

IN THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

Administrative Order No.: 2018-014

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES FOR
ADOPTION OF A MINOR CHILD BY RELATIVE
(AND THE RELATIVE IS WITHIN THE THIRD DEGREE OF CONSANGUINITY)**

WHEREAS, the Florida Adoption Act, Chapter 63, Florida Statutes, provides a multitude of procedural and technical requirements designed to ensure that basic safeguards in adoption-related proceedings are met; and

WHEREAS, a policy is needed locally to adopt uniform procedures for filing documents, and to ensure that all parties adhere to the statutory requirements for relative adoption filings.

THEREFORE; this Court enters this administrative order concerning adoption of a minor by relative, and the relative is within the third degree of consanguinity, in which the adoptee is a minor. Effective immediately, the following procedures will be adhered to in all cases in which a party seeks to adopt a minor relative within the third degree of consanguinity.

1. When a petition is filed seeking entry of a Final Judgment of Adoption of a Minor Child by Relative, and the relative is within the third degree of consanguinity, it will be filed in the Family Law division and will be assigned a "DR" designation.
2. Pursuant to Chapter 63.162, Florida Statutes, "All hearings held in proceedings under this act shall be held in closed court without admittance of any person other than essential officers of the court, the parties, witnesses, counsel, persons who have not consented to the adoption and are required to consent, and representative of the agencies who are present to perform their official duties." Further, the entire court file shall be deemed confidential and only subject to inspection upon order of the court. The Clerk shall provide the adoptive parents certified copies of the Final Judgment of Adoption of a Minor Child by Relative and shall not release it from the court file for recording in the official records.

3. Pending approval of the final or revised interim forms, the attached forms are approved for use in the Third Judicial Circuit. Each petition distributed by the Clerk's Office shall also include a checklist.

DONE AND ORDERED in Columbia County, Florida on November, 26 2018.



WESLEY R. DOUGLAS, CHIEF JUDGE
Third Judicial Circuit

cc (with enclosures):

Judges – Third Judicial Circuit
Clerks of Court – Third Judicial Circuit
Family Court Support Unit
John Lake – Court Technology Officer (web posting)