

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER  
NO. 07-95-44-07

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND  
FOR ORANGE AND OSCEOLA  
COUNTIES, FLORIDA

**AMENDED ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER GOVERNING THE CHILD SUPPORT  
HEARING OFFICERS' GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES PURSUANT TO  
FAMILY LAW RULE OF PROCEDURE 12.491 AND PROCEDURES**

Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.491 applies to proceedings for the establishment, enforcement, or modification of child support, or the enforcement of any support order for the parent or other person entitled to receive child support in conjunction with an ongoing child support or child support arrearage order, when a party seeking support is receiving services pursuant to Title IV-D of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 651 et seq.) upon administrative order of the chief justice.

Rule 12.491(e) addresses the general powers and duties of child support enforcement hearing officers and empowers the hearing officers to issue process, administer oaths, require the production of documents, and conduct hearings for the purpose of taking evidence and states that the hearing officers do not have the authority to hear contested paternity cases.

Upon the receipt of a child support proceeding, the child support enforcement hearing officer shall:

- (1) assign a time and place for an appropriate hearing and give notice to each of the parties as may be required by law;
  - (2) take testimony and establish a record, which record may be by electronic means as provided by Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.535(h);
  - (3) accept voluntary acknowledgment of paternity and support liability and stipulated agreements setting the amount of support to be paid; and
  - (4) evaluate the evidence and promptly make a recommended order to the court.
- Such order shall set forth findings of fact.

Rule 12.491(a) states that rule 12.491 shall become effective only when specifically invoked by administrative order of the chief justice for use in a particular county or circuit. By Administrative Order dated February 27, 1998, the Supreme Court of Florida ordered that, pursuant to Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.491, hearing officers may be utilized in this Circuit to consider proceedings for the establishment, enforcement and modification of support in Title IV-D cases.

By the power vested in the chief judge under Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution, section 43.26, Florida Statutes, and Rule 2.215 of the Florida Rules of General

Practice and Judicial Administration, effective **May 7, 2026**, to continue until further order and superseding any provisions in prior Administrative Orders that may be inconsistent, it is **ORDERED**:

I. CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT.

The provisions of Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.491 governing child support enforcement hearing officers shall be followed and enforced in both Orange and Osceola Counties in the Ninth Judicial Circuit.

II. TITLE IV-D DEFINITION.

For purposes of this Administrative Order, a case retains the character of a Title IV-D case only so long as no Termination of Child Support Services has been filed. Once the Department of Revenue has withdrawn from providing Title IV-D services **and** filed a Termination of Child Support Services, the case is no longer considered a Title IV-D case and shall not be heard before the support hearing officers.

III. CHILD SUPPORT NOTICES OF HEARING/NON-JURY TRIAL.

A party shall provide timely notice to a child support hearing officer that a support proceeding requiring a hearing has been filed with the Clerk of Court. Please request a form notice of hearing if needed. The original notice shall be delivered to the hearing officer, together with sufficient copies of the notice for service to all parties and with stamped, addressed envelopes bearing the party's return address. No stamped envelopes are needed for litigants with designated email addresses.

The notice shall indicate the party's estimate of the length of time required for the hearing and shall not be set for less than the minimum time listed on the schedule of times. It is the responsibility of the party providing the Notice of Hearing to request adequate time for the motion or trial. The notice shall also contain a requested date and time for the hearing as appears to be available in the hearing officer's online calendaring program. The party providing the notice must coordinate the requested hearing time with any other counsel of record in the case.

Timely notice to the hearing officer requires that the notices and envelopes be provided to the hearing officer no less than 30 days before the requested hearing date and no less than 45 days before the requested trial date. For motions requiring an expedited hearing by law, the required notices must be provided no less than 10 days before the requested hearing date.

Upon receipt of the notice detailed above, the hearing officer shall assign a time and place for the hearing and give notice to each of the parties as may be required by law.

#### IV. SCHEDULE OF TIMES.

All motions shall be set for minimum of 15 minutes.

Non-jury trials on Petitions for Enforcement of Administrative Support Order and Petitions for Modification (to extend child support only) shall be set for minimum 15 minutes.

Non-jury trials for any other petition shall be set for minimum of one-half hour. If an interpreter will be needed and/or there are multiple calculations of support to be made, please adjust the requested time accordingly.

If you are delivering notices for multiple cases in Orange County, please provide the notices and envelopes separated by case and separated by the assigned hearing officer.

Effective May 7, 2026, the assignment of case numbers to the respective Child Support Hearing Officer are:

- **Child Support Hearing Officer Ferrer:** Cases ending in 0
- **Child Support Hearing Officer Bishop:** Cases ending in 1, 2, 3
- **Child Support Hearing Officer Lopez:** Cases ending in 4, 5, 6
- **Child Support Hearing Officer Morgan:** Cases ending in 7, 8, 9

To promote efficient and timely disposition of all IV-D child support cases, the Administrative Child Support Hearing Officer from time to time may assess the caseload of each hearing officer and direct that cases be set before the next available hearing officer (disregarding the case number assignments stated herein), whenever the need arises and for a certain period of time. Reassignment of case numbers to child support hearing officers may be communicated in writing to any interested parties by the Administrative Child Support Hearing Officer.

#### V. WRITS OF ATTACHMENT.

Persons arrested on warrants for failure to pay child support shall be brought before the Child Support Hearing Officer assigned to hear the 4-D warrants that day.

