

Family Court Services

Description of Services

Lawson E. Thomas, Courthouse Center
175 N.W. 1st Avenue, Suite 1503, Miami, FL, 33128
Tel.: (305) 349-5508; Fax: (305) 349-5634

Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Supervised Visitation/Exchanges: Mondays/Wednesdays 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Saturdays 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Closed Sundays and County holidays

Mission: The coordination of supportive services to families in response to judicial orders to promote the resolution of family conflicts and thereby reduce the number of judicial hearings. *Through a process that focuses upon solutions rather than conflicts, parents most often reach understandings and resolve issues together. Support is given to the family system with particular sensitivity to children.*

Program Participation: Family Court Services participants are referred to the Unit through the Family Division, Domestic Violence Division, Unified Family Court, and General Magistrates. An order of referral must be signed and a copy forwarded to Family Court Services in order to facilitate the activation of an office file. The parties are required to contact the Unit within 5 working days for the provision of initial data or the court will be noticed of non-compliance.

Crisis Assistance	Provide Rapid, transitory response when the judiciary finds that an issue requires urgent attention such as when imminent danger to parent or child might exist
Alienation/ Reunification	Explore and assist with parental alienation and/or feelings of estrangement experienced by a child toward a parent while attempting to reestablish the relationship
Child/Family Assistance	Assistance with issues immediately affecting the welfare of the children through interviews with family members and through observations of their relationship with each other
Co-parenting	Short term parenting coordination and re-education that emphasizes improvement of joint parenting skills and communication; referrals to community agencies/professionals for counseling may be provided.
Marital Reconciliation	Assists parents in clarifying parties' motivation to separate/divorce and provides referral as needed.
Time-sharing issues/ Schedule	Addressing the parties' issues regarding the sharing of their child(ren), assisting parties in the clarification of an existing time-sharing plan and/or the development of a more meaningful arrangement
Parenting Coordination (for indigent)	Designation of parenting coordinator to assist the parties in the facilitation of their parenting plan, monitor compliance of court orders, and provide referrals to community resources as needed (6 meetings per order)
Supervised Visitation/ Monitored Exchanges	Observation of and/or assistance in optimal time between parent/grand-parent and child in a friendly environment when the physical and/or emotional welfare of child may be otherwise threatened
Community Referral	Assists in the referrals to community agencies and/or private professionals for counseling, extended co-parenting, parenting classes, psychological/psych evaluations, parenting coordination, and DNA testing
Social Investigation	Home Study facilitated(standardized Order for Social Investigation <u>must</u> accompany referral to FCS)
Substance Abuse Testing	The Village is available to administer drug tests and breathalyzer by separate court order.

Note: Cases with active Domestic Violence Injunctions are not to be referred to FCS for joint counseling or co-parenting.

Documentation: Family Court Services reports to the Court upon completion of the intervention, or as necessary, according to specific needs of the case. Please inform FCS of upcoming relevant hearings so that appropriate documentation may be provided.