

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTEENTH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

Administrative Order 2019-47-UFC

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER ESTABLISHING “RISE” COURT
RESTORING INDEPENDENCE, STRENGTH, AND EMPOWERMENT**

- (a) Pursuant to Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution and section 43.26, Florida Statutes, the chief judge of each judicial circuit is charged with the authority and power to do everything necessary to promote the prompt and efficient administration of justice.
- (b) Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215(b)(3) states the chief judge “shall, considering available resources, ensure the efficient and proper administration of all courts within [this] circuit.”
- (c) The Florida Supreme Court in *In re Report of Family Court Steering Comm.*, 794 So. 2d 518 (Fla. 2001), endorsed the guiding principles and characteristics of the model family court developed by the Family Court Steering Committee and reaffirmed its goal of the creation of a fully, integrated, comprehensive approach to handling all cases involving children and families.
- (d) Pursuant to the Supreme Court’s endorsement, the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit has adopted and routinely updates a Unified Family Court Plan, which delineates procedures to ensure a comprehensive coordinated approach to family law matters coming before the court.
- (e) The Circuit, in coordination with various stakeholders in the family court community, determines it necessary to establish procedures for the expeditious and efficient provision of services for children known or suspected of being a victim of human trafficking as defined in section 787.06(2)(d), Florida Statutes.
- (f) Consistent with legislative intent, specialized training and expertise of the judiciary is required in order to appropriately handle cases involving victims of human trafficking, and the supervision of these cases to a single judge will allow for all available services to be utilized for the children’s benefit and an extensive approach to be used to appropriately handle cases involving a child known or suspected of being a victim of human trafficking.

(g) In accordance with the authority vested in the chief judge by Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution, section 43.26, Florida Statutes, and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215, it is hereby **ORDERED, effective July 1, 2019:**

(1) There is created in the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit a specialized division within the dependency and delinquency divisions of the Unified Family Court to be known as “RISE” Court. “RISE” stands for “Restoring Independence, Strength, and Empowerment.” Circuit Judge Stacy Ross is designated to serve as the presiding RISE Court Judge.

(2) To be eligible for RISE Court

- i. The child must have been adjudicated dependent pursuant to section 39.01(15), Florida Statutes and 39.507, Florida Statutes, or adjudicated as a child in need of services pursuant to sections 984.03(9) and 984.21, Florida Statutes; AND
- ii. The child is suspected of currently being or having been a victim of human trafficking or has a verified report of human trafficking as documented by law enforcement or a child protective investigator.

(3) The judges assigned to a dependency division shall identify children whose case may be appropriate for RISE Court using the above criteria. Such criteria is not exhaustive or mandatory, and each dependency division judge shall utilize his or her discretion and confer with the RISE Court Judge to determine whether RISE Court is appropriate for a child.

(4) Upon identifying a child eligible for RISE Court, the presiding judge shall:

- i. Review the case with the RISE Court Judge to confirm eligibility and availability.
- ii. Inform all interested parties and counsel that the child satisfies the criteria for participation in RISE Court.
- iii. Inform all parties that all future hearings regarding the victim child’s services will be heard by the RISE Court Judge. If any party has a legal objection to supervision of the child’s services by the RISE Court Judge, the presiding judge shall hold a hearing to consider the objection and determine whether the child meets the criteria set forth in this Administrative Order.

- iv. Assure that an attorney ad litem has been appointed for the child pursuant to section 39.01305(3)(e), Florida Statutes.
- v. Schedule a status hearing to be held before the RISE Court Judge within twenty (20) business days.

(5) The RISE Court Judge is only to hear matters relating to the child or children suspected of being a victim of human trafficking. All other matters pertaining to the child and family, including any siblings not known or suspected of being a victim of human trafficking, shall remain with the originating dependency division. This includes, but is not limited to, judicial review hearings, permanency hearings, and termination of parental rights proceedings. If the identified child has a pending delinquency case, the delinquency case shall be transferred to Division JB.

(6) All divisions within the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit shall work cooperatively together to ensure that multiple judicial determinations concerning a single family do not conflict with one another.

(7) This Administrative Order is a companion to Administrative Order 2019-17-UFC, as such may be amended from time to time, and this Administrative Order shall prevail in the event of any conflict with Administrative Order 2019-17-UFC.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, this 27th day of June, 2019.

/s/ Jack Tuter
Jack Tuter, Chief Judge