 calendar days** after this summons is served on you to file a written response to the attached complaint/petition with the clerk of this circuit court, located at: *{street address}* _____.
A phone call will not protect you. Your written response, including the case number given above and the names of the parties, must be **filed** if you want the Court to hear your side of the case.

If you do not file your written response on time, you may lose the case, and your wages, money, and property may be taken thereafter without further warning from the Court. There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may call an attorney referral service or a legal aid office (listed in the phone book).

If you choose to file a written response yourself, at the same time you file your written response to the Court, you must also mail or take a copy of your written response to the party serving this summons at:

{Name and address of party serving summons} _____

_____.

Copies of all court documents in this case, including orders, are available at the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office. You may review these documents, upon request.

You must keep the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office notified of your current address. (You may file Notice of Current Address, ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915.) Future papers in this lawsuit will be mailed to the address on record at the clerk's office.

WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions,

including dismissal or striking of pleadings.

IMPORTANTE

Usted ha sido demandado legalmente. Tiene veinte (20) dias, contados a partir del recibo de esta notificacion, para contestar la demanda adjunta, por escrito, y presentarla ante este tribunal. Localizado en: _____. Una llamada telefonica no lo protegera. Si usted desea que el tribunal considere su defensa, debe presentar su respuesta por escrito, incluyendo el numero del caso y los nombres de las partes interesadas. Si usted no contesta la demanda a tiempo, pudiese perder el caso y podria ser despojado de sus ingresos y propiedades, o privado de sus derechos, sin previo aviso del tribunal. Existen otros requisitos legales. Si lo desea, usted puede consultar a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a una de las oficinas de asistencia legal que aparecen en la guia telefonica.

Si desea responder a la demanda por su cuenta, al mismo tiempo en que presente su respuesta ante el tribunal, usted debe enviar por correo o entregar una copia de su respuesta a la persona denominada abajo.

Si usted elige presentar personalmente una respuesta por escrito, en el mismo momento que usted presente su respuesta por escrito al Tribunal, usted debe enviar por correo o llevar una copia de su respuesta por escrito a la parte entregando esta orden de comparencencia a:

Nombre y direccion de la parte que entrega la orden de comparencencia: _____

_____.

Copias de todos los documentos judiciales de este caso, incluyendo las ordenes, estan disponibles en la oficina del Secretario de Juzgado del Circuito [Clerk of the Circuit Court's office]. Estos documentos pueden ser revisados a su solicitud.

Usted debe de manener informada a la oficina del Secretario de Juzgado del Circuito de su direccion actual. (Usted puede presentar _____ el Formulario: Ley de Familia de la Florida 12.915, [✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915], Notificacion de la Direccion Actual [Notice of Current Address].) Los papelos que se presenten en el futuro en esta demanda judicial seran env ados por correo a la direccion que este registrada en la oficina del Secretario.

ADVERTENCIA: Regla 12.285 (Rule 12.285), de las Reglas de Procedimiento de Ley de Familia de la Florida [Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure], requiere cierta revelacion automatica de documentos e informacion. El incumplimient, puede resultar en sanciones, incluyendo la desestimacion o anulacion de los alegatos.

IMPORTANT

Des poursuites judiciaries ont ete entreprises contre vous. Vous avez 20 jours consecutifs a partir de la date de l'assignation de cette citation pour deposer une reponse ecrite a la plainte ci-jointe aupres de ce tribunal. Qui se trouve a: *{L'Adresse}* _____. Un simple coup de telephone est insuffisant pour vous proteger; vous etes obliges de deposer votre reponse ecrite, avec mention du numero de dossier ci-dessus et du nom des parties nommees ici, si vous souhaitez que le tribunal entende votre cause. Si vous ne deposez pas votre reponse ecrite dans le delai requis, vous risquez de perdre la cause ainsi que votre salaire, votre argent, et vos biens peuvent etre saisis par la suite, sans aucun preavis ulterieur du tribunal. Il y a d'autres obligations juridiques et vous pouvez requerir les services immediats d'un avocat. Si vous ne connaissez pas d'avocat, vous pourriez telephoner a un service de reference d'avocats ou a un bureau

d'assistance juridique (figurant a l'annuaire de telephones).

Si vous choisissez de deposer vous-meme une reponse ecrite, il vous faudra egalement, en meme temps que cette formalite, faire parvenir ou expedier une copie au carbone ou une photocopie de votre reponse ecrite a la partie qui vous depose cette citation.

Nom et adresse de la partie qui depose cette citation: _____

_____

Les photocopies de tous les documents tribunals de cette cause, y compris des arrets, sont disponible au bureau du greffier. Vous pouvez revue ces documents, sur demande.

Il faut aviser le greffier de votre adresse actuelle. (Vous pouvez deposer ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, Notice of Current Address.) Les documents de l'avenir de ce proces seront envoyer a l' adresse que vous donnez au bureau du greffier.

ATTENTION: La regle 12.285 des regles de procedure du droit de la famille de la Floride exige que l'on remette certains renseignements et certains documents a la partie adverse. Tout refus de les fournir pourra donner lieu a des sanctions, y compris le rejet ou la suppression d'un ou de plusieurs actes de procedure.

THE STATE OF FLORIDA
TO EACH SHERIFF OF THE STATE: You are commanded to serve this summons and a copy of the complaint in this lawsuit on the above-named person.

DATED: _____

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

(SEAL)

By: _____
Deputy Clerk

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.923, NOTICE OF HEARING (GENERAL)

When should this form be used?

Anytime you have set a hearing before a **judge**, you must send notice of the **hearing** to the other party. **IMPORTANT**: If your hearing has been set before a general magistrate, you should use **Notice of Hearing Before General Magistrate**, ✎❒ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.920(c). If your hearing has been set before a child support enforcement hearing officer, you should use **Notice of Hearing (Child Support Hearing Officer)**, ✎❒ Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.921.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. After completing this form, you should **file** the original with the **clerk of the circuit court** in the county where your case was filed and keep a copy for your records.

What should I do next?

A copy of this form must be mailed **or** hand delivered to the other party in your case. If a **default** has been entered, you must still send this form to the other party to notify the other party of the **final hearing**.

Where can I look for more information?

Before proceeding, you should read "General Information for Self-Represented Litigants" found at the beginning of these forms. For further information on serving notices of hearing, see rule 1.090(d), Florida Civil Rules of Procedure.

Special notes...

To set a hearing date and time, you will usually have to make a good-faith effort to coordinate a mutually convenient date and time for you, the other parties in the case, and the judge, except in certain emergency situations. Some circuits may have additional procedural requirements that you must follow when you notify the court and other parties of your scheduled hearing. Therefore, before you complete this form, you should contact the clerk's office, **family law intake staff**, or **judicial assistant** for information regarding the proper procedure to follow.

Remember, a person who is NOT an attorney is called a nonlawyer. If a nonlawyer helps you fill out these forms, that person must give you a copy of **Disclosure from Nonlawyer**, ✎❒ Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900 (a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms also **must** put his or her name, address, and telephone number on the bottom of the last page of every form he or she helps you complete.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE _____ JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR _____ COUNTY, FLORIDA

Ref. No.: _____
UCN: _____
Division: _____

_____,
Petitioner,

and

_____,
Respondent.

NOTICE OF HEARING (GENERAL)

[✍ fill in **all** blanks]

TO: *{name of other party}* _____

There will be a hearing before Judge *{name}* _____, on *{date}* _____, at *{time}* _____ m., in Room _____ of the_____ Courthouse, located at: *{address}*_____on the following issues: _____

_____

_____.

_____ hour(s)/ _____ minutes have been reserved for this hearing.

This part to be filled out by the court or to be filled in with information you obtained from the court:

If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Within two (2) working days of your receipt of this (describe notice/order)_____ _____please contact the Human Rights Office, 400 S. Ft. Harrison Ave., Ste. 300, Clearwater, FL 33756, (727)464-4062(V/TDD).

☐ ☐ ☐

If you are represented by an attorney or plan to retain an attorney for this matter, you should notify the attorney of this hearing.

If this matter is resolved, the moving party shall contact the judge's office to cancel this hearing.

I certify that a copy of this document was [√ **one** only] ( ) mailed ( ) faxed and mailed ( ) hand delivered to the person(s) listed below on *{date}* _____.

Other party or his/her attorney:
Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Fax Number: _____
Dated: _____

_____
Signature of Party
Printed Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Fax Number: _____

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW: [✍ fill in **all** blanks]
I, *{full legal name and trade name of nonlawyer}* _____,
a nonlawyer, located at *{street}* _____, *{city}* _____,
{state} _____, *{phone}* _____, helped *{name}* _____,
who is the [√ **one** only] ___ petitioner **or** ___ respondent, fill out this form.