

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR INDIAN RIVER,
MARTIN, OKEECHOBEE AND
ST. LUCIE COUNTIES, FLORIDA**

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 05-09

RE: Parent Education and Family Stabilization Course in Family Law Cases

WHEREAS, Florida Statutes §61.21 mandates attendance in an approved parenting class for all parties to a dissolution of marriage proceeding with minor children, or a paternity action involving issues of parental responsibility; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Family Law Division of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit is to assist in moving families through a difficult period of their lives in the least traumatic way;

Pursuant to Rule 2.050, Fla. R. Jud. Admin., it is therefore **ORDERED**:

1. In all original actions involving issues of parental responsibility of minor children, except for Title IV-D and Chapter 751 actions, the parties shall attend and successfully complete a Parent Education and Stabilization course approved by the Department of Children and Families in accordance with § 61.21, Florida Statutes.
2. The Petitioner must complete the course within forty-five (45) days and file proof of completion with the Clerk of Court within sixty (60) days after filing of the petition, before mediation or before entry of the final judgment, whichever event occurs first. All other parties must complete the course within forty-five days (45) and file proof of completion with the Clerk of Court within sixty (60) days after they have been served with the petition, before mediation or before entry of the final judgment, whichever event occurs first.
3. Upon a showing of good cause, the Court may excuse a party from personal attendance of an approved parenting course or extend the time in which a party may complete the parenting course. In such cases, the Court shall an Order enter which extends the time in which the party has to complete the course, excuses the party's attendance at the course altogether, or permits completion of a specific online course. Absent said showing and Order, the parties must personally attend an approved parenting course within the time standards stated in this Administrative Order and in Florida Statutes.
4. In cases affected by this Order, the Clerk of Court shall advise the Petitioner and/or Petitioner's counsel of the requirements of this Order by providing a copy of the Standing Order of Referral to Parent Education and Stabilization Course, which lists the currently approved providers. It is the responsibility of the Petitioner and/or Petitioner's counsel to provide the Respondent with a copy of Standing Order of Referral to Parent Education and Stabilization Course, by including the same with the petition at the time

of service. In cases where the Clerk of Court forwards the petition to the Sheriff for service, a copy of the Standing Order of Referral to Parent Education and Stabilization Course shall be included.

5. Each party ordered to attend an approved parenting course shall be responsible to pay the cost of attendance, unless otherwise ordered by the Court. The cost of the course shall be set by the program provider, based upon each party's ability to pay, as determined by the provider.

6. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to require the parties to attend an approved parenting course together.

7. Nothing in this Order shall prohibit judges from ordering parties to attend a parenting course in cases not subject to this Order.

8. Failure to comply with the terms of this Order may result in appropriate sanctions against the offending party.

DONE AND ORDERED in quadruplicate at Stuart, Martin County, Florida this 30th day of December, 2005.

HONORABLE WILLIAM L. ROBY
Chief Judge