STATE OF MICHIGAN

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTIES OF DICKINSON, IRON & MENOMINEE

FAMILY COURT PLAN FOR THE 41ST CIRCUIT COURT AND THE DICKINSON, IRON & MENOMINEE PROBATE COURTS

LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

Circuit Court Joint Local Administrative Order 2026-02J

Dickinson Probate Court Joint Local Administrative Order 2026-01J

Menominee Probate Court Joint Local Administrative Order 2026-01J

Iron County Trial Court Order 2026-01J

Recinds Circuit Court Joint Local Administrative Order 2025-04J

Recinds Dickinson Probate Court Joint Local Administrative Order 2025-01J

Recinds Menominee Probate Court Joint Local Administrative Order 2025-01J

Recinds Iron County Trial Court Order 2025-01J

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Authority. Pursuant to MCL 600.1011, as amended by 2002 PA 682, each judicial circuit is required to establish a family court plan (FCP or "the Plan"). Supreme Court Administrative Order 2003-2 requires the family court plan to be submitted for approval to the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) for filing in accordance with the statute and guidelines provided by the SCAO. The chief circuit judge and the chief probate judge shall enter into an agreement establishing how the family division will be operated in the circuit and how the services will be coordinated. The chief judge of the circuit court has the authority to determine the duration of a judge's service pursuant to the family court plan in furtherance of this goal.

B. Goals. The goal(s) of this FCP are described below. This plan has been developed to accomplish the one family-one judge" to allow for consistency & predictability for families as much as possible.

C. Operation. This FCP supersedes prior plans that have been approved for the operation of the family division. This Plan will be reviewed and revised as necessary including when family division judicial assignments change, and at least every 2 years, by the chief judge and probate judges to ensure that the Plan meets the statutory requirements and complies with the Family Court Plan Requirements and Guidelines provided by the SCAO.

II ADMINISTRATION

A. JUDICIAL RESOURCES/SERVICE

1. Family Division Judges. All judges assigned to the family division have expressed an interest in overseeing family law cases through the end of their term. (See Appendix A for the list of Family Division Judges along with the length of their anticipated terms on the family division bench and an explanation of their length of service in the family division).

2. Judicial Expertise. Each judge listed in Appendix A will continue training consistent with MCJE rules, and is encouraged to attend training that informs the position and current skill set. Training opportunities are provided by the Michigan Judicial Institute (MJI) under MCL 600.1019). All judges have current expertise, both from the bench and from prior practice.

3. Judicial Service. All judges in "the Plan" will serve full time in the family division, under MCL 600.1011(3) as well as handling the other non-family cases that are within their respective jurisdictions.

B. ASSIGNMENT OF CASES

Cases involving members of the same family (aka "one family-one judge") is defined as "When 2 or more matters within the same jurisdiction of the family division of circuit court involving members of the same family are pending in the same judicial circuit, those matters, whenever practicable, shall be assigned to the judge to whom the first case was assigned." (MCL 600.1023) The term "whenever practicable" is not defined in the statute but generally means to the greatest extent possible to further the goals of the family court plan described in section 1(B).

1. Case Assignment. Cases will not be assigned by lot. Assignment and reassignment of cases shall be handled as outlined in the joint Case Assignment Local Administrative Order for the courts in the 41st Circuit.
   The Court Clerk in each county will be responsible for ensuring proper assignment of cases consistent with the current Local Administrative Order for Case Assignment.

2. One Family-One Judge. The Family Division Plan will promote the one family-one judge concept to the extent possible. However, the work load of the Family Division will be divided to ensure no one judge is overburdened. Timeliness of hearings and expertise are important to court users and these factors are considered when dividing the cases.

3. Prior Matters. When cases or motions are filed, the clerk's office shall review the case inventory and court records to see if the family, as defined herein, has a prior pending matter, as defined herein. The only exceptions to this are: 1) Personal Protection Orders (PH, PP, PJ,

PW) which shall remain with the original judge assigned in the event a case involving members of the same family is filed subsequent to the PPO and 2) Extreme Risk Protection Orders (EV, EP, and ER), which are assigned consistent with the 41st Circuit Court Extreme Risk Protection Immediate Emergency Ex Parte Availability Plan (Administrative Order (2024-002).

4. Case Types. The primary case types of the family division are AB, AC, AD, AF, AG, AM, AN, AO, AU, AY, DC, DJ, DL, DM, DO, DP, DS, DZ, EE, EJ, EM, EP, ER, EV, EZ, FH (only felony, non-payment of child support), ID, JA, JG, NA, NB, PH, PJ, PP, PW, TL, UE, UF, UI, UM, UN, VF, and VP. The ancillary case types that may be included in the Plan, if concurrent jurisdiction plans or other court configurations require it are CA, CY, DD, GA, GL, GM, JA, LG, MI, NC, and PO.

5. Concurrent Cases. Assignments as outlined herein and in the 41st Circuit Case Assignment Local Administrative Order (incorporated herein by reference) supports the "one family-one judge" requirement for concurrent cases. The only exceptions are outlined in Paragraph II (B)(3) above.

C. REASSIGNMENT OF CASES

1. Disqualifications. Disqualifications will first be handled as described under MCR 8.111(C)(1). Cases must be reassigned first within the court's family division, then within the remaining bench, and finally by SCAO assignment.

2. Transfer. In the event a family division judge's service or term ends, that judge's unresolved cases will be reassigned to the successor judge.

3. Dispute. Any dispute on proper reassignment shall be resolved by the chief judge of the 41st Circuit in consultation with the other presiding judges of the family court.

D. STAFFING AND FACILITIES

1. Administrative Structure. A family division organizational chart is included as Appendix A. The following staff serve in the family division of their respective counties and assist in the meeting the goals of the Family Court Plan as described in this LAO.

    a. Family Court Staff in Dickinson County Courts assisting with this Family Court Plan:
        1. Probate/Family Court:
            a. Chief Juvenile Officer
            b. Intensive Juvenile Officer/Community Based Services Coordinator

        2. Circuit Court: Friend of the Court Office

a. Director, Friend of the Court
b. Caseworker-Child Support
c. Caseworker-Child Support
d. Caseworker-Paternity Specialist

b. Family Court Staff in Iron County Trial Courts assisting with this Family Court Plan:
   1. Probate/Family Court:
      a. Chief Juvenile Officer
      b. Juvenile Officer

   2. Circuit Court: Friend of the Court Office
      a. Director, Friend of the Court
      b. Caseworker-Paternity Specialist
      c. Caseworker-Paternity Specialist

c. Family Court Staff Menominee County Courts assisting with this Family Court Plan:
   1. Probate/Family Court:
      a. Chief Juvenile Officer
      b. Juvenile Probation Officer

   2. Circuit Court: Friend of the Court Office
      a. Director, Friend of the Court
      b. Caseworker-Child Support
      c. Caseworker-Child Support
      d. Caseworker-Custody/Parenting Time

2. Remote Proceedings. Remote proceedings for family court cases shall comply with MCR 2.408.

3. Facilities. The facilities provided under the Family Court Plan to further the goals of the Family Court Plan are the courtrooms and attorney-client meeting spaces in the courthouse. The 41st Circuit does not have facilities for childcare during hearings/meetings nor for supervised parenting time. Regular meetings with the judges in the Family Court Plan are held, at least annually, to discuss facilities and other Family Court Plan related issues. The three-courthouse buildings in the 41st Circuit Family Court Plan have no room for additional services and the county boards are not inclined to approve any improvements.

E. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

1. Clerks of the Court. The County Clerk of the respective County is designated as the Clerk of the Court for the Family Division. The County Clerk's office in each county shall serve as the central access point in each county to provide the public and bar information regarding the family division and related activities. The staff of the Juvenile Courts and the Probate Judges shall assist the Clerk's office, if necessary, in providing such information. All Juvenile and other court documents which were previously in the jurisdiction of the juvenile court will continue to

be filed in the juvenile court offices. All other family division matters will be filed with the County Clerk as has been the practice. After initial implementation of the family division, it was agreed by the Clerk and the courts that there was insufficient space or personnel to accommodate a transfer of all files or filings.

2. Plan Development. The County Clerks have been afforded the opportunity to participate in the development of plans for management of court records. Any letter of concurrence or disagreement with the Plan authored by the County Clerk regarding management of court records shall be submitted to the SCAO with the submission of the Family Court Plan for approval.

3. Filing. Filing of documents, pleadings, and case scheduling information shall be with the county clerk or the probate court clerk, depending upon where those files are kept and as described in paragraph E) 1) above.

4. Access Point. The County Clerk's office in each county shall serve as the central access point in each county to provide the public and bar information regarding the family division and related activities. The staff of the Juvenile Courts and the Probate Judges shall assist the Clerk's office, if necessary, in providing such information.

5. Internal Transfer. This provision is inapplicable because the files stay with the respective county clerk regardless of the judicial assignment.

6. Technological Access. The files may be available to judges in OnBase. In the alternative, the family division judges walk down the hall or stairway and retrieve the files or have their staff retrieve the physical file in paper form.

7. Public Access. This FCP will be posted on the court's website and is otherwise publicly available upon request.

Date: 10-19-26

Mary B Barglind

Mary B. Barglind, Chief Judge

Date: 10-08-2026

Thomas Slagle, Probate Court Judge

Date: _____

_____

Donald Powell, Iron Co. Trial Court Judge

Date: 10-12-26

Daniel S Hass P37233

Daniel Hass, Menominee Co. Probate Court Judge

Date: 10/19/26

Donald Powell, Iron Co. Trial Court Judge

Date: _____

Daniel Hass, Menominee Co. Probate Court Judge

APPENDIX A

Circuit Judges

41st Circuit Court, Chief Judge:	The Honorable Mary B. Barglind *term expires January 1, 2029
41st Circuit Court Judge:	The Honorable Christopher S. Ninomiya *term expires January 1, 2027

Presiding Family Division Judges

Dickinson County Probate Court:	The Honorable Thomas D. Slagle *term expires January 1, 2031
Iron County Trial Court:	The Honorable Donald S. Powell *term expires January 1, 2031
Menominee County Probate Court:	The Honorable Daniel E. Hass *term expires January 1, 2031

*The terms of the Judges in the Family Court Plan will be extended upon reelection, unless the Family Court Plan is otherwise modified.

**The Judges serving in this Family Court Plan have been serving in the family division their entire terms of office:

Judge Mary B. Barglind- from January, 1999
Judge Christopher S. Ninomiya- from January, 2018
Judge Thomas D. Slagle- from March, 2004
Judge Donald S. Powell- from January, 2019
Judge Daniel E. Hass- from September, 2015

41st Circuit Court Family Division

