

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR PASCO AND PINELLAS COUNTIES, FLORIDA**

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2019-027 PA/PI-CIR

**RE: ASSIGNMENT OF CASES INVOLVING THE HAGUE CONVENTION ON
THE CIVIL ASPECTS OF INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTION**

The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (“Hague Convention”) is a mechanism for parents seeking the return of children who have been wrongfully removed or retained from the child’s country of habitual residence. The Hague Convention is not an extradition remedy, but is a civil remedy for abduction.

In 1988, the United States codified the terms of the Hague Convention in 42 U.S.C. § 11601, which is known as the International Child Abduction Remedies Act. In 2002, the Florida Legislature recognized the Hague Convention and enacted sections 61.524 and 61.525, Florida Statutes.

On April 12, 2019, the Florida Supreme Court published Administrative Order AOSC19-19 which requires the chief judge of each judicial circuit to designate a judge with primary responsibility for handling Hague Convention cases filed within the circuit.

The Honorable Jack Helinger currently serves as the Family Law Division Administrative Judge for Pasco and Pinellas Counties. The Family Law Division includes Unified Family Court. The Honorable David Ellis currently serves as a Circuit Family Court Judge in Pasco County.

To create a unified process of how Hague Convention cases are handled, and to fulfill the requirements set forth by the Supreme Court of Florida, and in accordance with Article V, section 2, Florida Constitution, Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215, and section 43.26, Florida Statutes, it is

ORDERED:

1. In conformity with AOSC 19-19, Judge Ellis is hereby designated as the judge with primary responsibility for handling convention cases within the Sixth Judicial Circuit.
2. Any judge who receives a case or motion involving the Hague Convention, the International Child Abduction Remedies Act, or any case relating to sections 61.524 and 61.525 of the Florida Statutes shall notify the Family Law Division Administrative Judge immediately.
3. After review of the case, filings, and motions, the Family Law Division Administrative Judge shall refer the matter to Judge Ellis who will further handle and hear all matters filed that pertain to the Hague Convention.
4. In the event that Judge Ellis is not available to handle a specific Hague Convention matter within the time constraints presented, the Family Law Division Administrative Judge, or his or her

designee, shall rule on the matter until such time as Judge Ellis is able to address any other matter relating to sections 61.524 and 61.525, Florida Statutes.

5. No cases are to be reassigned based upon this Administrative Order. The case should only be transferred or reassigned in order to promote the efficient administration of justice.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers, at St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida this _____ day of May 2019.

ORIGINAL SIGNED ON MAY 10, 2019
BY ANTHONY RONDOLINO, CHIEF JUDGE

cc: All Judges
The Honorable Bernie McCabe, State Attorney
The Honorable Bob Dillinger, Public Defender
The Honorable Paula O'Neil, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Pasco County
The Honorable Ken Burke, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Pinellas County
The Honorable Chris Nocco, Sheriff, Pasco County
The Honorable Bob Gualtieri, Sheriff, Pinellas County
Gay Inskeep, Trial Courts Administrator
Ngozi Acholonu, Assistant Regional Counsel
Bar Associations, Pasco and Pinellas Counties
Law Libraries, Pasco and Pinellas Counties