

Ita M. Neymotin, Regional Counsel
Office of Regional Counsel, Second District
2000 Main Street, Suite 500
Fort Myers, FL 33901
Email: ineymotin@flrc2.org
VIA UPS No. 1Z64589FP290637076

Mark P. Brewer, Asst. Regional Counsel
Office of Regional Counsel, Second District
1991 Main Street - Suite 216
Sarasota, FL 34236-5960
Email: mbrewer@flrc2.org
VIA UPS No. 1Z64589FP293371482

TODAY'S DATE: October 7, 2015

Regional Counsel Ms. Neymotin, and Asst. Regional Counsel Mr. Brewer:

Enclosed you will find my correspondence with James Gerstenlauer, Circuit Executive, United States Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit. Addendum Five to the local rules for the Eleventh Circuit provides for a Non-Criminal Justice Act Counsel Appointment. My letter concerns the procedure for a qualified person to obtain a Non-Criminal Justice Act Counsel Appointment.

Earlier today I emailed this to each of you, but the emails were rejected with this message:

Could not deliver message to the following recipient(s):

Failed Recipient: ineymotin@flrc2.org

Reason: Remote host said: 550 5.7.1 Your email has been rejected because it violates organization policy.

5.7.1 Please contact Clay Oberhausen 813-777-2512 if you have any
5.7.1 questions. v64si2650996ywg.289 - gsmtip

Failed Recipient: mbrewer@flrc2.org

Reason: Remote host said: 550 5.7.1 Your email has been rejected because it violates organization policy.

5.7.1 Please contact Clay Oberhausen 813-777-2512 if you have any
5.7.1 questions. v64si2650996ywg.289 - gsmtip

I am not able to contact Clay Oberhausen at 813-777-2512 until I receive authorization from him and Regional Counsel Neymotin to record the phone call, and have an agreement with the Office of the Regional Counsel for the Second District to pay for a transcript of the recorded phone call.

Otherwise I expect a response in writing from Regional Counsel Ms. Neymotin within 10 days. After that time I will proceed accordingly. Thank you in advance for the courtesy of a response.

Sincerely,



Neil J. Gillespie
8092 SW 115th Loop
Ocala, Florida 34481

Tel. 352-854-7807
Email: neilgillespie@mfi.net
Enclosures - Gerstenlauer letter and email; bounced email

Neil Gillespie

From: <System Administrator>
To: <neilgillespie@mfi.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 07, 2015 11:21 AM
Subject: Delivery Failure

Could not deliver message to the following recipient(s):

Failed Recipient: ineymotin@flrc2.org

Reason: Remote host said: 550 5.7.1 Your email has been rejected because it violates organization policy.

5.7.1 Please contact Clay Oberhausen 813-777-2512 if you have any
 5.7.1 questions. v64si2650996ywg.289 - gsmtpt

Failed Recipient: mbrewer@flrc2.org

Reason: Remote host said: 550 5.7.1 Your email has been rejected because it violates organization policy.

5.7.1 Please contact Clay Oberhausen 813-777-2512 if you have any
 5.7.1 questions. v64si2650996ywg.289 - gsmtpt

-- The header and top 20 lines of the message follows --

Received: from owner35a3a1404 (fl-184-4-131-0.dhcp.embarqhsd.net [184.4.131.0]) by smtp.mfi.net with SMTP;

Wed, 7 Oct 2015 11:19:37 -0400

Message-ID: <B4A5FDFF22C948909723E1271FE148FD@owner35a3a1404>

From: "Neil Gillespie" <neilgillespie@mfi.net>

To: "James Gerstenlauer" <james_gerstenlauer@ca11.uscourts.gov>

Cc: "Rick Carey" <rick.carey@fd.org>,

"Donna Elm" <donna_elm@fd.org>,

"Ita M. Neymotin" <ineymotin@flrc2.org>,

"Mark Brewer" <mbrewer@flrc2.org>,

"Alton L. \"Rip\" Colvin" <Rip.Colvin@justiceadmin.org>,

"Jeffrey Lewis" <jeffrey.lewis@rc1.myflorida.com>,

"JOHN TENEWITZ" <JOHNTENEWITZ@AUD.STATE.FL.US>,

"David Gee, HCSO Sheriff" <DGee@hcsotampa.fl.us>,

"Mary Mainland MD Chief Medical Examiner" <mainlandm@hillsboroughcounty.org>,

"Sheriff Chris Blair" <cblair@marionso.com>,

"Captain Bill Sowder MCSO" <bsowder@marionso.com>,

"Jeffrey Deen" <jdeen@rc5state.com>,

"Neil Gillespie" <neilgillespie@mfi.net>

Subject: Letter-James Gerstenlauer-CA11-Circuit Executive re Non-Criminal Justice Act Counsel Appointment

Date: Wed, 7 Oct 2015 11:20:07 -0400

MIME-Version: 1.0

Content-Type: multipart/mixed;

boundary="-----_NextPart_000_0010_01D100F2.1F455C60"

X-Priority: 3

X-MSMail-Priority: Normal

X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 6.00.2900.5931
Disposition-Notification-To: "Neil Gillespie" <neilgillespie@mfi.net>
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V6.00.2900.6157

This is a multi-part message in MIME format.

-----=_NextPart_000_0010_01D100F2.1F455C60
Content-Type: multipart/alternative;
boundary="-----=_NextPart_001_0011_01D100F2.1F455C60"

-----=_NextPart_001_0011_01D100F2.1F455C60
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: quoted-printable

VIA UPS No. 1Z64589FNW92003432=20
Via email: james_gerstenlauer@ca11.uscourts.gov

James Gerstenlauer, Circuit Executive
U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
56 Forsyth St. N.W.

VIA UPS No. 1Z64589FNW92003432
Via email: james_gerstenlauer@ca11.uscourts.gov

October 6, 2015

James Gerstenlauer, Circuit Executive
U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
56 Forsyth St. N.W.
Atlanta, Ga. 30303

Dear Mr. Gerstenlauer:

Addendum Five to the local rules for the U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit, provides for a Non-Criminal Justice Act Counsel Appointment. What is the procedure for a qualified person to obtain a Non-Criminal Justice Act Counsel Appointment as described in Addendum Five?

On information and belief, I was entitled to a Non-Criminal Justice Act Counsel Appointment in past cases before the Eleventh Circuit, but did not get one. Addendum Five states,

The court adopts these provisions for furnishing representation for persons financially unable to obtain adequate representation in cases and situations which do not fall within the scope of 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, as amended – but in which the court believes that the interests of justice will be served by the presence of counsel.

(b)(2) Any person seeking relief under 29 U.S.C. § 621, 42 U.S.C. § 1981, 42 U.S.C. § 1982, 42 U.S.C. § 1983, 42 U.S.C. § 1985, 42 U.S.C. § 1986, 42 U.S.C. § 2000a, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, and 42 U.S.C. § 2000e or in such other cases as the court shall determine to be appropriate may be eligible for representation. The court may approve such representation on a determination that the interests of justice so require and that the person is financially unable to obtain representation.

On September 11, 2015 I submitted this question by email to Assistant Federal Public Defender Rick Carey, but got no response, other than a read acknowledgment from Mr. Carey.

On September 12, 2015 I submitted a follow-up email to Assistant Federal Public Defender Rick Carey, and others, including Federal Public Defender Donna Elm, but got no response.

Thank you in advance for the courtesy of a response.

Sincerely,



Neil J. Gillespie
8092 SW 115th Loop
Ocala, FL 34481
Tel. 352-854-7807
Email: neilgillespie@mfi.net

Enclosure: Addendum Five to the local rules for the U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit

UPS Internet Shipping: View/Print Label

1. **Ensure there are no other shipping or tracking labels attached to your package.** Select the Print button on the print dialog box that appears. Note: If your browser does not support this function select Print from the File menu to print the label.

2. **Fold the printed label at the solid line below.** Place the label in a UPS Shipping Pouch. If you do not have a pouch, affix the folded label using clear plastic shipping tape over the entire label.

3. **GETTING YOUR SHIPMENT TO UPS Customers with a Daily Pickup**
Your driver will pickup your shipment(s) as usual.

Customers without a Daily Pickup

Take your package to any location of The UPS Store[®], UPS Access Point[™] location, UPS Drop Box, UPS Customer Center, UPS Alliances (Office Depot[®] or Staples[®]) or Authorized Shipping Outlet near you. Items sent via UPS Return Services(SM) (including via Ground) are also accepted at Drop Boxes. To find the location nearest you, please visit the 'Find Locations' Quick link at ups.com. Schedule a same day or future day Pickup to have a UPS driver pickup all of your Internet Shipping packages.

Hand the package to any UPS driver in your area.

UPS Access Point[™] UPS Access Point[™]
THE UPS STORE THE UPS STORE
11100 SW 93RD COURT RD 3101 SW 34TH AVE
OCALA ,FL 34481 Ocala ,FL 34474

FOLD HERE

NEIL J. GILLESPIE 352-854-7807 NEIL J. GILLESPIE 8092 SW 115TH LOOP OCALA FL 34481		0.4 LBS LTR	1 OF 1
SHIP TO: JAMES GERSTENLAUER CIRCUITEXECUTIVE US COURT APPEALS ELEVENTH CIRCUIT 56 FORSYTH ST. N.W. ATLANTA GA 30303-2218			
	GA 303 9-02 		
UPS NEXT DAY AIR SAVER 1P TRACKING #: 1Z 645 89F NW 9200 3432			
			
BILLING: P/P ATTENTION UPS DRIVER: SHIPPER RELEASE			
UIS 17.6.02. WXPNV50 66.0A 07/2015			

ADDENDUM FIVE

NON-CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT COUNSEL APPOINTMENTS

The court adopts these provisions for furnishing representation for persons financially unable to obtain adequate representation in cases and situations which do not fall within the scope of 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, as amended – but in which the court believes that the interests of justice will be served by the presence of counsel.

(a) Determination of Need.

In determining need for appointment of counsel, the court shall generally be governed by the guidelines outlined in 18 U.S.C. § 3006A.

(b) Appointment of Counsel.

(1) Counsel shall be selected from the same panels of attorneys designated or approved by the district courts of the Eleventh Circuit as described in Addendum Four, which are hereby approved by this court, or from a bar association, legal aid agency, or other approved organization. In addition, any judge of this court may appoint competent counsel not otherwise included in the preceding categories.

(2) Any person seeking relief under 29 U.S.C. § 621, 42 U.S.C. § 1981, 42 U.S.C. § 1982, 42 U.S.C. § 1983, 42 U.S.C. § 1985, 42 U.S.C. § 1986, 42 U.S.C. § 2000a, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, and 42 U.S.C. § 2000e or in such other cases as the court shall determine to be appropriate may be eligible for representation. The court may approve such representation on a determination that the interests of justice so require and that the person is financially unable to obtain representation.

(3) The court may at its discretion and in the interest of justice substitute one appointed counsel for another at any stage of the proceedings on appeal.

(4) The court may at its discretion and where circumstances warrant make appointments of counsel retroactive so as to include representation furnished prior to appointment.

(c) Withdrawal or Release of Appointed Counsel.

Counsel appointed under this rule to represent a party shall continue such representation until relieved by order of the court of appeals.

(d) Duties of Appointed Counsel.

(1) Appointed counsel shall furnish the party represented, upon written request, with a copy of motion papers and briefs filed for the party on the appeal, and shall send the party a copy of the

court's decision when issued; the clerk will send appointed counsel an extra copy of the decision for this purpose.

(2) Appointed counsel shall appear for oral argument only when directed by the court.

(3) In the event of affirmance or other decision adverse to the party represented appointed counsel shall promptly advise the party in writing of the right to seek further review by the filing of a petition for writ of certiorari with the Supreme Court.

(4) Appointed counsel shall advise the party represented in each case that, if the party wishes to file a petition for a writ of certiorari with the Supreme Court, the party may have the right to do so without prepayment of fees and costs or giving security therefor.

(5) No appointed representative under this rule shall accept a payment from or on behalf of the person represented in this court without prior authorization by a United States circuit judge.

(e) Payment of Claims for Expenses.

(1) In all appeals covered by this rule, the court of appeals may authorize reimbursement of necessary expenses reasonably incurred in representing a party on appeal, consistent with the limitations contained in the Criminal Justice Act, by any private attorney, bar association, legal aid agency, or other approved organization appointed by the court for the purpose of representing a party on appeal pursuant to this addendum. Compensation for attorney services as a fee for either in-court or out-of-court time is not authorized.

(2) Travel expenses and other expenses reasonably incurred and necessary for adequate representation on appeal may be claimed by an appointed attorney or other legal representative. The clerk of court shall furnish each attorney or other representative at the time of appointment with information as to expenses currently allowable and in accordance with rules, regulations and guidelines promulgated by the Judicial Conference of the United States. Per diem may not be claimed in lieu of actual travel and subsistence expenses. Meal and lodging expenses incurred incident to representation on appeal, necessary long distance telephone calls or telegrams, and the cost of photocopying (but not printing), are reimbursable expenses within the guidelines established by the court. Expenses of general office overhead, personal items, filing fees and expenses of printing of briefs are not reimbursable. Expenses of travel by private automobile may be claimed on a straight mileage basis at the authorized rate. See § (6) of the guidelines, below. Parking fees and toll expenses are allowable. Transportation other than by private automobile may be claimed on an actual cost basis, but first class fare is not permitted unless absolutely necessary and documentation is provided that tourist or economy fares were not available.

(3) Unless otherwise ordered by the court for good cause shown, travel expenses other than those incurred in connection with attending oral argument will not be reimbursed without a prior *ex parte* application to and approval by the court.

(4) All claims for reimbursement of expenses for representation on appeal shall be itemized in detail and filed with the clerk of court on officially approved forms that the clerk's office will provide. Claims should be filed as promptly as possible and in no event later than 60 days after issuance of the mandate.

(5) After approval of allowable reimbursable expenses by the court, the claim form will be forwarded to the circuit executive for payment.

(6) Reimbursable Expenses.

(a) Travel and transportation expenses. Travel and transportation must be accomplished by the most economical means available. Only actual expenses may be claimed.

(i) Air transportation. Tourist or economy accommodations must be used except where unavailable. A copy of the ticket must be attached to the claim form. If travel by first class air transportation is claimed a detailed explanation of the reasons therefor must be provided with the ticket copy.

(ii) Automobile transportation. The total mileage cost shall not exceed the fare authorized for travel by tourist or economy air transport except in an emergency or for other compelling reasons. Travel by privately owned automobile shall not exceed the current government authorized rate for official travel per mile on a straight mileage basis, plus parking fees, ferry, bridge, road, and tunnel fares.

(iii) Local transportation. Local travel will be accomplished by the most economical means available and only actual expenses may be claimed. Transportation to and from an airport should be by airport shuttle, if available.

(iv) Meals and lodging. Reasonable compensation for hotel or motel accommodations and meals will be allowed on an actual expense basis subject to the limitations governing compensation for federal employees traveling to the same destination. Counsel will be notified by the clerk prior to the scheduled oral argument session of the current limitations. A copy of the hotel or motel bill shall be attached to the claim form.

(b) Photocopying. Actual costs not to exceed 25 cents per page will be paid if copy bill is submitted. For in-house copying, actual costs not to exceed 15 cents per page will be paid.

(c) Express mail and other special arrangements. For delivery of items that could have been mailed via U.S. Postal Service first class mail, additional expenses will be reimbursed only if a satisfactory explanation is given why first class mail service was not utilized. In non-emergency cases routine documents such as briefs and motions should be prepared early enough to permit use of first class mail.

(d) Computer Assisted Legal Research.

(i) By Court Appointed Counsel. The cost of use, by appointed counsel, of computer assisted legal research services, may be allowed as a reimbursable out-of-pocket expense, provided that the amount claimed is reasonable. Whenever appointed counsel incurs charges for computer assisted legal research, counsel should attach to the claim form a copy of the bill and receipt for the use of the legal research services or an explanation of the precise basis of the charge (e.g., indicating the extent to which it was derived by proration of monthly charges, or by charges identifiable to the specific research). If the amount claimed is in excess of \$500 or if it includes costs for downloading or printing, counsel should include a brief statement of justification.

(ii) By Commercial Computer Assisted Legal Research Services. The court may in advance authorize counsel to obtain computer assisted legal research services, where the research is performed by employees of a commercial legal research firm or organization rather than by appointed counsel, provided that the total amount charged for computer assisted legal research services is reasonable. Requests by counsel for authority to obtain such computer assisted legal research services should include the following:

- a - a brief explanation of the need for the research services; and
- b - an estimate of the charges.

(e) Miscellaneous Expenses. The lowest possible cost for expenses such as postage, telephone calls, brief supplies, and parking, shall be incurred.

(f) Briefs.

Reimbursement will be provided only for the number of copies of briefs and record excerpts required by the rules to be filed and served, plus two copies for each party signing the brief. The number of copies and number of pages must be itemized on the claim form.

(g) Funding.

By resolution the court may allocate from time to time certain monies from its nonappropriated fund account to support this program of non-CJA counsel appointments.

Neil Gillespie

From: "Neil Gillespie" <neilgillespie@mfi.net>
To: "James Gerstenlauer" <james_gerstenlauer@ca11.uscourts.gov>
Cc: "Rick Carey" <rick.carey@fd.org>; "Donna Elm" <donna_elm@fd.org>; "Ita M. Neymotin" <ineymotin@flrc2.org>; "Mark Brewer" <mbrewer@flrc2.org>; "Alton L. "Rip" Colvin" <Rip.Colvin@justiceadmin.org>; "Jeffrey Lewis" <jeffrey.lewis@rc1.myflorida.com>; "JOHN TENEWITZ" <JOHNTENEWITZ@AUD.STATE.FL.US>; "David Gee, HC SO Sheriff" <DGee@hcso.tampa.fl.us>; "Mary Mainland MD Chief Medical Examiner" <mainlandm@hillsboroughcounty.org>; "Sheriff Chris Blair" <cblair@marionso.com>; "Captain Bill Sowder MCSO" <bsowder@marionso.com>; "Jeffrey Deen" <jdeen@rc5state.com>; "Neil Gillespie" <neilgillespie@mfi.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 07, 2015 11:20 AM
Attach: ABA - Florida Civil Counsel Appointment.pdf; ABA - Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants.pdf; RulesAddendum05AUG07.pdf; Letter-James Gerstenlauer-CA11-Circuit Executive re Non-Criminal Justice Act Counsel Appointment.pdf
Subject: Letter-James Gerstenlauer-CA11-Circuit Executive re Non-Criminal Justice Act Counsel Appointment

VIA UPS No. 1Z64589FNW92003432

Via email: james_gerstenlauer@ca11.uscourts.gov

James Gerstenlauer, Circuit Executive
 U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
 56 Forsyth St. N.W.
 Atlanta, Ga. 30303

Dear Mr. Gerstenlauer:

Addendum Five to the local rules for the U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit, provides for a Non-Criminal Justice Act Counsel Appointment. What is the procedure for a qualified person to obtain a Non-Criminal Justice Act Counsel Appointment as described in Addendum Five?

On information and belief, I was entitled to a Non-Criminal Justice Act Counsel Appointment in past cases before the Eleventh Circuit, but did not get one. Addendum Five states,

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(b)(2) Any person seeking relief under 29 U.S.C. § 621, 42 U.S.C. § 1981, 42 U.S.C. § 1982, 42 U.S.C. § 1983, 42 U.S.C. § 1985, 42 U.S.C. § 1986, 42 U.S.C. § 2000a, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, and 42 U.S.C. § 2000e or in such other cases as the court shall determine to be appropriate may be eligible for representation. The court may approve such representation on a determination that the interests of justice so require and that the person is financially unable to obtain representation.

On September 11, 2015 I submitted this question by email to Assistant Federal Public Defender Rick Carey, but got no response, other than a read acknowledgment from Mr. Carey.

On September 12, 2015 I submitted a follow-up email to Assistant Federal Public Defender Rick Carey, and others, including Federal Public Defender Donna Elm, but got no response.

Thank you in advance for the courtesy of a response.

Sincerely,

Neil J. Gillespie
 8092 SW 115th Loop
 Ocala, FL 34481
 Tel. 352-854-7807
 Email: neilgillespie@mfi.net

Enclosure: Addendum Five to the local rules for the U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit

----- Original Message -----

From: [Neil Gillespie](#)
To: [Rick Carey](#) ; [Donna Elm](#)

Cc: [Ita M. Neymotin](#) ; [Mark Brewer](#) ; [Alton L. "Rip" Colvin](#) ; [Jeffrey Lewis](#) ; [JOHN TENEWITZ](#) ; [Neil Gillespie](#)
Sent: Saturday, September 12, 2015 6:16 AM
Subject: Fw: How does a qualified civil litigant obtain a federal civil counsel appointment?

Mr. Carey, when can I expect a response from you to my email below?

Thank you. Neil J Gillespie

----- Original Message -----

From: [Neil Gillespie](#)
To: [Rick Carey](#)
Cc: [Neil Gillespie](#)
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2015 2:05 AM
Subject: How does a qualified civil litigant obtain a federal civil counsel appointment?

Rick Carey
Assistant Federal Public Defender
Office of the Federal Public Defender
201 SW 2nd St Ste 102
Ocala, FL 34474-4119
Office: 352-351-9157
Fax: 352-351-9162

Dear Mr. Carey:

This is a request for information only.

How does a qualified civil litigant obtain a federal civil counsel appointment? A law-abiding civil litigant who is indigent, disabled, and a vulnerable adult, (Fla. Stat. ch 415). Cases like a section 1983 civil rights lawsuit, or defense of a wrongful foreclosure of a federal HECM reverse home mortgage.

Attached you will find Addendum Five to the local rules, U.S. Eleventh Circuit (set out in part below) that shows non-criminal justice act counsel appointments are available.

<http://www.ca11.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/courtdocs/clk/RulesAddendum05AUG07.pdf>

How does a qualified litigant apply for a federal civil counsel appointment?

The U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida CJA page does not show information for a non-criminal justice act civil counsel appointment. https://www.flmd.uscourts.gov/AttyResources/cja_e-voucher.htm

Do the federal courts have a plan equivalent to the Florida Office of Criminal Conflict and Civil Regional Counsel, the five Regional Counsel offices created by the legislature (Statute 27.511)? <http://flrc2.org/History.html> If so, How does a qualified litigant apply for a federal civil counsel appointment?

Also, the American Bar Association (ABA) has a "Civil Right to Counsel" page, "Law Governing Appointment of Counsel in State Civil Proceedings", with 50 research reports, one for each state detailing existing authority for appointment of counsel in various types of civil proceedings. The Florida report is attached.
http://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_aid_indigent_defendants/initiatives/resource_center_for_access_to_justice/resources--information-on-key-atj-issues/civil_right_to_counsel1.html

If I missed anything leading to a federal civil counsel appointment, please advise me. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Neil J. Gillespie
8092 SW 115th Loop
Ocala, FL 34481
Tel. 352-854-7807
Email: neilgillespie@mfi.net

ADDENDUM FIVE - U.S. Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals
NON-CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT COUNSEL APPOINTMENTS
<http://www.ca11.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/courtdocs/clk/RulesAddendum05AUG07.pdf>

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(b) Appointment of Counsel...

(2) Any person seeking relief under 29 U.S.C. § 621, 42 U.S.C. § 1981, 42 U.S.C. § 1982, 42 U.S.C. § 1983, 42 U.S.C. § 1985, 42 U.S.C. § 1986, 42 U.S.C. § 2000a, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, and 42 U.S.C. § 2000e or in such other cases as the court shall determine to be appropriate may be eligible for representation. The court may approve such representation on a determination that the interests of justice so require and that the person is financially unable to obtain representation

[Home](#) > [ABA Groups](#) > [Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants](#) > [Initiatives](#) > [Resource Center for Access to Justice Initiatives](#) > [Resources & Information on Key ATJ Issues](#) > [Civil Right to Counsel](#)

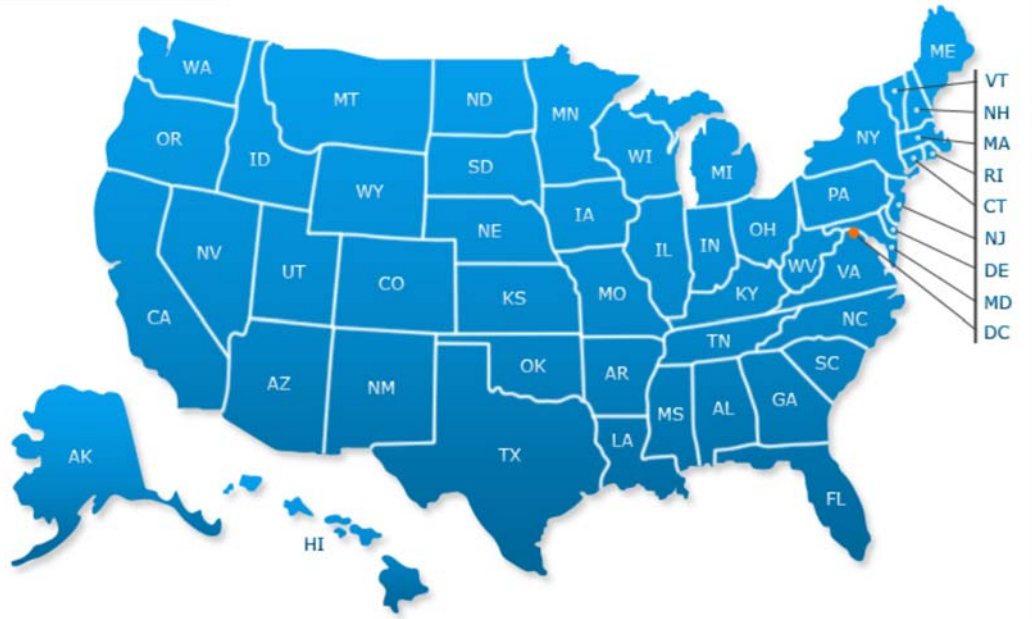
Civil Right to Counsel

Law Governing Appointment of Counsel in State Civil Proceedings

The map below provides access, by clicking each state, to a research report detailing existing authority for appointment of counsel in various types of civil proceedings. Additional prefatory material and appendices are available through links below.

- [Introduction](#)
- [Acknowledgments](#)
- [Foreword](#)
- [Appendix: International Law Relating to Appointment of Counsel in Civil Proceedings](#)

Civil Appt. Authority



Additional Resources

[ABA Toolkit for a Right to Counsel in Civil Proceedings »](#)

The Toolkit includes in one package the "ABA Basic Principles for a Right to Counsel in Civil Proceedings" and "The ABA Model Access Act," which provide two important tools for jurisdictions seeking to implement a civil right to counsel.

[ABA House of Delegates Policy Resolution Urging Recognition of a Civil Right to Counsel »](#)

For additional information regarding civil right to counsel issues, please visit:

[National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel](#)

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
Directory of Law Governing Appointment of
Counsel in State Civil Proceedings

FLORIDA

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American Bar Association
Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants
321 N. Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60610
Phone: 312-988-5765; FAX: 312-988-5483
http://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_aid_indigent_defendants.html

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FLORIDA

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Preface

Important Information to Read Before Using This Directory

The *ABA Directory of Law Governing Appointment of Counsel in State Civil Proceedings* (Directory) is a compilation of existing statutory provisions, case law, and court rules requiring or permitting judges to appoint counsel for civil litigants. The Directory consists of 51 detailed research reports—one for each state plus D.C.—that present information organized by types of civil proceedings. Prior to using the Directory, please read the *Introduction*, at the Directory’s [home page](#), for the reasons behind the development of the Directory, the various sources of authority from which judicial powers to appoint counsel in civil proceedings may derive, and the structure used to organize information within each of the research reports.

Terms of Use/Disclaimers

This Directory should not be construed as providing legal advice and the ABA makes no warranties concerning the information contained therein, which has been updated to reflect the law through early 2012. The Directory does not seek to address all conceivable subsidiary issues in each jurisdiction, but some such issues were researched and addressed, including: notification of right to counsel; standards for waiver of right to counsel; standard of review on appeal for improper denial of counsel at trial; whether “counsel” for a child means a client-directed attorney or a “best interests” attorney/attorney ad litem; and federal court decisions finding a right to counsel. Similarly, the research did not exhaustively identify all law regarding the issue of compensation of appointed counsel in each jurisdiction, though discussion of such law does appear within some of the reports.

The Directory attempts to identify as “unpublished” any court decisions not published within an official or unofficial case reporter. Discussion of unpublished cases appears only for those jurisdictions where court rules currently permit their citation in briefs or opinions. Limitations on the use of unpublished opinions vary by jurisdiction (e.g., whether unpublished cases have value as precedent), and such limits were not exhaustively researched. Users should conduct independent, jurisdiction-specific research both to confirm whether a case is published and to familiarize themselves with all rules relating to the citation and use of unpublished or unreported cases.

Acknowledgments

This Directory was a multi-year project of the ABA’s Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants (SCLAID). We are indebted to our partner in this project, the National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel (NCCRC), for sharing the body of research that was adapted to form the Directory’s reports. The *Acknowledgments*, at the Directory’s [home page](#), details additional specific contributions of the many individuals involved in this project.

Law Addressing Authorization or Requirement to Appoint Counsel in Specific Types of Civil Proceedings

1. SHELTER

Federal Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

The federal Fair Housing Act, contained within Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, provides that “[a]n aggrieved person may commence a civil action in an appropriate United States district court or State court....” 42 U.S.C. § 3613 (a)(1)(A). Further, “[u]pon application by a person alleging a discriminatory housing practice or a person against whom such a practice is alleged, the court may-- (1) appoint an attorney for such person....” 42 U.S.C. § 3613(b).

2. SUSTENANCE

Federal Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination. While nearly all Title VII claims are brought in federal court, the U.S. Supreme Court has specified that state courts have concurrent jurisdiction with federal courts for Title VII claims. *Yellow Freight System Inc. v. Donnelly*, 494 U.S. 820, 826 (1990).

Title VII provides that “[u]pon application by the complainant and in such circumstances as the court may deem just, the court may appoint an attorney for such complainant....” 42 U.S.C. 2000e-5(f)(1). In *Poindexter v. FBI*, the D.C. Court of Appeals observed:

Title VII's provision for attorney appointment was not included simply as an afterthought; it is an important part of Title VII's remedial scheme, and therefore courts have an obligation to consider requests for appointment with care. In acting on such requests, courts must remain mindful that appointment of an attorney may be essential for a plaintiff to fulfill “the role of ‘a private attorney general,’ vindicating a policy ‘of the highest priority.’ ... Once the plaintiff has triggered the attorney appointment provision, “courts must give serious consideration” to the plaintiff's request ... such discretionary choices are not left to a court's ‘inclination, but to its judgment; and its judgment is to be guided by sound legal principles.’ ... Furthermore, in exercising this discretion, the court should clearly indicate its disposition of the request for appointment and its basis for that disposition.

737 F.2d 1173, 1183-85 (D.C. Cir. 1984).

3. SAFETY AND/OR HEALTH

A. Domestic Violence Protection Order Proceedings

No law could be located regarding the appointment of counsel for indigent litigants in domestic violence protection order proceedings.

B. Conservatorship, Adult Guardianship, or Adult Protective Proceedings

State Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

If a “vulnerable adult” requires a protective service intervention,¹ he or she is entitled to be represented by counsel at the hearing determining whether such services are necessary, and “the court shall appoint legal counsel to represent a vulnerable adult who is without legal representation.” Fla. Stat. § 415.1051(1)(c)(2) & § (2)(f)(2).

Upon a petition to determine whether a person is incapacitated (a predecessor step to guardianship),² Fla. Stat. § 744.331 provides that

(a) When a court appoints an attorney for an alleged incapacitated person, the court must appoint the office of criminal conflict and civil regional counsel or a private attorney as prescribed in s. 27.511(6). A private attorney must be one who is included in the attorney registry compiled pursuant to s. 27.40. Appointments of private attorneys must be made on a rotating basis, taking into consideration conflicts arising under this chapter.

(b) The court shall appoint an attorney for each person alleged to be incapacitated in all cases involving a petition for adjudication of incapacity. The alleged incapacitated person may substitute her or his own attorney for the attorney appointed by the court.

¹ A protective service intervention is a hearing in which the court determines whether, as a result of abuse, neglect, or “exploitation,” an adult is in need of protective services by the state, such as placement in adult family-care homes, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, or “other appropriate facilities.” Fla. Stat. § 415.1051(3). See *also id.* § 415.1051(1) (describing nonemergency protective services interventions).

² *In re Fey*, 624 So.2d 770, 772 n.1 (Fla. App. 1993) (“Florida Probate Rule 5.550(b)(1)(B) provides that the requisite notice of filing the petition to determine incapacity shall state ‘that an attorney has been appointed to represent such person;’ thus, the appointment of counsel must be accomplished at the very onset of guardianship proceedings, as opposed to any time before final hearing.”)

(c) Any attorney representing an alleged incapacitated person may not serve as guardian of the alleged incapacitated person or as counsel for the guardian of the alleged incapacitated person or the petitioner.

(d) Effective January 1, 2007, an attorney seeking to be appointed by a court for incapacity and guardianship proceedings must have completed a minimum of 8 hours of education in guardianship. A court may waive the initial training requirement for an attorney who has served as a court-appointed attorney in incapacity proceedings or as an attorney of record for guardians for not less than 3 years. The education requirement of this paragraph does not apply to the office of criminal conflict and civil regional counsel until July 1, 2008.

One of the Florida Court of Appeals has said that the failure to appoint counsel in such proceedings is reversible error. *Martinez v. Cramer*, --- So.3d ----, 2013 WL 4006526 (Fla. App. 2013) (citing *In re Fey*, 624 So.2d 770, 772 (Fla. App. 1993)). Counsel is also provided for review of the guardianship. Fla. Stat. § 744.464(2)(e). Additionally, Fla. Stat. § 744.3031 provides that counsel must be appointed for emergency guardianship proceedings.

State Court Rules and Court Decisions Interpreting Court Rules

Fla. Prob. R. 5.649(c) provides that “[w]ithin 3 days after a petition has been filed, the court shall appoint an attorney to represent a person with a developmental disability who is the subject of a petition to appoint a guardian advocate. The person with a developmental disability may substitute his or her own attorney for the attorney appointed by the court.”

C. Civil Commitment or Involuntary Mental Health Treatment Proceedings

State Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

When an indigent person is mentally disabled and requires involuntary admission to residential services, he or she is entitled to appointed counsel at both the capacity determination, Fla. Stat. § 393.12, and the hearing to determine involuntary admission, *id.* § 393.11(6). Counsel must also be appointed for indigent people subject to petitions for involuntary outpatient placement, *see id.* § 394.4655(4), or inpatient placement, *see id.* § 394.467(4).³

³ In *Auxier v. Jerome Golden Center for Behavioral Health*, 85 So.3d 1164 (Fla. App. 2012), a ward’s GAL committed the ward and then opposed appointment of counsel for the ward, arguing that the GAL’s own attorney could represent the ward. The Court of Appeals held that the attorney appointed pursuant to § 394.467(4) represents the ward, not any GAL that the ward might have.

Indigent parties also have the right to court-appointed counsel in proceedings regarding involuntary substance abuse treatment. *See id.* § 397.681(2).

State Court Rules and Court Decisions Interpreting Court Rules

Fla. R. Juv. P. Rule 8.350(a)(6)(2011) provides that, where the state seeks to place a dependent child in mental health facility, “[i]f the department's motion, the guardian ad litem's report, or another party based on communication with the child indicates that the child does not agree with the department's motion, then the court shall appoint an attorney to represent the child, if one has not already been appointed.”

State Court Decisions Addressing Constitutional Due Process or Equal Protection

The Florida Supreme Court has found a right to counsel for civil commitment. *Pullen v. State*, 802 So.2d 1113, 1119 (Fla. 2001) (“While the right to appointed counsel in Baker Act involuntary civil commitment proceedings is provided by Florida statute, the constitutional guarantee of due process would require no less.”). Though the court did not specify which constitution it was relying on, its citation to federal cases would suggest it was a holding under the federal constitution.

D. Sex Offender Proceedings

Fla. Stat. § 394.916(3) specifies that in proceedings for involuntary civil commitment of sexually violent predators, “[a]t all adversarial proceedings under this act, the person subject to this act is entitled to the assistance of counsel, and, if the person is indigent, the court shall appoint the public defender or, if a conflict exists, other counsel to assist the person.”

E. Involuntary Quarantine, Inoculation, or Sterilization Proceedings

State Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

If an indigent person is to be hospitalized or placed in isolation due to tuberculosis, she or he has the right to appointed counsel at the hearing. *See id.* § 392.56(3)(c).

4. CHILD CUSTODY

A. Appointment of Counsel for Parent—State-Initiated Proceedings

State Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

Florida statutes provide indigent parents with a right to counsel in *all* dependency proceedings. Fla. Stat. § 39.013(1) (“Parents must be informed by the court of their right to counsel in dependency proceedings at each stage of the dependency proceedings. Parents who are unable to afford counsel must be appointed counsel.”); *see also id.* § 39.013(9) (describing court’s responsibilities under this provision). There is, however, a split of authority as to whether the term “parent” in § 39.013(1) includes the non-offending parent. *See In re A.G.*, 40 So.3d 908 (Fla. App. 2010) (finding non-offending parent is entitled to appointed counsel, and disagreeing with *C.L.R. v. Department of Children & Families*, 913 So.2d 764 (Fla. App. 2005)). Dependency proceedings often determine whether children will be placed in shelters temporarily or whether parental rights will be terminated permanently, and statutes expressly mandate appointment of counsel in each of these particular circumstances. *See id.* § 39.013(10) (“Court-appointed counsel representing indigent parents at shelter hearings shall be paid from state funds appropriated by general law.”); *id.* § 39.402(5)(b)(2) (during hearings to determine the placement of children in shelters, “if indigent, the parents have the right to be represented by appointed counsel”). *Id.* § 39.807(1)(a) (“The court shall appoint counsel for indigent parents” for all stages of termination of parental rights proceedings).

If a parent voluntarily surrenders rights to a child, Florida statutory law does not provide a right to counsel in dependency proceedings. *See Fla. Stat. § 39.807 (2011)(d)* (right to counsel not applicable “to any parent who has voluntarily executed a written surrender of the child and consent to the entry of a court order therefor.”) *See also Justice Admin. Comm'n v. Goettel*, 32 So. 3d 786, 787 (Fla. App. 2010) (“Because the mother executed a written surrender, she had no right to appointed counsel for her termination proceeding.”). Also, grandparents do not have a statutory right to court-appointed counsel in dependency proceedings. *Justice Administrative Com'n v. Grover*, 12 So. 3d 1256 (Fla. App. 2009). A legal guardian who is not a parent similarly lacks a statutory right for appointment of counsel. *B.M. v. Dep't of Children & Families*, 842 So. 2d 936, 937 (Fla. App. 2003) (“As B.D. is not a parent of these children, there is no fundamental liberty interest of a parent involved in these proceedings.”).

Federal Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

The federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), which governs child welfare proceedings in state court,⁴ provides:

In any case in which the court determines indigency, the parent or Indian custodian shall

⁴ While the ICWA does not appear to have a definitive statement about jurisdiction, 25 U.S.C. § 1912(b) refers to state law not providing for appointment of counsel. Additionally, 25 U.S.C. § 1912(b) states: “In any involuntary proceeding in a State court, where the court knows or has reason to know that an Indian child is involved, the party seeking the foster care placement of, or termination of parental rights to, an Indian child shall notify the parent or Indian custodian and the Indian child’s tribe, by registered mail with return receipt requested, of the pending proceedings and of their right of intervention.” These provisions, plus the fact that child welfare proceedings typically occur in state court, suggest that ICWA applies in state law proceedings.

have the right to court-appointed counsel in any removal, placement, or termination proceeding....Where State law makes no provision for appointment of counsel in such proceedings, the court shall promptly notify the Secretary upon appointment of counsel, and the Secretary, upon certification of the presiding judge, shall pay reasonable fees and expenses out of funds which may be appropriated pursuant to section 13 of this title.”

25 U.S.C. § 1912(b).

State Court Rules and Court Decisions Interpreting Court Rules

According to Fla. R. Juv. P. Rule 8.320 (2011), “[a]t each stage of the dependency proceeding the court shall advise the parent of the right to have counsel present. The court shall appoint counsel to indigent parents or others who are so entitled to as provided by law, unless appointment of counsel is waived by that person.” Fla. R. Juv. P. 8.517 (created in 2013) specifies that trial counsel cannot withdraw after a dependency or termination of parental rights order until determining whether the parent wants to appeal, and if so, until an order appointing appellate counsel has been entered.

State Court Decisions Addressing Constitutional Due Process or Equal Protection

In the seminal pre-*Lassiter*⁵ case of *In the Interest of D.B. and D.S.*, 385 So. 2d 83 (Fla. 1980), the Florida Supreme Court found that due process under both the Florida and U.S. Constitutions requires the appointment of counsel only where child dependency proceedings result in the permanent loss of parental custody (i.e., are essentially combined with a termination proceeding) or where “the proceedings, because of their nature, may lead to criminal child abuse charges.” The court commented that “there are numerous types of juvenile dependency proceedings, but all concern the care, not the punishment, of the child. Some provide very temporary types of relief and custody, while other dependency proceedings permanently terminate the custody and care of a child.” *Id.* at 90. The court reiterated its general endorsement of the multi-factor test enunciated in *Potvin v. Keller*, 313 So. 2d 703 (Fla. 1975), which instructed courts to weigh various criteria when determining the need for counsel, including the potential length of parent-child separation, the degree of parental restrictions on visitation, whether there was parental consent, whether there were disputed facts, and the complexity of the proceeding. *See Potvin*, 313 So. 2d at 706.⁶ The court found, however, that

⁵ *Lassiter v. Department of Social Services*, 452 U.S. 18, 25 (1981) (finding no absolute Fourteenth Amendment right to counsel in termination of parental rights proceedings).

⁶ *Potvin* in turn drew its test largely from *Cleaver v. Wilcox*, 499 F.2d 940 (9th Cir. 1974). As noted earlier, the right to appointed counsel has since been statutorily extended to all dependency proceedings by Fla. Stat. § 39.013 and in *S.B. v. Dep’t. of Children & Families*, 851 So. 2d 689, 692 (Fla. 2003), the court noted that Fla. Stat. § 39.013(1) “supersedes” the *Potvin* factors by providing an absolute right to counsel in all dependency proceedings.

because there is a constitutionally protected interest in “preserving the family unit and raising one’s children,” *In re D.B.*, 385 So. 2d at 90, the *Potvin* calculus always mandates appointment of counsel for the parent when termination of parental rights is at stake: “[A] constitutional right to counsel necessarily arises where the proceedings can result in permanent loss of parental custody. In all other circumstances the constitutional right to counsel is not conclusive; rather, the right to counsel will depend upon a case-by-case application of the test adopted in *Potvin*” *Id.* at 87.

The *D.B.* court concluded by noting that it was not departing from federal precedent: “The right to counsel in juvenile dependency proceedings has not been addressed by the United States Supreme Court. Further, only one federal appellate court, the Ninth Circuit in *Cleaver v. Wilcox*, has written on the issue, and we have adhered to their view.” *Id.* at 94. But since *Lassiter*, the Florida Supreme Court has, without expressly noting the conflict,⁷ reaffirmed its view that, when termination of parental rights are at stake, state due process always mandates appointment of counsel for the parent. See *J.B. v. Florida Dept. of Children and Family Services*, 768 So. 2d 1060, 1067-68 (Fla. 2000); *In re E.H.*, 609 So. 2d 1289, 1290 (Fla. 1992).

Applying the *Potvin* factors, an intermediate appellate court found that due process required counsel to be provided in a dependency proceeding even when termination of parental rights was not at stake when the indigent parent was mentally ill and thus lacked the ability to represent herself effectively. See *L.W. v. Dep’t. of Health and Rehabilitative Services*, 695 So. 2d 724 (Fla. App. 1996). And in *White v. Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services*, 483 So. 2d 861 (Fla. App. 1986), the court found that the parents at issue were entitled to appointed counsel at every stage of the dependency proceedings where their admissions during the dependency proceeding “resulted in an adjudication of their abuse and neglect (which are two grounds for permanent commitment) and resulted in placement of the twins in a foster home where lack of parental visitation resulted in a charge of abandonment (a third ground for permanent commitment) and resulted in a performance agreement (the failure to perform being a fourth ground for permanent commitment).” See also *In re R.W.*, 429 So. 2d 711, 712 (Fla. App. 1983) (in dependency case, “[m]erely informing an indigent parent of the right to assistance of counsel, and referring that parent to a legal aid office, while withholding court appointment and failing to establish a knowing waiver of record, does not pass constitutional muster.”) But see *In Interest of J.L.C.*, 501 So. 2d 92, 93 (Fla. App. 1987) (per curiam) (rejecting mother’s argument that failure to provide counsel until termination proceeding violated due process; court cites to *D.B.* and notes that “it does not appear that the trial court’s determination was based on evidence previously adduced at a dependency hearing at which the mother was not represented by counsel”).

⁷ One intermediate appellate court did note the conflict shortly after *Lassiter* was decided. See *In re D.D.W.*, 400 So. 2d 1310, 1311 (Fla. App. 1981).

In *S.B. v. Dep't of Children and Families*, 851 So. 2d 689, 694 (Fla. 2003), in which counsel was appointed pursuant to statute in a child dependency proceeding, the Florida Supreme Court held that “[b]ecause there is no constitutional right to counsel under the circumstances of this case, we likewise find that there is no right to collaterally challenge the effectiveness of counsel.” However, there might be a right to effective assistance in cases where the right to counsel is constitutionally based. In *In re E.K.*, 33 So. 3d 125, 127 (Fla. 2d DCA 2010), the Second District Court of Florida took up this issue and called “a right to effective counsel” one without a “means by which to enforce that right.” The court noted that while the state supreme court had not held that an individual has a right to effective counsel, “it appears that a parent who is constitutionally entitled to appointed counsel in a termination proceeding is implicitly entitled to *effective* assistance of counsel.” *Id.* at 127. The court outlined the history of the problem in Florida courts and sought certification on the issue. *Id.* It appears that none of the parties in *E.K.* requested that the Supreme Court accept jurisdiction on certification, and no action was taken on the issue. See Deborah A. Schroth, *Role of the Lawyer in Dependency Cases*, JUVL FL-CLE 10-1 (2011).

State Court Decisions Addressing Court’s Inherent Authority

In *Makemson v. Martin County*, 491 So. 2d 1109, 1112 (Fla. 1986), the Florida Supreme Court held that the court has the authority to exceed legislatively mandated statutory fee caps in order to ensure reasonable compensation for attorneys who had been appointed to represent indigent clients in criminal cases. In *Board of County Com'rs of Hillsborough County v. Curry*, 545 So.2d 930 (Fla. App. 1989), a Florida Court of Appeals extended the reasoning of *Makemson* to non-capital cases, noting that the basis for the *Makemson* decision was “the judiciary's inherent power to ensure adequate representation for indigent criminal defendants by competent counsel, regardless of whether the defendant has been charged with a capital crime.” Further, the *Scruggs* court extended *Makemson* to termination of parental rights cases due to the fundamental rights at stake and suggested that it would reach a similar holding in any type of case where counsel was constitutionally required. See *Id.*

B. Appointment of Counsel for Parent—Privately Initiated Proceedings

State Court Decisions Addressing Constitutional Due Process or Equal Protection

In a decision that involved the termination of a father’s parental rights pursuant to a contested adoption proceeding, the court of appeals in the Second District found that “an indigent legal parent is entitled to appointed counsel in an adoption proceeding that involves the involuntary termination of his or her parental rights” *O.A.H. v. R.L.A.*, 712 So. 2d 4 (Fla. App. 1998). In *O.A.H.*, the court found that although the applicable statute pursuant to which the father’s parental rights were to be terminated (Fla. Stat. § 63.072) (repealed in 2001) did

not contain an express statutory right to counsel, under Florida’s Due Process Clause, the father was nonetheless entitled to counsel, “when the proceedings can result in a permanent loss of parental rights.” *Id.* at 10. In reaching its decision, the court in *O.A.H.* also found that an adoption proceeding, and the resulting termination of parental rights, is not purely a private dispute and that the State has exclusive authority to terminate legal relationship of a parent and child, and that this authority is a “state action sufficient to invoke due process concerns.” *Id.* at 8. Regarding state action, the court relied upon U.S. Supreme Court precedent in *M.L.B. v. S.L.J.*, 519 U.S. 102, 117 n.8 (1996). *See also M.E.K. v. R.L.K.*, 921 So. 2d 787 (Fla. App. 2006) (in adoption case, Fifth District holds that trial court in adoption case erred in following *Lassiter* instead of *O.A.H.*); *In the Interest of M.C.*, 899 So. 2d 486 (Fla. App. 2005) (reaffirming *O.A.H.*); *G.C. v. W.J.*, 917 So.2d 998, 999 (Fla. App. 2005) (First District case where court followed *O.A.H.*).

C. Appointment of Counsel for Child—State-Initiated Proceedings

Federal Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), which governs child welfare proceedings in state court,⁸ provides the following with regard to any removal, placement, or termination of parental rights proceeding:

The court may, in its discretion, appoint counsel for the child upon a finding that such appointment is in the best interest of the child. Where State law makes no provision for appointment of counsel in such proceedings, the court shall promptly notify the Secretary upon appointment of counsel, and the Secretary, upon certification of the presiding judge, shall pay reasonable fees and expenses out of funds which may be appropriated pursuant to section 13 of this title.”

25 U.S.C. § 1912(b).

The federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) provides:

A State plan submitted under paragraph (1) shall contain a description of the activities that the State will carry out using amounts received under the grant to achieve the objectives of this subchapter, including— ...(B) an assurance in the form of a certification by the Governor of the State that the State has in effect and is enforcing a State law, or

⁸ While the ICWA does not appear to have a definitive statement about jurisdiction, 25 U.S.C. § 1912(b) refers to state law not providing for appointment of counsel. Additionally, 25 U.S.C. § 1912(b) states: “In any involuntary proceeding in a State court, where the court knows or has reason to know that an Indian child is involved, the party seeking the foster care placement of, or termination of parental rights to, an Indian child shall notify the parent or Indian custodian and the Indian child’s tribe, by registered mail with return receipt requested, of the pending proceedings and of their right of intervention.” These provisions, plus the fact that child welfare proceedings typically occur in state court, suggest that ICWA applies in state law proceedings.

has in effect and is operating a statewide program, relating to child abuse and neglect that includes-- ... (xiii) provisions and procedures requiring that in every case involving a victim of child abuse or neglect which results in a judicial proceeding, a guardian ad litem, who has received training appropriate to the role, including training in early childhood, child, and adolescent development, and who may be an attorney or a court appointed special advocate who has received training appropriate to that role (or both), shall be appointed to represent the child in such proceedings.”

42 U.S.C. § 5106a(b)(2).

State Court Rules and Court Decisions Interpreting Court Rules

Although Fla. Stat. § 39.807(2)(a) only provides that “[t]he court shall appoint a guardian ad litem to represent the best interest of the child in any termination of parental rights proceedings,” Fla. R. Juv. P. 8.217(a) provides: “At any stage of the proceedings, any party may request or the court may consider whether an attorney ad litem is necessary to represent any child alleged to be dependent, if one has not already been appointed.” Fla. R. Juv. P. 8.217(b) adds that “[t]he court may appoint an attorney ad litem to represent the child in any proceeding as allowed by law.”

State Court Decisions Addressing Constitutional Due Process or Equal Protection

In the pre-*Lassiter*⁹ case of *In the Interest of D.B. and D.S.*, 385 So. 2d 83 (Fla. 1980), the Florida Supreme Court summarily found that “there is no constitutional right to counsel for the subject child in a juvenile dependency proceeding.” *Id.* at 91.

D. Appointment of Counsel for Child—Privately Initiated Proceedings

No law could be located regarding the appointment of counsel for children in privately initiated child custody proceedings.

5. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Civil Contempt Proceedings

State Court Decisions Addressing Constitutional Due Process or Equal Protection

The Florida Supreme Court rejected a Fourteenth Amendment right to counsel in civil contempt proceedings due to a failure to pay child support. *Andrews v. Walton*, 428 So. 2d 663

⁹ *Lassiter v. Department of Social Services*, 452 U.S. 18, 25 (1981) (finding no absolute Fourteenth Amendment right to counsel in termination of parental rights proceedings).

(Fla. 1983). The high court reasoned that since civil contempt required ability to pay (and willful failure to do so), those facing this sanction would never be sufficiently indigent to merit appointment of counsel. *Id.* at 666. However, one appellate court subsequently held that where a contemnor willfully or unintentionally divests himself/herself of the ability to pay, then counsel is required because the contemnor essentially no longer holds the keys to his/her own prison. *Bowen v. Bowen*, 454 So. 2d 565 (Fla. App. 1984).

B. Paternity Proceedings

No law could be located regarding the appointment of counsel for indigent litigants in paternity proceedings.

C. Proceedings for Judicial Bypass of Parental Consent for Minor to Obtain an Abortion

State Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

The Florida Parental Notice of Abortion Act, Fla. Stat. § 390.01114, provides that a minor may petition a Florida circuit court for a waiver of the notification requirements under the aforementioned Act. Upon such a petition, “the court shall advise the minor that she has a right to court-appointed counsel and shall provide her with counsel upon her request at no cost to the minor.” *Id.* § 390.01114(4)(a).¹⁰

State Court Decisions Addressing Constitutional Due Process or Equal Protection

The state supreme court has found appointed counsel necessary in hearings determining the need for parental consent to abortion. *See In re T.W.*, 551 So. 2d 1186, 1196 (Fla. 1989). The court stated: “In [parental consent hearings] wherein a minor can be wholly deprived of authority to exercise her fundamental right to privacy [by obtaining an abortion], counsel is required under our state constitution.” *Id.* The court noted that the provision of counsel in *In re D.B.* was based on the fact that “an individual’s interest in preserving the family unit and raising children is fundamental,” *In re T.W.*, 551 So. 2d at 1196, and thus since “a woman’s right to decide whether or not to continue her pregnancy constitutes a fundamental constitutional right,” counsel is similarly required whenever one can be deprived of the authority to exercise that right. *Id.* The court cited *Indiana Planned Parenthood Affiliates Ass’n v. Pearson*, 716 F.2d 1127, 1138 (7th Cir. 1983), for that court’s analogous reasoning under

¹⁰ In *North Florida Women’s Health and Counseling Services, Inc. v. State*, 866 So.2d 612 (Fla. 2003), the Florida Supreme Court found that the notification requirement violated the privacy provisions of the Florida Constitution, but in response, the state amended the constitution to say that the legislature may require parental notification without violating a young woman’s state constitutional right of privacy, as long as the parental-notification law provides for certain exceptions and a judicial bypass.

federal law. *In re T.W.*, 551 So. 2d at 1196. In *Pearson*, the court held that “the statute impermissibly fails to provide for the appointment of counsel to minors.” 716 F.2d at 1138. Despite this citation to supportive federal precedent, the *In re T.W.* court maintained that it was “expressly decid[ing] this case on state law grounds.” 551 So. 2d at 1196.¹¹

Also at stake in *T.W.* was the fact that the trial court had appointed counsel to act as guardian ad litem for a fetus in a judicial bypass case. The trial court had appointed counsel due to the trial court’s concerns that the bypass statute was unconstitutionally vague and that minors should be required to obtain parental consent in all cases. The guardian therefore articulated these arguments essentially on behalf of the court. The Florida Supreme Court held that the appointment was “clearly improper” and that it was the Attorney General’s job to make such challenges to the statute, not the court’s.¹² The Florida Supreme Court passed on the question of whether appointment of counsel for a fetus would be proper absent motive by a judge to challenge the constitutionality of the statute.¹³

D. Unaccompanied Minors in Immigration Proceedings

State Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

In cases where a child (i) has been adjudicated dependent, (ii) found not to be a citizen of the United States, (iii) is found by the court to be eligible for “special immigrant juvenile status”, and (iv) such status is in the best interest of the child, Fla. Stat. § 39.5075 requires that the “[Florida] department [of child services], or community-based care provider *shall, directly or through voluntary or contractual legal services*, file a petition for special immigrant juvenile status and the application for adjustment of status to the appropriate federal authorities on behalf of the child.” Fla. Stat. § 39.5075(5) (emphasis added).

E. Proceedings Involving Claims by and Against Prisoners

¹¹ Note that this decision effectively overruled a prior one from a Florida federal court ruling on federal grounds. *Jacksonville Clergy Consultation Service, Inc. v. Martinez*, 707 F.Supp. 1301 (M.D. Fla. 1989).

¹² “We are compelled to comment on the trial judge’s finding that the court, ‘as the only entity otherwise involved [i]n the proceeding which could possibly protect the state’s interest,’ could have standing to challenge the constitutionality of the statute. Under no circumstances is a trial judge permitted to argue one side of a case as though he were a litigant in the proceedings. The survival of our system of justice depends on the maintenance of the judge as an independent and impartial decisionmaker. A judge who becomes an advocate cannot claim even the pretense of impartiality.” *T.W.*, 551 So.2d at 1190 n.3.

¹³ See also *In re Guardianship of J.D.S.*, 864 So.2d 534 (Fla. App. 2004) (GAL for fetus not appropriate because GALs can only be appointed for “persons” and fetus not a “person” under law).

State Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

A few cases have addressed the reach of the public defender's scope of representation in civil matters involving prisoners, mostly as a question of whether the public defenders exceeded their statutory authority. *State ex rel. entities Smith v. Brummer*, 443 So. 2d 957 (Fla. 1984) (habeas proceedings not one of the types of proceedings specified in public defender statute, so representation inappropriate); *State ex rel. Smith v. Jorandby*, 498 So. 2d 948 (Fla. 1986) (representation inappropriate for prisoner's money damages claim against state); *Bentzel v. State*, 585 So. 2d 1118 (Fla. App. 1991) (permitting public defender representation in extradition proceeding due to potential loss of liberty); *Graham v. Vann*, 394 So. 2d 176 (Fla. App. 1981) (public defender's office "did not exist at common law and is a creature of Article V, s 18, Florida Constitution, with no authority outside of that provided by statute There are currently five criminal actions pending against the petitioners, and the Office of the Public Defender has represented each of the individuals within the past year. We cannot believe that it was legislative intent that under such circumstances the trial judge is free to appoint counsel, but in so doing he may not consider the Office of the Public Defender.")

State Court Decisions Addressing Constitutional Due Process or Equal Protection

Generally, a petitioner's right to the appointment of counsel in postconviction proceedings is not an "organic right" and is limited to either those instances specified by statute or those rare situations where due process requires it. *See State v. Weeks*, 166 So. 2d 892 (Fla. 1964) (while Sixth Amendment does not require appointment of counsel for postconviction proceedings, "Fifth Amendment due process would require such assistance if the post-conviction motion presents apparently substantial meritorious claims for relief and if the allowed hearing is potentially so complex as to suggest the need ... Each case must be decided in the light of Fifth Amendment due process requirements which generally would involve a decision as to whether under the circumstances the assistance of counsel is essential to accomplish a fair and thorough presentation of the prisoner's claims"); *Keegan v. State*, 293 So. 2d 351 (Fla. 1974) (finding no "exceptional circumstance" present in petition); *Ulvano v. State*, 479 So. 2d 809 (Fla. App 1985) (criminal trial counsel's potential conflict of interest warranted appointment of counsel for postconviction challenge to original representation).

In *Black v. Rouse*, 587 So.2d 1359, 1362 (Fla. App. 1991), an appellate court rejected a right to counsel for an inmate challenging medical treatment, citing to *Lassiter v. Department of Social Services*, 452 U.S. 18 (1981), to hold that "in a civil action as opposed to a criminal action, appellant does not have a constitutional right to appointed counsel, unless the proceedings may result in his freedom being curtailed."

F. Forfeiture Proceedings

State Court Decisions Addressing Constitutional Due Process or Equal Protection

In a case involving forfeiture of seized cash, a Florida appellate court summarily stated that “we reject Plaisted's argument that the trial court erred by failing to appoint counsel to represent him in connection with his motion for return of property.” *Plaisted v. State*, 46 So.3d 148, 150 (Fla. App. (2010)). The court relied entirely on *United States v. Wade*, 291 F.Supp.2d 1314, 1316-17 (M.D. Fla. 2003), which had held there is no right to effective assistance of counsel in civil cases.

Law Addressing Authorization or Requirement to Appoint Counsel in Civil Proceedings Generally

State Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

Fla. Stat. § 29.007 (2011) (“Court-appointed counsel”) provides:

For purposes of implementing s. 14, Art. V of the State Constitution [relating to funding of the judiciary], the elements of court-appointed counsel to be provided from state revenues appropriated by general law are as follows:

- (1) Private attorneys appointed by the court to handle cases where the defendant is indigent and cannot be represented by the public defender or the office of criminal conflict and civil regional counsel.
- (2) When the office of criminal conflict and civil regional counsel has a conflict of interest, private attorneys appointed by the court to represent indigents or other classes of litigants in civil proceedings requiring court-appointed counsel in accordance with state and federal constitutional guarantees and federal and state statutes.

...

This section applies in any situation in which the court appoints counsel to protect a litigant’s due process rights.

A private attorney appointed by a court pursuant to § 29.007 (2011) “shall be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses” incurred during representation. Fla. Stat. § 27.5304 (2011). Fla. Stat. § 27.5304 lists the flat fees to be awarded to private attorneys. Counsel may seek compensation in excess of the flat fees listed in § 27.5304 only if “compensation on an hourly basis at a rate of \$75.00 would be at least double the flat fee.” *Justice Admin. Comm’n v. Shaman*, 59 So. 3d 1231 (Fla. App. 2011).

Federal Statutes and Court Decisions Interpreting Statutes

The federal Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), which applies to each state¹⁴ and to all civil proceedings (including custody),¹⁵ provides:

If in an action covered by this section it appears that the defendant is in military service,

¹⁴ 50 App. U.S.C.A. § 512(a) states, “This Act [sections 501 to 515 and 516 to 597b of this Appendix] applies to-- ... (2) each of the States, including the political subdivisions thereof...”

¹⁵ 50 App. U.S.C. § 521(a) states, “This section applies to any civil action or proceeding, including any child custody proceeding, in which the defendant does not make an appearance.”

the court may not enter a judgment until after the court appoints an attorney to represent the defendant. If an attorney appointed under this section to represent a servicemember cannot locate the servicemember, actions by the attorney in the case shall not waive any defense of the servicemember or otherwise bind the servicemember.

50 App. U.S.C. § 521(b)(2).

Additionally, 50 App. U.S.C. § 522(d)(1), which also applies to all civil proceedings (including custody),¹⁶ specifies that a service member previously granted a stay may apply for an additional stay based on a continuing inability to appear, while § 522(d)(2) states: “If the court refuses to grant an additional stay of proceedings under paragraph (1), the court shall appoint counsel to represent the servicemember in the action or proceeding.”

State Court Decisions Addressing Court’s Inherent Authority

In *Makemson v. Martin County*, 491 So. 2d 1109, 1112 (Fla. 1986), discussed *supra* Part 4.A, the Florida Supreme Court held that the court has the authority to exceed legislatively mandated statutory fee caps in order to ensure reasonable compensation for attorneys who had been appointed to represent indigent clients in criminal cases. In *Board of County Com'rs of Hillsborough County v. Curry*, 545 So.2d 930 (Fla. App. 1989), a Florida Court of Appeals extended *Makemson* to termination of parental rights cases due to the fundamental rights at stake and suggested that it would reach a similar holding in any type of case where counsel was constitutionally required.

¹⁶ 50 App. U.S.C. § 522(a) applies to “any civil action or proceeding, including any child custody proceeding, in which the plaintiff or defendant at the time of filing an application under this section-- (1) is in military service or is within 90 days after termination of or release from military service; and (2) has received notice of the action or proceeding.”