

By the Committees on Judiciary; and Children, Families, and Elder Affairs; and Senators Rich, Wise, Storms, and Baker

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to court actions involving families; amending ss. 39.001, 61.001, 63.022, 68.07, 984.01, and 985.01, F.S., and creating ss. 88.1041, 742.016, 743.001, and 1003.201, F.S.; providing additional purposes relating to implementing a unified family court program in the circuit courts; providing legislative intent; providing an effective date.

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

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

39.001 Purposes and intent; personnel standards and screening.—

(1) PURPOSES OF CHAPTER.—The purposes of this chapter are:

(o) To provide all children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that involve children and families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of resolving disputes which do not cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the intent of the Legislature to support the development of a unified family court and to support the state court system's efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one

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30 family, one judge”; collaboration with the community for
31 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
32 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
33 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
34 litigation, refer families to resources that will make family
35 relationships stronger, coordinate families’ cases to provide
36 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
37 condition than when the families entered the system.

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

40 61.001 Purpose of chapter.—

41 (2) Its purposes are:

42 (a) To preserve the integrity of marriage and to safeguard
43 meaningful family relationships;

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

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

49 (d) To provide all children and families with a fully
50 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
51 involve children and families and a resolution of family
52 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
53 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
54 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes which do not
55 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
56 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
57 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
58 unified family court and to support the state court system’s

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

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

72 63.022 Legislative intent.—

73 (6) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide all
74 children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive
75 approach to handling all cases that involve children and
76 families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely,
77 efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the
78 Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of
79 resolving disputes which do not cause additional emotional harm
80 to the children and families who are required to interact with
81 the judicial system. It is the intent of the Legislature to
82 support the development of a unified family court and to support
83 the state court system's efforts to improve the resolution of
84 disputes involving children and families through a fully
85 integrated, comprehensive approach that includes coordinated
86 case management; the concept of "one family, one judge";
87 collaboration with the community for referral to needed

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88 services; and methods of alternative dispute resolution. The
89 Legislature supports the goal that the legal system focus on the
90 needs of children who are involved in the litigation, refer
91 families to resources that will make family relationships
92 stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide consistent
93 results, and strive to leave families in better condition than
94 when the families entered the system.

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

97 68.07 Change of name.—

98 (9) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide all
99 children and families with a fully integrated, comprehensive
100 approach to handling all cases that involve children and
101 families and a resolution of family disputes in a fair, timely,
102 efficient, and cost-effective manner. It is the intent of the
103 Legislature that the courts of this state embrace methods of
104 resolving disputes which do not cause additional emotional harm
105 to the children and families who are required to interact with
106 the judicial system. It is the intent of the Legislature to
107 support the development of a unified family court and to support
108 the state court system's efforts to improve the resolution of
109 disputes involving children and families through a fully
110 integrated, comprehensive approach that includes coordinated
111 case management; the concept of "one family, one judge";
112 collaboration with the community for referral to needed
113 services; and methods of alternative dispute resolution. The
114 Legislature supports the goal that the legal system focus on the
115 needs of children who are involved in the litigation, refer
116 families to resources that will make family relationships

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117 stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide consistent
118 results, and strive to leave families in better condition than
119 when the families entered the system.

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

122 88.1041 Legislative intent.—It is the intent of the
123 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully
124 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
125 involve children and families and a resolution of family
126 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
127 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
128 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes which do not
129 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
130 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
131 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
132 unified family court and to support the state court system's
133 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
134 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
135 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
136 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
137 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
138 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
139 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
140 litigation, refer families to resources that will make family
141 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
142 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
143 condition than when the families entered the system.

144 Section 6. Section 742.016, Florida Statutes, is created to
145 read:

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146 742.016 Legislative intent.—It is the intent of the
147 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully
148 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
149 involve children and families and a resolution of family
150 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
151 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
152 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes which do not
153 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
154 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
155 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
156 unified family court and to support the state court system's
157 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
158 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
159 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
160 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
161 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
162 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
163 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
164 litigation, refer families to resources that will make family
165 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
166 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
167 condition than when the families entered the system.

168 Section 7. Section 743.001, Florida Statutes, is created to
169 read:

170 743.001 Legislative intent.—It is the intent of the
171 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully
172 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
173 involve children and families and a resolution of family
174 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective

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175 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
176 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes which do not
177 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
178 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
179 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
180 unified family court and to support the state court system's
181 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
182 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
183 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
184 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
185 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
186 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
187 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
188 litigation, refer families to resources that will make family
189 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
190 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
191 condition than when the families entered the system.

192 Section 8. Paragraph (g) is added to subsection (1) of
193 section 984.01, Florida Statutes, to read:

194 984.01 Purposes and intent; personnel standards and
195 screening.—

196 (1) The purposes of this chapter are:

197 (g) To provide all children and families with a fully
198 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that
199 involve children and families and a resolution of family
200 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
201 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
202 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes which do not
203 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who

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204 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
205 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
206 unified family court and to support the state court system's
207 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
208 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
209 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
210 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
211 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
212 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
213 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
214 litigation, refer families to resources that will make family
215 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
216 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
217 condition than when the families entered the system.

218 Section 9. Paragraph (e) of subsection (1) of section
219 985.01, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

220 985.01 Purposes and intent.—

221 (1) The purposes of this chapter are:

222 (e)1. To assure that the adjudication and disposition of a
223 child alleged or found to have committed a violation of Florida
224 law be exercised with appropriate discretion and in keeping with
225 the seriousness of the offense and the need for treatment
226 services, and that all findings made under this chapter be based
227 upon facts presented at a hearing that meets the constitutional
228 standards of fundamental fairness and due process.

229 2. To assure that the sentencing and placement of a child
230 tried as an adult be appropriate and in keeping with the
231 seriousness of the offense and the child's need for
232 rehabilitative services, and that the proceedings and procedures

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233 applicable to such sentencing and placement be applied within
234 the full framework of constitutional standards of fundamental
235 fairness and due process.

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

257 Section 10. Section 1003.201, Florida Statutes, is created
258 to read:

259 1003.201 Legislative intent.—It is the intent of the
260 Legislature to provide all children and families with a fully
261 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that

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262 involve children and families and a resolution of family
263 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective
264 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of
265 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes which do not
266 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who
267 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the
268 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a
269 unified family court and to support the state court system's
270 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children
271 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach
272 that includes coordinated case management; the concept of "one
273 family, one judge"; collaboration with the community for
274 referral to needed services; and methods of alternative dispute
275 resolution. The Legislature supports the goal that the legal
276 system focus on the needs of children who are involved in the
277 litigation, refer families to resources that will make family
278 relationships stronger, coordinate families' cases to provide
279 consistent results, and strive to leave families in better
280 condition than when the families entered the system.

281 Section 11. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.
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