

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to court actions involving families;  
 3           amending ss. 39.001, 61.001, 63.022, 68.07, 741.2902,  
 4           984.01, and 985.02, F.S., and creating ss. 88.1041,  
 5           742.016, 743.001, and 1003.201, F.S.; providing additional  
 6           purposes relating to implementing a unified family court  
 7           program in the circuit courts; providing legislative  
 8           intent; providing an effective date.

9  
 10   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 12           Section 1. Paragraph (o) is added to subsection (1) of  
 13           section 39.001, Florida Statutes, to read:

14           39.001 Purposes and intent; personnel standards and  
 15           screening.--

16           (1) PURPOSES OF CHAPTER.--The purposes of this chapter  
 17           are:

18           (o) To provide all children and families with a fully  
 19           integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that  
 20           involve children and families and a resolution of family  
 21           disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective  
 22           manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of  
 23           this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not  
 24           cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who  
 25           are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the  
 26           intent of the Legislature to support the development of a  
 27           unified family court and to support the efforts of the state  
 28           courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving

29 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive  
 30 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept  
 31 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for  
 32 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute  
 33 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal  
 34 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the  
 35 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'  
 36 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide  
 37 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better  
 38 condition than when the families entered the system.

39 Section 2. Subsection (2) of section 61.001, Florida  
 40 Statutes, is amended to read:

41 61.001 Purpose of chapter.--

42 (2) Its purposes are:

43 (a) To preserve the integrity of marriage and to safeguard  
 44 meaningful family relationships. ~~†~~

45 (b) To promote the amicable settlement of disputes that  
 46 arise between parties to a marriage. ~~† and~~

47 (c) To mitigate the potential harm to the spouses and  
 48 their children caused by the process of legal dissolution of  
 49 marriage.

50 (d) To provide all children and families with a fully  
 51 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that  
 52 involve children and families and a resolution of family  
 53 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective  
 54 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of  
 55 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not  
 56 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who

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57 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the  
58 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a  
59 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state  
60 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving  
61 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive  
62 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept  
63 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for  
64 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute  
65 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal  
66 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the  
67 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'  
68 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide  
69 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better  
70 condition than when the families entered the system.

71 Section 3. Subsection (6) is added to section 63.022,  
72 Florida Statutes, to read:

73 63.022 Legislative intent.--

74 (6) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide all  
75 children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive  
76 approach to handling all cases that involve children and  
77 families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely,  
78 efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the  
79 Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of  
80 resolving disputes that do not cause additional emotional harm  
81 to the children and families who are required to interact with  
82 the judicial system. It is the intent of the Legislature to  
83 support the development of a unified family court and to support  
84 the efforts of the state courts system to improve the resolution

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85 of disputes involving children and families through a fully  
86 integrated, comprehensive approach that includes coordinated  
87 case management; the concept of "one family, one judge";  
88 collaboration with the community for referral to needed  
89 services; and methods of alternative dispute resolution. The  
90 Legislature supports the goal that the legal system focus on the  
91 needs of children who are involved in the litigation, refer  
92 families to resources that will make families' relationships  
93 stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide consistent  
94 results, and strive to leave families in better condition than  
95 when the families entered the system.

96 Section 4. Subsection (9) is added to section 68.07,  
97 Florida Statutes, to read:

98 68.07 Change of name.--

99 (9) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide all  
100 children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive  
101 approach to handling all cases that involve children and  
102 families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely,  
103 efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the  
104 Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of  
105 resolving disputes that do not cause additional emotional harm  
106 to the children and families who are required to interact with  
107 the judicial system. It is the intent of the Legislature to  
108 support the development of a unified family court and to support  
109 the efforts of the state courts system to improve the resolution  
110 of disputes involving children and families through a fully  
111 integrated, comprehensive approach that includes coordinated  
112 case management; the concept of "one family, one judge";

113 collaboration with the community for referral to needed  
 114 services; and methods of alternative dispute resolution. The  
 115 Legislature supports the goal that the legal system focus on the  
 116 needs of children who are involved in the litigation, refer  
 117 families to resources that will make families' relationships  
 118 stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide consistent  
 119 results, and strive to leave families in better condition than  
 120 when the families entered the system.

121 Section 5. Section 88.1041, Florida Statutes, is created  
 122 to read:

123 88.1041 Legislative intent.--It is the intent of the  
 124 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully  
 125 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that  
 126 involve children and families and a resolution of family  
 127 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective  
 128 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of  
 129 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not  
 130 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who  
 131 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the  
 132 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a  
 133 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state  
 134 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving  
 135 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive  
 136 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept  
 137 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for  
 138 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute  
 139 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal  
 140 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the

141 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'  
142 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide  
143 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better  
144 condition than when the families entered the system.

145 Section 6. Subsection (3) is added to section 741.2902,  
146 Florida Statutes, to read:

147 741.2902 Domestic violence; legislative intent with  
148 respect to judiciary's role.--

149 (3) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide all  
150 children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive  
151 approach to handling all cases that involve children and  
152 families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely,  
153 efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the  
154 Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of  
155 resolving disputes that do not cause additional emotional harm  
156 to the children and families who are required to interact with  
157 the judicial system as long as such methods do not conflict with  
158 the legislative intent expressed in subsections (1) and (2). It  
159 is the intent of the Legislature to support the development of a  
160 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state  
161 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving  
162 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive  
163 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept  
164 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for  
165 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute  
166 resolution. Case management or alternative dispute resolution  
167 processes must comply with existing laws and court rules  
168 governing the use of mediation, case management, and alternative

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169 dispute resolution in cases involving injunctions for protection  
170 brought under this chapter. The Legislature supports the goal  
171 that the legal system focus on the needs of children who are  
172 involved in the litigation, refer families to resources that  
173 will make families' relationships stronger, coordinate families'  
174 cases to provide consistent results, and strive to leave  
175 families in better condition than when the families entered the  
176 system.

177 Section 7. Section 742.016, Florida Statutes, is created  
178 to read:

179 742.016 Legislative intent.--It is the intent of the  
180 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully  
181 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that  
182 involve children and families and a resolution of family  
183 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective  
184 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of  
185 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not  
186 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who  
187 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the  
188 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a  
189 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state  
190 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving  
191 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive  
192 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept  
193 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for  
194 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute  
195 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal  
196 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the

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197 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'  
198 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide  
199 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better  
200 condition than when the families entered the system.

201 Section 8. Section 743.001, Florida Statutes, is created  
202 to read:

203 743.001 Legislative intent.--It is the intent of the  
204 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully  
205 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that  
206 involve children and families and a resolution of family  
207 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective  
208 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of  
209 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not  
210 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who  
211 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the  
212 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a  
213 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state  
214 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving  
215 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive  
216 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept  
217 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for  
218 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute  
219 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal  
220 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the  
221 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'  
222 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide  
223 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better  
224 condition than when the families entered the system.



225 Section 9. Paragraph (g) is added to subsection (1) of  
 226 section 984.01, Florida Statutes, to read:

227 984.01 Purposes and intent; personnel standards and  
 228 screening.--

229 (1) The purposes of this chapter are:

230 (g) To provide all children and families with a fully  
 231 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that  
 232 involve children and families and a resolution of family  
 233 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective  
 234 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of  
 235 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not  
 236 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who  
 237 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the  
 238 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a  
 239 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state  
 240 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving  
 241 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive  
 242 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept  
 243 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for  
 244 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute  
 245 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal  
 246 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the  
 247 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'  
 248 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide  
 249 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better  
 250 condition than when the families entered the system.

251 Section 10. Paragraph (j) is added to subsection (1) of  
 252 section 985.02, Florida Statutes, to read:

253 985.02 Legislative intent for the juvenile justice  
254 system.--

255 (1) GENERAL PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN.--It is a purpose of  
256 the Legislature that the children of this state be provided with  
257 the following protections:

258 (j) A fully integrated, comprehensive approach to handling  
259 all cases that involve children and families and a resolution of  
260 family disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective  
261 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of  
262 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not  
263 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who  
264 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the  
265 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a  
266 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state  
267 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving  
268 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive  
269 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept  
270 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for  
271 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute  
272 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal  
273 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the  
274 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'  
275 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide  
276 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better  
277 condition than when the families entered the system. This  
278 section may not be construed to contravene legislative intent  
279 provided in this chapter relating to protecting the public from  
280 acts of delinquency, ensuring that juveniles found to have

281 committed a delinquent act understand the consequences and  
282 serious nature of such behavior, and transferring juveniles from  
283 the juvenile justice system to the adult system as provided in  
284 this chapter.

285 Section 11. Section 1003.201, Florida Statutes, is created  
286 to read:

287 1003.201 Legislative intent.--It is the intent of the  
288 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully  
289 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that  
290 involve children and families and a resolution of family  
291 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective  
292 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of  
293 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes that do not  
294 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who  
295 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the  
296 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a  
297 unified family court and to support the efforts of the state  
298 courts system to improve the resolution of disputes involving  
299 children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive  
300 approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept  
301 of "one family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for  
302 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute  
303 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal  
304 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the  
305 litigation, refer families to resources that will make families'  
306 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide  
307 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better  
308 condition than when the families entered the system.

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309           Section 12. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
310 law.