

Rule 12.003. Coordination of Related Family Cases and Hearings

(a) Assignment to One Judge.

(1) All related family cases must be handled before one judge unless impractical.

(2) If it is impractical for one judge to handle all related family cases, the judges assigned to hear the related cases involving the same family and/or children may confer for the purpose of case management and coordination of the cases. Notice and communication shall comply with Canon 3.B.(7) of the Code of Judicial Conduct. The party who filed the notice of related cases or the court may coordinate a case management conference under rule 12.200 between the parties and the judges hearing the related cases. In addition to the issues that may be considered, the court shall:

(A) consolidate as many issues as is practical to be heard by one judge;

(B) coordinate the progress of the remaining issues to facilitate the resolution of the pending actions and to avoid inconsistent rulings;

(C) determine the attendance or participation of any minor child in the proceedings if the related cases include a juvenile action; and

(D) determine the access of the parties to court records if a related case is confidential pursuant to Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.420.

(b) Joint Hearings or Trials.

(1) The court may order joint hearings or trials of any issues in related family cases.

(2) For joint or coordinated hearings, notice to all parties and to all attorneys of record in each related case shall be provided by the court, the moving party, or other party as ordered by the court, regardless of whether or not the party providing notice is a party in every case number that will be called for hearing.