

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 16TH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF THE STATE OF
FLORIDA, IN AND FOR MONROE COUNTY

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER: **5.013**
AMENDED 03-1

IN RE:

APPROVAL OF PARENT EDUCATION
AND FAMILY STABILIZATION COURSES

_____ :

WHEREAS, Florida Statute Section 61.21 (2) has been amended, effective July 1, 2003, to require that the Department of Children and Family Services approve a parenting course designed to educate, train, and assist divorcing parents in regard to the consequences of divorce on parents and children for each Judicial Circuit, and to provide each judicial Circuit with a list of approved course providers; and

WHEREAS, it is beneficial to parents who are separating or divorcing to have available an educational program that will provide general information regarding the issues, and legal procedures for resolving custody and child support disputes, the emotional experiences and problems of divorcing adults, the family problems and emotional concerns and needs of the children, and the availability of community resources and services;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED as follows:

- (1) All parties to a dissolution of marriage proceeding with minor children, or a paternity action which involves issues of parental responsibility shall be required to complete a Parent Education and Family Stabilization Course prior to the entry of a final judgment by the Court. The Court may excuse a party from attending the parenting course for good cause. The Court may, without motion of either party, prohibit the parenting course from being taken together, if there is a history of domestic violence.

- (2) The Court may require that parties to a modification of a final judgment involving shared parental responsibilities, custody, or visitation, complete a Parent Education and Family Stabilization Course prior to the entry of an order modifying the final judgment.
- (3) All parties required to complete a parenting course shall begin the course as expeditiously as possible after filing their petitions, and shall be required to file proof of compliance with the Court prior to the entry of the final judgment.
- (4) Paragraph 4, of Administrative Order 5.013, Amended 02-1, is eliminated in its entirety as the 16th Judicial Circuit no longer has statutory responsibility for the approval of parenting courses.

DONE AND SIGNED in Chambers, at Key West, Monroe County, Florida, this 24th day of June, 2003.

Hon. Richard Payne, Chief Judge