ADULT NAME CHANGE

THE CLERK'S OFFICE DOES NOT GIVE REFUNDS ON PACKET FEES OR FILING FEES.

NO PERSONAL CHECKS

USE BLACK INK ONLY. NO WHITE OUT

You MUST have all forms completed before turning in to Clerk.
The Clerk's office does NOT review your documents.
It is YOUR responsibility to ensure procedures are followed correctly as you are filing as a Self-Represented Litigant.

Required forms provided in this packet:

- Civil Cover Sheet
- Petition for Change of Name (Adult)
- Disclosure from A Non-Lawyer
- Notice of Limitations of Services Provided
- Notice of Related Cases
- General Information for Self-Represented Litigants

You will also need the following items:

- A color copy of your Florida driver's license or Florida ID
  - (You must file in the county where you currently reside)
- FDLE background screening & Electronic Fingerprints – completed at the Sheriff's Office in your county
  Note also: If you are returning to a former name other than your maiden name, you will need to provide proof of that former name (i.e., copy of your marriage license or court order changing name).

  If you are restoring your maiden name, you will not need a background screening or fingerprints.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- ✓ Complete all required forms
- ✓ Provide a copy of your Florida DL and the envelopes (and marriage license or court order, as applicable)
- ✓ Submit all of these documents to the Clerk along with the forms and filing fee.
- ✓ Wait at least **two weeks** to hear from the Case Manager in the Family Law Court Staff. If you do not hear from the Case Manager within two weeks, please contact the case manager listed below either by telephone or by email.
- ✓ **CALL THE CASE MANAGER FOR UPDATES.**

Note: Case Managers cannot help you complete the forms. If you need assistance we encourage you to contact an attorney.

Cary Godwin, 850-718-0480 or godwinc@jud14.flcourts.org
Case Manager – Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson and Washington Counties

Filing fee $400

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE FORM 12.928, COVER SHEET FOR FAMILY COURT CASES (11/13)

When should this form be used?

The Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases and the information contained in it neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other documents as required by law. This form shall be filed by the petitioner/party opening or reopening a case for the use of the **clerk of the circuit court** for the purpose of reporting judicial workload data pursuant to Florida Statutes section 25.075.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. The petitioner must **file** this cover sheet with the first pleading or motion filed to open or reopen a case in all domestic and juvenile cases.

What should I do next?

Follow these instructions for completing the form:

I. Case Style. Enter the name of the court, the appropriate case number assigned at the time of filing of the original petition, the name of the judge assigned (if applicable), and the name (last, first, middle initial) of the petitioner(s) and respondent(s).

II. Type of Action /Proceeding. Place a check beside the proceeding you are initiating. If you are simultaneously filing more than one type of proceeding against the same opposing party, such as a modification and an enforcement proceeding, complete a separate cover sheet for each action being filed.

   (A) Initial Action/Petition
   (B) Reopening Case. If you check "Reopening Case," indicate whether you are filing a modification or supplemental petition or an action for enforcement by placing a check beside the appropriate action/petition.
      1. Modification/Supplemental Petition
      2. Motion for Civil Contempt/ Enforcement
      3. Other – All reopening actions not involving modification/supplemental petitions or petition enforcement.

III. Type of Case. Place a check beside the appropriate case. If the case fits more than one category, select the most definitive. Definitions of the categories are provided below.
   (A) Simplified Dissolution of Marriage- petitions for the termination of marriage pursuant to Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.105.
   (B) Dissolution of Marriage - petitions for the termination of marriage pursuant to Chapter 61, Florida Statutes, other than simplified dissolution.
   (C) Domestic Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against domestic violence pursuant to section 741.30, Florida Statutes.

(D) Dating Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against dating violence pursuant to section 784.046, Florida Statutes.

(E) Repeat Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against repeat violence pursuant to section 784.046, Florida Statutes.

(F) Sexual Violence - all matters relating to injunctions for protection against sexual violence pursuant to section 784.046, Florida Statutes.

(G) Stalking-all matters relating to injunctions for protection against stalking pursuant to section 784.0485, Florida Statutes

(H) Support - IV-D - all matters relating to child or spousal support in which an application for assistance has been filed with the Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement under Title IV-D, Social Security Act, except for such matters relating to dissolution of marriage petitions (sections 409.2564, 409.2571, and 409.2597, Florida Statutes), paternity, or UIFSA.

(I) Support-Non IV-D - all matters relating to child or spousal support in which an application for assistance has **not** been filed under Title IV-D, Social Security Act.

(J) UIFSA- IV-D - all matters relating to Chapter 88, Florida Statutes, in which an application for assistance has been filed under Title IV-D, Social Security Act.

(K) UIFSA - Non IV-D - all matters relating to Chapter 88, Florida Statutes, in which an application for assistance has **not** been filed under Title IV-D, Social Security Act.

(L) Other Family Court - all matters involving time-sharing and/or parenting plans relating to minor child(ren), support unconnected with dissolution of marriage, annulment, delayed birth certificates pursuant to Florida Statutes section 382.0195, expedited affirmation of parental status pursuant to Florida Statutes section 742.16, termination of parental rights proceedings pursuant to Florida Statutes section 63.087, declaratory judgment actions related to premarital, marital, post-marital agreements, or other matters not included in the categories above.

(M) Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 63 - all matters relating to adoption pursuant to Chapter 63, Florida Statutes, excluding any matters arising out of Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.

(N) Name Change - all matters relating to name change, pursuant to section 68.07, Florida Statutes.

(O) Paternity/Disestablishment of Paternity – all matters relating to paternity pursuant to Chapter 742, Florida Statutes.

(P) Juvenile Delinquency - all matters relating to juvenile delinquency pursuant to Chapter 985, Florida Statutes.

(Q) Petition for Dependency - all matters relating to petitions for dependency.

(R) Shelter Petition – all matters relating to shelter petitions pursuant to Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.

(S) Termination of Parental Rights Arising Out Of Chapter 39 – all matters relating to termination of parental rights pursuant to Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.

(T) Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 39 – all matters relating to adoption pursuant to Chapter 39, Florida Statutes.

(U) CINS/FINS – all matters relating to children in need of services (and families in need of services) pursuant to Chapter 984, Florida Statutes.

ATTORNEY OR PARTY SIGNATURE. Sign the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases. Print legibly the name of the person signing the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases. Attorneys must include a Florida Bar number. Insert the date the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases is signed. Signature is a certification that filer has provided accurate information on the Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases.

Nonlawyer 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.

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, see Rule 12.100, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure.

COVER SHEET FOR FAMILY COURT CASES

I. Case Style

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 14TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____
Judge: _____

_____
Petitioner

and

_____
Respondent

II. Type of Action/Proceeding. Place a check beside the proceeding you are initiating. If you are simultaneously filing more than one type of proceeding against the same opposing party, such as a modification and an enforcement proceeding, complete a separate cover sheet for each action being filed. **If you are reopening a case, choose one of the three options below it.**

(A) ____ Initial Action/Petition
(B) ____ Reopening Case
1. ____ Modification/Supplemental Petition
2. ____ Motion for Civil Contempt/Enforcement
3. ____ Other

III. Type of Case. If the case fits more than one type of case, select the most definitive.

(A) ____ Simplified Dissolution of Marriage
(B) ____ Dissolution of Marriage
(C) ____ Domestic Violence
(D) ____ Dating Violence
(E) ____ Repeat Violence
(F) ____ Sexual Violence
(G) ____ Stalking
(H) ____ Support IV-D (Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)
(I) ____ Support Non-IV-D (**not** Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)
(J) ____ UIFSA IV-D (Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)
(K) ____ UIFSA Non-IV-D (**not** Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement)
(L) ____ Other Family Court
(M) ____ Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 63
(N) ____ Name Change

(O) ____ Paternity/Disestablishment of Paternity
(P) ____ Juvenile Delinquency
(Q) ____ Petition for Dependency
(R) ____ Shelter Petition
(S) ____ Termination of Parental Rights Arising Out Of Chapter 39
(T) ____ Adoption Arising Out Of Chapter 39
(U) ____ CINS/FINS

IV. Rule of Judicial Administration 2.545(d) requires that a Notice of Related Cases Form, Family Law Form 12.900(h), be filed with the initial pleading/petition by the filing attorney or self-represented litigant in order to notify the court of related cases. Is Form 12.900(h) being filed with this Cover Sheet for Family Court Cases and initial pleading/petition?
____ No, to the best of my knowledge, no related cases exist.
____ Yes, all related cases are listed on Family Law Form 12.900(h).

ATTORNEY OR PARTY SIGNATURE

I CERTIFY that the information I have provided in this cover sheet is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature_____ FL Bar No.: _____
Attorney or party (Bar number,if attorney)

_____ _____
(Type or print name) (E-mail Address(es))

_____
Date

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW: [fill in **all** blanks]
This form was prepared for the: *{choose only **one**}* ( ) Petitioner ( ) Respondent
This form was completed with the assistance of:
*{name of individual}*_____,
{name of business} _____,
*{address}*_____,
*{city}*_____, *{state}*_____, *{telephone number }*_____.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA SUPREME COURT APPROVED FAMILY LAW FORM 12.982(a) PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME (ADULT) (03/15)

When should this form be used?

This form should be used when an adult wants the court to change his or her name. This form is **not** to be used in connection with a dissolution of marriage or for adoption of child(ren). If you want a change of name because of a dissolution of marriage or adoption of child(ren) that is not yet final, the change of name should be requested as part of that case.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink and must be signed before a notary public or deputy clerk. You should file the original with the clerk of the circuit court in the county where you live and keep a copy for your records

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-FILING

The Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all petitions, pleadings, and documents be filed electronically except in certain circumstances. **Self-represented litigants may file petitions or other pleadings or documents electronically; however, they are not required to do so.** If you choose to file your pleadings or other documents electronically, you must do so in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.525, and you must follow the procedures of the judicial circuit in which you file. **The rules and procedures should be carefully read and followed.**

What should I do next?

Unless you are seeking to restore a former name, you must have fingerprints submitted for a state and national criminal records check. The fingerprints must be taken in a manner approved by the Department of Law Enforcement and must be submitted to the Department for a state and national criminal records check. **You may not request a hearing on the petition until the clerk of court has received the results of your criminal history records check.** The clerk of court can instruct you on the process for having the fingerprints taken and submitted, including information on law enforcement agencies or service providers authorized to submit fingerprints electronically to the Department of Law Enforcement. The process may take several weeks and you will have to pay for the cost of processing the fingerprints and conducting the state and national criminal history records check.

Next, you must obtain a hearing date for the court to consider your request. If you are seeking to restore a former name, a hearing on the petition MAY be held immediately after the petition is filed. The final hearing on any other petition for a name change may be held immediately after the clerk of court receives the results of your criminal history records check. You should ask the clerk of court, family law intake staff, or judicial assistant about the local procedure for setting a hearing. You may be

required to attend the final hearing. Included in these forms is a **Final Judgment of Change of Name (Adult)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.982(b), which the judge may use. You should check with the clerk, family law intake staff, or judicial assistant, to see if you need to bring a final judgment form with you. 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.

If the judge grants your petition, he or she will sign this order. This officially changes your name. The clerk can provide you with certified copies of the signed order. There will be charges for the certified copies, and the clerk can tell you the amount of the charges.

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, see Section 68.07, Florida Statutes.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING E-SERVICE ELECTION

After the initial service of process of the petition or supplemental petition by the Sheriff or certified process server, the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration now require that all documents required or permitted to be served on the other party must be served by electronic mail (e-mail) except in certain circumstances. **You must strictly comply with the format requirements set forth in the Rules of Judicial Administration.**

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS MAY SERVE DOCUMENTS BY E-MAIL; HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO DO SO. If a self-represented litigant elects to serve and receive documents by e-mail, the procedures must always be followed once the initial election is made.

To serve and receive documents by e-mail, you must designate your e-mail addresses by using the **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915, and you must provide your e-mail address on each form on which your signature appears. Please **CAREFULLY** read the rules and instructions for: **Certificate of Service (General)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.914; **Designation of Current Mailing and E-mail Address**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.915; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

Special notes...

The heading of the form calls for the name of the petitioner. Your current legal name should be used, as you are the one who is asking the court for relief. The judicial circuit, case number, and division may be obtained from the clerk of court's office when you file the petition.

It may be helpful to compile a list of all of the people and/or places that will need a copy of your final judgment. This list may include the driver's license office, social security office, banks, schools, etc. A

list will help you know how many copies of your order you should get from the clerk of court after your hearing.

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: _____

_____,
Petitioner.

PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME (ADULT)

I, *{full legal name}* _____, being sworn, certify that the following information is true:

1. My complete present name is: _____.
   I request that my name be changed to: _____.

2. I live in _____ County, Florida, at *{street address}* _____
   _____.

3. I was born on *{date}*_____, in *{city}* _____, *{county}* _____,
   {state} _____, *{country}* _____.

4. My father's full legal name : _____.
   My mother's full legal name: _____.
   My mother's maiden name: _____.

5. I have lived in the following places since birth:

Dates (to/from)	Address
_____/_____	_____
_____/_____	_____
_____/_____	_____
_____/_____	_____

(___ Please indicate here if you are continuing these facts on an attached page.)

6. **Family**
   *{Indicate **all** that apply}*
   a. _____ I am not married.
   b. _____ I am married. My spouse's full legal name is: _____
   c. _____ I do not have child(ren).
   d. _____ The name(s), age(s), and address(es) of my child(ren) are as follows (all children, **including**

those over 18, must be listed):

Name *{last, first, middle initial}* Age Address, City, State

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(_____Please indicate here if you are continuing these facts on an attached page.)

7. **Former names**

*{Indicate **all** that apply}*

_____My name has never been changed **by a court.**

_____My name previously was changed **by court order** from _____

to _____ on *{date}*_____,

by *{court, city, and state}* _____.

A copy of the court order is attached.

_____My name previously was changed **by marriage** from _____

to _____ on *{date}*_____,

in *{city, county, and state}* _____.

A copy of the marriage certificate is attached.

_____I have never been known or called by any other name.

_____I have been known or called by the following other name(s):

{list name(s) and explain where you were known or called by such name(s)} _____

_____

_____.

8. **Occupation**

My occupation is: _____.

I am employed at: *{company and address}* _____

_____.

During the past 5 years, I have had the following jobs:

Dates (to/from)	Employer and employer's address
_____/_____	_____
_____/_____	_____
_____/_____	_____
_____/_____	_____
_____/_____	_____

(_____Please indicate here if you are continuing these facts on an attached page.)

9. **Business**

{Choose one only}

_____ I do not own and operate a business.

_____ I own and operate a business. The name of the business is: _____.

The street address is: _____.

My position with the business is: _____.

I have been involved with the business since: *{date}* _____.

10. **Profession**

{Choose one only}

_____ I am not in a profession.

_____ I am in a profession. My profession is: _____.

I have practiced this profession:

Dates (to/from)	Place and address
_____/_____	_____
_____/_____	_____
_____/_____	_____
_____/_____	_____
_____/_____	_____

(_____ Please indicate here if you are continuing these facts on an attached page.)

11. **Education**

I have graduated from the following school(s):

Degree Received	Date of Graduation	School
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

(_____ Please indicate here if you are continuing these facts on an attached page.)

12. **Criminal History**

{Choose one only}

_____ I have never been arrested for or charged with, pled guilty or nolo contendere to, or been found to have committed a criminal offense, regardless of adjudication.

_____ I have a criminal history. In the past I have been arrested for or charged with, pled guilty or nolo contendere to, or been found to have committed a criminal offense, regardless of adjudication. The details of my criminal history are:

Date	City/State	Event (arrest, charge, plea, or adjudication)
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

(_____ Please indicate here if you are continuing these facts on an attached page.)

13. **Bankruptcy**

{Choose one only}

____I have never been adjudicated bankrupt.

____I was adjudicated bankrupt on *{date}* _____, in *{city}* _____, *{county}* _____, *{state}* _____.

(___Please indicate here if you have filed additional bankruptcies, and explain on an attached page.)

14. **Creditor(s)' Judgments**

{Choose one only}

_____I have never had a money judgment entered against me by a creditor.

_____The following creditor(s)' money judgment(s) have been entered against me:

Date	Amount	Creditor	Court entering judgment and case number	if Paid *{date}*
_____	_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	_____	

(_____ Please indicate here if these facts are continued on an attached page.)

15. **Fingerprints and Criminal History Records Check**

Unless I am seeking to restore a former name, a copy of my fingerprints has been taken in a manner approved by the Department of Law Enforcement and submitted for a state and national criminal history records check. **I understand that I cannot request a hearing on my Petition until the Clerk of Court receives the results of the criminal history records check.**

16. I have no ulterior or illegal purpose for filing this petition, and granting it will not in any manner invade the property rights of others, whether partnership, patent, good will, privacy, trademark, or otherwise.

17. My civil rights have never been suspended, or, if my civil rights have been suspended, they have been fully restored.

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 PETITIONER

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Designated E-mail Address(es): _____

_____

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] This form was prepared for the Petitioner.
This form was completed with the assistance of:
{name of individual} _____,
{name of business} _____,
{address} _____,
{city} _____, *{state}* _____,*{ zip code}*_____, *{telephone number}* _____.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE FORM 12.900(a), DISCLOSURE FROM NONLAWYER (11/12)

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 to retain and the nonlawyer must keep a copy in the person's file. The nonlawyer shall also keep copies for at least 6 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: _____

CASE NO._____

NOTICE OF LIMITATIONS OF SERVICES PROVIDED

The personnel in the self-help program are not acting as your lawyer or providing legal advice to you.

Self-help personnel are not acting on behalf of the court or any judge. The presiding judge in your case may require amendment of a form or substitution of a different form. The judge is not required to grant the relief requested in a form.

The personnel in this self-help program cannot tell you what your legal rights or remedies are, represent you in court, or tell you how to testify in court.

Self-help services are available to all persons who are or will be parties to a family law case.

The information that you give to and receive from self-help personnel is not confidential and may be subject to disclosure at a later date. If another person involved in your case seeks assistance from the self-help program, that person will be given the same type of assistance that you receive.

In all cases, it is best to consult with your own attorney, especially if your case presents significant issues regarding children, child support, alimony, retirement or pension rights, assets or liabilities.

_____ I CANNOT READ ENGLISH. THIS NOTICE WAS READ TO ME BY:

_____ IN _____.
(NAME) (LANGUAGE)

_____ I CAN READ ENGLISH

_____
SIGNATURE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA FAMILY LAW RULES OF PROCEDURE FORM 12.900(h), NOTICE OF RELATED CASES (11/13)

When should this form be used?

Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.545(d) requires the **petitioner** in a family law case to file with the court a notice of related cases, if any. Your circuit may also require this form to be filed even if there are no related cases. A case is considered related if

- it involves the same parties, children, or issues and is pending when the family law case is filed; or
- it affects the court's jurisdiction to proceed; or
- an order in the related case may conflict with an order on the same issues in the new case; or
- an order in the new case may conflict with an order in the earlier case.

This form is used to provide the required notice to the court.

This form should be typed or printed in black ink. It must be **filed** with the **clerk of the circuit court** with the initial pleading in the family law case.

What should I do next?

A copy of the form must be served on the presiding judges, either the chief judge or the family law administrative judge, and all parties in the related cases. You should also keep a copy for your records. **Service** must be in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

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. The words that are in **"bold underline"** in these instructions are defined there. For further information, see Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.545(d).

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 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 **must** also 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.

Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.900(a), before he or she helps you. A nonlawyer helping you fill out these forms **must** also 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 14TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,
IN AND FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY, FLORIDA

Case No.: _____
Division: _____

_____,
Petitioner,
and

_____,
Respondent.

NOTICE OF RELATED CASES

1. Petitioner submits this Notice of Related Cases as required by Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.545(d). A related case may be an open or closed civil, criminal, guardianship, domestic violence, juvenile delinquency, juvenile dependency, or domestic relations case. A case is "related" to this family law case if it involves any of the same parties, children, or issues and it is pending at the time the party files a family case; if it affects the court's jurisdiction to proceed; if an order in the related case may conflict with an order on the same issues in the new case; or if an order in the new case may conflict with an order in the earlier litigation.

   [check one only]
   ___ **There are no related cases.**
   ___ **The following are the related cases (add additional pages if necessary):**

   Related Case No. 1
   Case Name(s): _____
   Petitioner _____
   Respondent _____
   Case No.: _____ Division: _____

   Type of Proceeding: [check all that apply]

   ____ Dissolution of Marriage
   ____ Custody
   ____ Child Support
   ____ Juvenile Dependency
   ____ Termination of Parental Rights
   ____ Domestic/Sexual/Dating/Repeat Violence or Stalking Injunctions
   ____ Paternity
   ____ Adoption
   ____ Modification/Enforcement/Contempt Proceedings
   ____ Juvenile Delinquency
   ____ Criminal
   ____ Mental Health
   ____ Other *{specify}*_____

   State where case was decided or is pending: ____ Florida ____ Other: *{specify}*_____

Name of Court where case was decided or is pending (*for example, Fifth Circuit Court, Marion County, Florida*): _____
Title of last Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____
Date of Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____

Relationship of cases check **all** that apply]:
____ pending case involves same parties, children, or issues;
____ may affect court's jurisdiction;
____ order in related case may conflict with an order in this case;
____ order in this case may conflict with previous order in related case.
Statement as to the relationship of the cases: _____
_____
_____

Related Case No. 2
Case Name(s): _____
Petitioner _____
Respondent _____
Case No.: _____ Division: _____

Type of Proceeding: [check **all** that apply]

____ Dissolution of Marriage
____ Custody
____ Child Support
____ Juvenile Dependency
____ Termination of Parental Rights
____ Domestic/Sexual/Dating/Repeat Violence or Stalking Injunctions
____ Paternity
____ Adoption
____ Modification/Enforcement/Contempt Proceedings
____ Juvenile Delinquency
____ Criminal
____ Mental Health
____Other *{specify}*_____

State where case was decided or is pending: ____ Florida ____ Other: *{specify}*_____

Name of Court where case was decided or is pending (*for example, Fifth Circuit Court, Marion County, Florida*): _____
Title of last Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____
Date of Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____

Relationship of cases check all that apply]:
____ pending case involves same parties, children, or issues;
____ may affect court's jurisdiction;
____ order in related case may conflict with an order in this case;
____ order in this case may conflict with previous order in related case.

Statement as to the relationship of the cases: _____
_____

_____

Related Case No. 3
Case Name(s): _____
Petitioner _____
Respondent _____
Case No.: _____ Division: _____

Type of Proceeding: [check **all** that apply]

____ Dissolution of Marriage
____ Custody
____ Child Support
____ Juvenile Dependency
____ Termination of Parental Rights
____ Domestic/Sexual/Dating/Repeat Violence or Stalking Injunctions
____ Paternity
____ Adoption
____ Modification/Enforcement/Contempt Proceedings
____ Juvenile Delinquency
____ Criminal
____ Mental Health
____ Other *{specify}* _____

State where case was decided or is pending: ____ Florida ____ Other: *{specify}* _____

Name of Court where case was decided or is pending (*for example, Fifth Circuit Court, Marion County, Florida*): _____
Title of last Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____
Date of Court Order/Judgment (if any): _____

Relationship of cases check all that apply]:
____ pending case involves same parties, children, or issues;
____ may affect court's jurisdiction;
____ order in related case may conflict with an order in this case;
____ order in this case may conflict with previous order in related case.
Statement as to the relationship of the cases: _____
_____
_____

2. [check **one** only]
____ I **do not** request coordination of litigation in any of the cases listed above.
____ I **do** request coordination of the following cases: _____
_____
_____

3. [check **all** that apply]
____ Assignment to one judge
____ Coordination of existing cases
will conserve judicial resources and promote an efficient determination of these cases because: _____.

4. The Petitioner acknowledges a continuing duty to inform the court of any cases in this or any other state that could affect the current proceeding.

Dated: _____

_____
Petitioner's Signature
Printed Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Fax Number: _____
E-mail Address(es): _____

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I CERTIFY that I delivered a copy of this Notice of Related Cases to the _____ County Sheriff's Department or a certified process server for service on the Respondent, and **[check all used]** ( ) e-mailed ( ) mailed ( ) hand delivered, a copy to *{name}*_____, who is the **[check all that apply]** ( ) judge assigned to new case, ( ) chief judge or family law administrative judge, ( ) *{name}*_____ a party to the related case, ( ) *{name}* _____, a party to the related case on *{date}* _____.

_____
Signature of Petitioner/Attorney for Petitioner
Printed Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Fax Number: _____
E-mail Address(es): _____
Florida Bar Number: _____

IF A NONLAWYER HELPED YOU FILL OUT THIS FORM, HE/SHE MUST FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW:
[fill in all blanks] This form was prepared for the *{choose **only** one}*: ( ) Petitioner ( ) Respondent.
This form was completed with the assistance of:
{name of individual} _____,
*{name of business}*_____,
*{address}*_____,
{city} _____*{state}* _____, *{telephone number}* _____.

FAMILY LAW FORMS, COMMENTARY, AND INSTRUCTIONS
GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS
(09/13)

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 original or supplemental petitions, any time 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, which cannot include either alimony or child support. For more information on constructive service, see **Notice of Action for Dissolution of Marriage (No Child or Financial Support)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a)(1), **Notice of Action for Family Cases with Minor Child(ren)**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.913(a)(2), **Affidavit of Diligent Search and Inquiry**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(b), and **Affidavit of Diligent Search**, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure Form 12.913(c).. 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 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.

Parenting Plan. If your case involves minor or dependent child(ren), a **Parenting Plan** shall be approved or established by the court. **Parenting Plan**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form, 12.995(a), **Safety-Focused Parenting Plan**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.995(b), or **Relocation/Long Distance Parenting Plan**, Florida Supreme Court Approved Family Law Form 12.995(c). The Parenting Plan shall be developed and agreed to by the parents and approved by a court. **If the parents cannot agree, or if the agreed Parenting Plan is not approved, the court must establish a Parenting Plan.** The Parenting Plan shall contain a time-sharing schedule and should address the issues regarding the child(ren)'s education, health care, and physical, social, and emotional well-being.

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)_____
E-mail Address: _____(8)_____

Some forms require that your signature be witnessed. You must sign the form in the presence of a <u>notary public</u> 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 & 3–8) except 2 with the requested information, if applicable. **Line 2, the signature line, must be signed in the presence of the <u>notary public</u> or <u>deputy clerk</u>.**

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] This form was prepared for the: *{either Petitioner or Respondent; or Husband or Wife}*
This form was completed with the assistance of:
{name of individual } _____ (1) _____,
{name of business} _____ (2) _____,
{address} _____ (3) _____,
{city} (4) _____, *{state}* _____ (5), *{telephone number}* (6) _____.

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 <u>nonlawyer</u> who helps you should type or print his or her name on line 1.
Lines 2–6 The nonlawyer's business name, address, (including street, city, state, and telephone number) should be typed or printed on lines 2–6.

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.

Alimony-spousal support which may be ordered by the court in a proceeding for dissolution of marriage. Types of alimony include: bridge-the-gap, durational, rehabilitative, or retroactive, and may be either temporary or permanent. The court may order periodic payments, payment in lump sum, or both. In determining whether to award alimony, the court must determine whether either party has an actual need for alimony and whether the other party has the ability to pay. The court must consider the factors set forth in section 61.08, Florida Statutes, and must make certain written findings. An alimony award may not leave the paying party with significantly less net income than that of the receiving party without written findings of exceptional circumstances.

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.

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.

Beneficiary Designation-Florida law provides that a beneficiary designation made by or on behalf of a party providing for the payment or transference of an asset or benefit upon his or her death to the other spouse is void when the final judgment dissolving or declaring a marriage invalid is signed, unless the final judgment specifically states otherwise. Federal law and other statutory provisions may also apply. This includes, but is not limited to, such assets as life insurance policies, annuities, employee benefit plans, individual retirement accounts, and payable-on-death accounts. Whether or not to continue a beneficiary designation is a complex area of the law and you may wish to consult with an attorney.

Bridge-the-Gap Alimony-spousal support which is ordered to assist a party to make the transition from being married to being single. Bridge-the-Gap alimony is designed to assist a party with legitimate, identifiable short-time needs; its length cannot exceed two years and it cannot be modified.

Central 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.

Concurrent Custody-(for the purposes of a petition filed pursuant to chapter 751, Florida Statutes) means that an eligible extended family member is awarded custodial rights to care for a child or children concurrently with the child(ren)'s parent or parents.

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; that relief cannot include either alimony or child support. 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.

Custody Order – a judgment or order incorporating a Parenting Plan is a child custody determination for the purposes of the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act, the International Child Abduction Remedies Act, 42 U.S.C. ss. 11601 et seq., the Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act, and the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction enacted at the Hague on October 25, 1980.

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, have a mental or physical disability that prevents them from supporting themselves, or are in high school, between the ages of 18 and 19, and performing in good faith with a 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.

Durational Alimony-spousal support which is ordered to provide economic assistance for a set period of time following a marriage of short or moderate duration or following a marriage of long duration if there is no ongoing need for support on a permanent basis. Durational alimony terminates upon the death of either party or upon remarriage of the party receiving support. It may be modified or terminated , but cannot exceed the length of a marriage.

Electronic Communication – Contact, other than face-to-face contact, facilitated by tools such as telephones, electronic mail or email, webcams, video-conferencing equipment and software or other wired or wireless technologies, or other means of communication to supplement fact-to face contact between a parent and that parent's minor child.

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.

Extended Family-(for the purposes of a petition filed pursuant to chapter 751, Florida Statutes) is a person who is either:

1) A relative of a minor child within the third degree by blood or marriage to the parent; OR
2) The stepparent of a minor child if the stepparent is currently married to the parent of the child and is not a party in a pending dissolution, separate maintenance, domestic violence, or other civil or criminal proceeding in any court of competent jurisdiction involving one or both of the child's parents as an adverse 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.

Health Insurance-coverage under a fee-for-service arrangement, health care maintenance organization, or preferred provider organization, and other types of coverage available to either parent, under which medical services could be provided to a minor or dependent child.

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.

Parenting Plan – a document created to govern the relationship between the parents relating to the decisions that must be made regarding the minor child(ren). The Parenting Plan must contain a time-sharing schedule for the parents and child(ren) and shall address the issues concerning the minor child(ren). The issues concerning the minor child(ren) may include, but are not limited to, the child(ren)'s education, health care, and physical, social, and emotional well-being. In creating the Plan, all circumstances between the parents, including their historic relationship, domestic violence, and other factors must be taken into consideration. The Parenting Plan must be developed and agreed to by the parents and approved by the court. If the parents cannot agree to a Parenting Plan, or if the parents agreed to a plan that is not approved by the court, a Parenting Plan will be established by the court with or without the use of **parenting plan recommendations.**

Parenting Plan Recommendation – A nonbinding recommendation concerning one or more elements of a Parenting Plan made by a court-appointed mental health practitioner or other professional designated pursuant to either section 61.20 or 61.401, Florida Statutes, or Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.363.

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 provide for the needs and necessities of life as they were established during the marriage for a party who lacks the financial ability to meet his or her needs and necessities after dissolution of marriage. Permanent alimony is paid at a specified, periodic rate until: modification by a court order; the death of either party;or the remarriage of the party receiving alimony, whichever occurs first. Permanent alimony requires consideration of the factors set forth in section 61.08(2), Florida Statutes, and must include certain written findings by the court.

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.

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

Pro Se Coordinator - see Family Law Intake Staff.

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 after dissolution of marriage.

Relocation- a change in the location of the principal residence of a parent or other person in accordance with section 61.13001, Florida Statutes.

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

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

Service - the delivery of legal documents to a party. Service must be in accordance with Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516.

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 time-sharing to the other parent.

State Disbursement Unit- the unit established and operated by the Title IV-D agency to provide one central address for the collection and disbursement of child support payments made in both Department of Revenue and non-Department of Revenue cases, in which the obligation is paid through an income deduction order.

Supervised Time-Sharing- a parenting arrangement under which time-sharing 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.

Supportive Relationship-a relationship, defined in section 61.14(1)(b)1, Florida Statutes, existing between a spouse who receives alimony and a person with whom that spouse resides.

Time-Sharing Schedule – a timetable that must be included in the Parenting Plan that specifies the time, including overnights and holidays, that a minor child or children will spend with each parent. The time-sharing schedule shall either be developed and agreed to by the parents of a minor child or children and is approved by the court, or established by the court if the parents cannot agree, or if their agreed-upon schedule is not approved by the court.

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.

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

Case No.: _____
Division: _____

IN RE: THE NAME CHANGE OF

_____,
Petitioner.

FINAL JUDGMENT OF CHANGE OF NAME (ADULT)

This cause came before the Court on *{date}* _____, for a hearing on Petition for Change of Name (Adult) under section 68.07, Florida Statutes, and it appearing to the Court that:

1. Petitioner is a bona fide resident of _____ County, Florida;

2. Petitioner's request is not for any ulterior or illegal purpose; and

3. Granting this petition will not in any manner invade the property rights of others, whether partnership, patent, good will, privacy, trademark, or otherwise; it is

ORDERED that Petitioner's present name, _____,
is changed to _____,
by which Petitioner shall hereafter be known.

DONE and ORDERED ON _____ in _____, Florida.

_____
CIRCUIT JUDGE

I certify that a copy of the *{name of document(s)}* _____
was ( ) mailed ( ) faxed and mailed ( ) e-mailed ( ) hand-delivered to the party(ies) listed below on *{date}* _____.

Petitioner