

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

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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, 984.01,  
4 and 985.01, F.S., and creating ss. 88.1041, 742.016,  
5 743.001, and 1003.201, F.S.; providing additional  
6 purposes relating to implementing a unified family  
7 court program in the circuit courts; providing  
8 legislative intent; providing an effective date.

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

11  
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 are:

17 (o) To provide all children and families with a fully  
18 integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases that  
19 involve children and families and a resolution of family  
20 disputes in a fair, timely, efficient, and cost-effective  
21 manner. It is the intent of the Legislature that the courts of  
22 this state embrace methods of resolving disputes which do not  
23 cause additional emotional harm to the children and families who  
24 are required to interact with the judicial system. It is the  
25 intent of the Legislature to support the development of a  
26 unified family court and to support the state court system's  
27 efforts to improve the resolution of disputes involving children  
28 and families through a fully integrated, comprehensive approach  
29 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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