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**CIRCUIT COURT FOR BALTIMORE CITY  
FAMILY DIVISION**

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**Differentiated Case Management Plan**

August 23, 2016

## Family Differentiated Case Management Plan

This Family DCM Plan is instituted in accordance with Maryland Rule 16-302(b), which requires the County Administrative Judge to develop and, upon approval by the Chief Judge of the Maryland Court of Appeals, implement and monitor a case management plan for the prompt and efficient scheduling and disposition of actions in the Circuit Court.

### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

From commencement of litigation to resolution, whether by trial or settlement, any elapsed time other than reasonably required for pleadings, discovery, and delivery of court services per Maryland Rule 16-204(a)(3) should be eliminated. To enable just, efficient, and effective resolution of cases, the court, not the lawyers or litigants, should control the pace of litigation. A strong judicial commitment is essential to reducing delay, while providing essential services. Once an efficient and effective system is attained, focus must remain on maintaining said system.

The purpose of this DCM Plan to provide an effective case management system which will assure compliance with the Performance Standards and Measures for Maryland Family Divisions, to wit:

1. Access to Justice;
2. Expedition and Timeliness;
3. Equality, Fairness, and Integrity;
4. Independence and Accountability; and
5. Public Trust and Confidence.

Consistent with the case time standards adopted by the Judicial Council, constitutional requirements and applicable Maryland Rules, it is the goal of this plan to ensure that ninety eight percent (98%) of family cases, other than limited divorce, are concluded within twelve months (365 days) of the filing date; and that ninety eight percent (98%) of limited divorce are concluded within 24 months (730 days) of the filing date. A concluded disposition is defined as conclusion by final judgment or dismissal. In order to achieve this goal, the Circuit Court is committed to concluding its many categories of family cases within a regular and predictable time frame warranted by the needs of those cases.

### **CASE MANAGEMENT**

#### **General Overview**

The policies and procedures outlined in this plan shall be implemented by the Judge-in-Charge of the Family Division with assistance from the Division administrative staff, Clerk's Office, Assignment Office, Baltimore City Office of Child Support Enforcement, State's Attorney Office, and any other necessary parties.

## **Judges and Magistrates**

The Judge-in-Charge of the Family Division reports to the Administrative Judge, who is ultimately responsible for all aspects of case management in the Circuit Court for Baltimore City. With respect to the Family Division, the Administrative Judge will designate judges to hear family cases and make final decisions about special assignment of cases to particular judges.

The Judge-in-Charge of the Division will designate courtroom and docket rotations for all judges assigned to the Family Division. The Judge-in-Charge will also oversee the composition of magistrate's dockets. From time-to-time, the Judge-in-Charge, with the assistance of the Associate Administrator, will examine work-loads and time standard compliance associated with particular dockets and will adjust the dockets as appropriate.

All judges and magistrates will be responsible for compliance with the Family Division DCM Plan. Individual judges and magistrates are responsible for the efficient and effective management of the cases assigned to them, including, but not limited to, timely disposition of cases, timely production of necessary orders, rulings and other paperwork, and timely ruling on non-hearing motions, requests for default, etc.

## **Clerk of the Court**

The Clerk of the Court will designate clerks to be assigned to the Family Division Clerk's Office. The employees of the Clerk's Office will oversee domestic (prefix D, hereinafter "D"), IV-D (prefix P, hereinafter "P"), guardianship (prefix T, hereinafter "T"), and UIFSA (prefix U, hereinafter "U") cases, assign cases to dockets, and be responsible for the following tasks:

- Timely processing and docketing of all paperwork;
- Establishment, maintenance and oversight of a "tickle" system that effectively tracks mandated time-lines, including, but not limited to, dismissals under Maryland Rule 2-507 (b) and (c);
- Timely creation and transmittal of mandated notices;
- Effective tracking of case files;
- Effective, responsible and service-oriented communication with all members of the public and employees of the court;
- Oversight of compliance with case flow standards; and
- Direct scheduling of specialized matters, such as contempt petitions, that do not require case management review.

## **Family Division Services**

Acknowledgement of specialized services and possible effect on case management leads to the court recognizing and ensuring the delivery of services through the following entities.

- Pro Se Assistance Office
- Parenting Education
- Mediation

- Custody Evaluation (psychological)
- Home Study
- Substance Abuse Evaluation
- Random Drug Testing
- Supervised Visitation
- Community Services
- Pilot Projects
  - Collaborative Law
  - Student Mediation

## TRACK DESIGNATIONS

### Definitions

Tracks define expected case processing events, the timing of events, assignment, and the expectations for case duration. The case-flow time standard for Circuit Court family cases is 12 months (365 days) for 98% of cases, except limited divorce and 24 months (730 days) for 98% of limited divorce cases, but expected duration is based on needed time to each resolution, which may be less than the time standard.

A Family case may follow one of six (6) potential tracks to resolution. Tracks are defined at filing, at time of review by case manager or at scheduling conference, depending on type of case, issues and status.

**Track Designations (Table 1.1)**

<i>Track</i>	<i>Case Subtypes</i>	<i>Expected Case Duration</i>
<b>Track 1: Family Filing</b> (D cases)	All Cases	Filing + 350 days
<u>Track 1A</u>	All Cases, Affidavit of Service filed	
<u>Track 1B</u>	Domestic Violence TPO and FPO Hearings Modification Extension Dist. Ct. Appeals	
<b>Track 2: Family Expedited</b> (D Cases)	Divorce, Uncontested <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mutual Consent</li> <li>• No children, no prop.</li> <li>• PSA (no children)</li> <li>• PSA w/ children (parenting plan)</li> </ul>	Answer + 90 days = 120 days
<u>Track 2A</u> Hearing before Judge		

<i>Track</i>	<i>Case Subtypes</i>	<i>Expected Case Duration</i>
<p><b>Track 2: Family Expedited</b> (D Cases)</p> <p><u>Track 2B</u> Hearing before Magistrate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children w/ parenting plan and no property</li> </ul> <p>Divorce, Default All issues</p> <p>Custody, Uncontested Establishment Modification</p> <p>Custody, Default Establishment Modification</p> <p>Visitation, Uncontested Establishment Modification</p> <p>Visitation, Default Establishment Modification</p> <p>Child Support Establishment (not IV-D) Modification</p> <p>Contempt (custody, visitation, divorce)</p>	<p>Answer + 90 days = 120 days</p>
<p><b>Track 3: Family Standard</b> (D Cases)</p>	<p>Divorce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>w/ simple property &amp; no custody</li> <li>w/ simple property &amp; contested custody</li> <li>w/ no property &amp; contested custody</li> </ul> <p>Custody Establishment Modification</p> <p>Visitation Establishment Modification</p>	<p>Answer + 240 days = 270 days</p>

<i>Track</i>	<i>Case Subtypes</i>	<i>Expected Case Duration</i>
<b>Track 4: Family Complex</b>	All case types w/ high levels of conflict and/or need for specialized services  Divorce w/ complex property issues w/ or w/o custody	545 days (3 – 5% of caseload; custom managed)
<b>Track 5: Limited Divorce</b>	Limited Divorce	730 days
<b>Track 6: IV-D (P cases)</b>  <u>Track 6A (U Cases)</u>	Paternity establishment  Child Support establishment Modifications  Multi-level Contempt  UIFSA	Filing + 350 days

## Track Assignment Procedures

### Domestic (D) Cases

All domestic cases (D), except for domestic violence will be assigned to Track 1 upon filing. Domestic violence cases will be assigned to Track 1B.

The Clerk’s office will reassign a case to Track 1A when an affidavit of service is filed.

Upon filing of Answer or expiration of time to vacate order of default (hereinafter referred to as “qualifying event”), all D cases and modifications of child support in P cases filed by individuals, will be sent to the case manager. The case manager will review all filings for legal and procedural sufficiency and as appropriate, request that cases be assigned to Track 2A, Track 2B, Track 5, assigned to a magistrate for scheduling conference, or set before a IV-D Magistrate (P cases only).

At the scheduling conference, magistrates will request that cases be assigned to Track 3, Track 4, or Track 5, based on their observation of the complexity of the issues in the case, levels of conflict, and need for services.

**Paternity (P) and UIFSA (U) Cases**

All establishment of paternity and IV-D child support cases (P cases) will be assigned to Track 6 upon filing, and set for hearing by the clerk’s office. All UIFSA cases will be assigned to Track 6A upon filing and set for hearing by the Clerk’s office.

If a track 6 or track 6A case is reopened as a result of the filing of a petition for contempt or petition for modification, the case will retain the original track designation. If the filing is initiated by a state entity, the Clerk’s office will set the case for hearing. If the filing is initiated by a private individual, the case will be sent to the case manager upon occurrence of a qualifying event.

**Track Assignment, Timing, and Responsibility (Table 1.2)**

<b>Track</b>	<b>When Assigned</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
Track 1: Family Filing	Filing	Clerk’s Office
Track 1A	Affidavit of Service filed	Clerk’s Office
Track 1B (Domestic Violence)	Filing	Clerk’s Office
Track 2: Family Expedited Track 2A (hearing before Judge Track 2B (hearing before Magistrate)	Filing of Answer or expiration of time to file Motion to Vacate Default	Case Manager
Track 3: Family Standard	Scheduling Conference	Magistrate
Track 4: Family Complex	Scheduling Conference	Magistrate
Track 5: Limited Divorce	Filing of Answer or expiration of time to file Motion to Vacate Default	Case Manager
Track 6: IV-D	Filing	Clerk’s Office
Track 6 A (UIFSA)	Filing	Clerk’s Office

## **Disputes Regarding Track Assignment**

Attorneys or pro se litigants may request a different track designation. All such requests must be in writing, contain a detailed explanation of the necessity for reassignment, and must be filed, by motion, within fifteen (15) days of the initial track assignment or reassignment.

## **PROCEDURES SPECIFIC TO CASES FILED WITHIN THE FAMILY DIVISION**

### **Case Filing**

1. Each original complaint/petition must list a name and address for plaintiff and defendant and must be a signed original. Consistent with Maryland Rule 2-111, each new Complaint or Petition must be accompanied by a Domestic Case Information Report (CC-DCM-002). Case types exempt from filing the Information Report include:

- Contempt for failure to pay child support, when filed by a government agency;
- Requests for relief from Domestic Violence under MD FL §4-501, et seq.;
- Guardianship;
- Paternity when filed by government agency.

Cases reopened for modification must retain the original listed plaintiff and defendant, no matter who is filing the modification action. Updated addresses must be provided for each party.

2. Cases are filed with the Clerk of the Court in room 109. All fees are due when paperwork is filed. The schedule of fees is as follows:

- Filing fee is \$165.00;
- Attorney appearance fee is \$20.00;
- Fee to reopen case is \$31.00;
- Sheriff service fee is \$40.00.

Filing fees may be waived by the Court, based on the following conditions:

- Filing of a Requests for Fee Waiver (CC-DC-089). Proof of income from all sources must be provided;
- Representation by an attorney appearing under the auspices of a free legal services provider program;
- Other determinations by the court.

3. After a case is opened or reopened, the clerk's office will issue a Summons. A Summons is notice to the non-filing party that there is a matter now pending before the court.

Summons and Complaint/Petition must be served on the responding party or their attorney, if they are represented. A Summons is good for 60 days from the date it is issued.



Requests to reissue Summons after expiration of 60 days must be directed to the Clerk's office.

Failure to serve the other party within 120 days will result in dismissal of the case under Maryland Rule 2-507(b).

4. IV-D (P) and UIFSA (U) cases are initiated by a governmental agency and are managed by specialized personnel within the domestic clerk's office. (See Cases Subject to Special Procedures).

### **Answer**

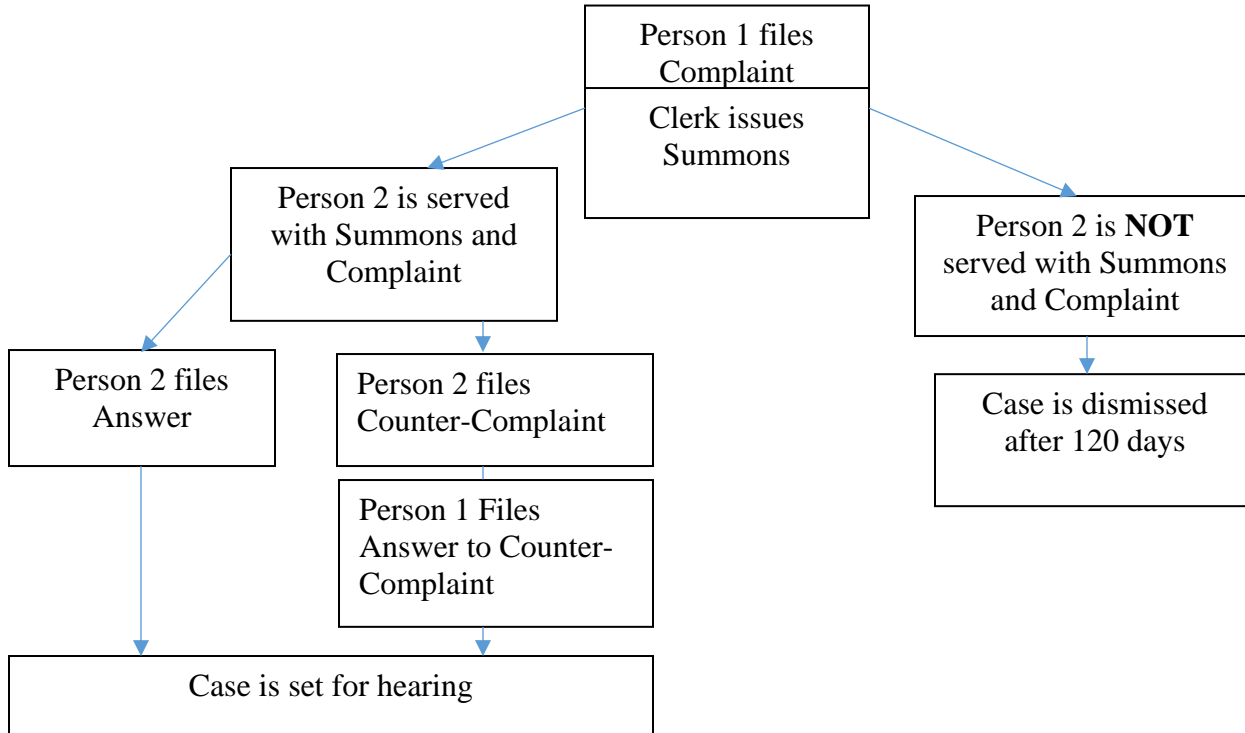
If a responding party wants the court to consider their point of view, they must file a response to the Complaint that has been served on them. That response is called an Answer, and the deadlines for response are:

- within 30 days if the defendant resides in Maryland;
- within 60 days if the defendant resides in another state in the United States; or
- within 90 days if the defendant resides in a foreign country.

The Answer must follow the requirements of Maryland Rule 3-323, including the necessity of filing a Case Information Sheet per Maryland Rule 2-323(h).

A responding party may also file a Counter-Complaint at the same time an Answer is filed or within 30 days of the date the Answer is filed, if the responding party wants the court to address issues not presented by the initiating party. Counter-Complaints must be accompanied by a Case Information Sheet and must contain a Certificate of Service.

If a Counter-Complaint is filed, the case cannot proceed until such time as an Answer to Counter-Complaint is filed. When filing an Answer to Counter-Complaint, the original initiating party does not need to file another Case Information Sheet.

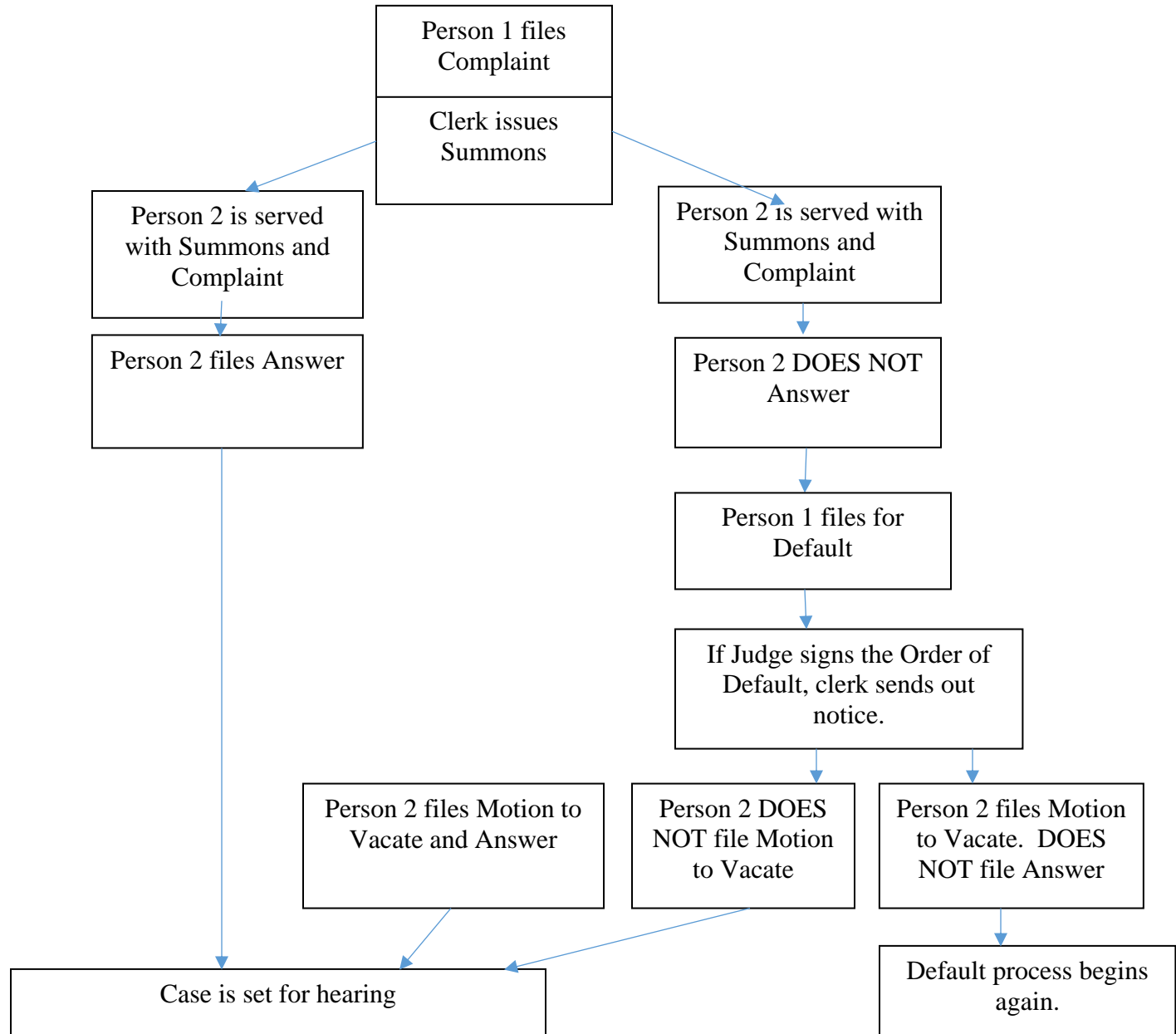


### **Default**

If a Complaint has been properly served, the appropriate amount of time has elapsed, and the responding party has not filed an Answer, the initiating party may file a Request for Default.

Requests for Default must include a Request for Default, Non-Military Affidavit, and blank Order. The Non-Military Affidavit must be signed by the initiating party (not an attorney) and must provide specifics regarding their knowledge of the responding parties' present status with respect to military service.

Requests for default are forwarded to the Motions Judge. Upon granting of default, the Clerk's office will immediately send out a notice to the responding party that the responding party is in default and has 30 days to file a Motion to Vacate.



### File Review by Case Manager

Upon the occurrence of a qualifying event, the Clerk's office will send files to the case manager for review and assignment to a track. Qualifying events include:

- The filing of an Answer to a Complaint or Petition, including Petitions to Modify in IV-D (P) cases; or
- The filing of a responsive motion pursuant to Md. Rule 2-322; or
- The entry of an Order of Default (30 days after notice sent).

After reviewing a file, the case manager will assign the case to Track 2A, Track 2B, Track 5, request a scheduling conference before a magistrate, or request a hearing on Track 6 child support modification cases. The case manager shall, in turn, make those designations known to the assignment clerk. The assignment clerk will set hearings on the dockets of judges or magistrates, as appropriate, based on track assignment and referral from case manager.

The case manager will put a checklist in the file indicating that the file has been reviewed, the status of the case, and track assignment, if appropriate.

### **Referrals for Services (Pre-Scheduling Conference)**

Per Maryland Rules 9-204 and 9-205 parties may be ordered to attend a parenting education seminar and custody/visitation mediation prior to the Scheduling Conference. Parties may attend the seminar and engage in mediation at any time prior to trial on the merits, though parties are urged to comply immediately.

Mediation will not be ordered if a party represents that there exists a genuine issue of physical or sexual abuse of a party or child who is the subject of litigation, and that mediation would therefore be inappropriate.

### **Scheduling Conference**

Domestic (D) cases determined to be Track 3, Track 4, and appropriate Track 5 shall be set for scheduling conference before a magistrate. At scheduling conference the magistrate will assist the parties with settlement negotiation if appropriate, assess the need for, and order, specific services, and designate the cases as Track 3 or Track 4. Track 5 cases may be set before a magistrate depending on issues, but the track designation will have already been set by the case manager.

Based on the track designation, the magistrate shall issue a Scheduling Order consistent with Md. Rule 2-504, which incorporates deadlines for discovery, dates for major events, and/or hearing dates set within the parameters of the designated track. If not previously addressed by the court, the magistrate may recommend the parties' and child(ren)'s participation in parenting education seminars and children's groups, and incorporate such recommendation into the proposed Scheduling Order.

Each Scheduling Order will be forwarded to the Judge-in-Charge or his/her designee for signature.

Possible Major Events include:

- Pendente Lite hearing (Track 4);
- Court Ordered Settlement Conference (Tracks 3, 4, and 5);
- Pretrial Conference (generally only in Track 4 cases);
- Trial on the Merits (all tracks)

The magistrate may also refer parties for appropriate services. Therefore, in addition to mediation and parenting education, the magistrate may recommend and/or a judge may order the appointment of counsel for a minor child, a custody evaluation, a home study, a substance abuse evaluation,

and a referral for counseling, a referral for supervised visitation or any other service or program dictated by the parties' circumstances. In addition to the Scheduling Order, orders for referral to specific services and programs along with completed referral sheets will be prepared as appropriate and forwarded to the individual providers of said services.

### **Pendente Lite Hearings**

At scheduling conference a magistrate may set a pendente lite hearing if there are emergent issues that require resolution prior to trial on the merits. Examples of emergency issues include:

- Temporary child support;
- Temporary alimony;
- Temporary custody;
- Temporary use and possession;

### **Court Ordered Settlement Conference**

Track 3, Track 4, and appropriate Track 5 cases will be set for a court ordered settlement conference 30 – 60 days before trial. At the settlement conference, parties will meet with an experienced member of the family law bar to attempt to craft a settlement prior to trial.

The conferences are set for 1 hour on either a Tuesday or Wednesday morning. Settlements are immediately put on the record, and parties may not be required to appear for any further hearings.

### **Pre-Trial Conference**

Only Track 4 cases with extremely complex issues will be set for a pre-trial conference. The hearings are held approximately 30 days prior to the date for trial on the merits and are set before the judge scheduled to conduct the trial on the merits. The conference is brief (30 minutes), and is scheduled so that the judge can insure that everyone is prepared for the upcoming trial.

### **Trial on the Merits**

At the trial on the merits, a judge or magistrate (depending on the nature of the case) will make a final decision about all issues in the case. Decisions by magistrates are subject to filing of Exceptions per Maryland Rule 9-208(f).

## **CASES SUBJECT TO SPECIAL PROCEDURES**

### **IV-D Cases (Track 6)**

#### **Establishment of Paternity and/or Child Support**

Cases for establishment or paternity and/or child support are initiated by the filing of a Complaint by the Office of the State's Attorney in conjunction with the Baltimore Office of Child Support Enforcement or by private individuals who file for support through the Baltimore City Office of Child Support Enforcement.

Cases are filed with the Paternity Section of the Family Division Clerk's office. The Clerk's office is responsible for all case scheduling, except Petitions for Modification of Child Support filed by private individuals, which are processed by the Family Division Case Manager.

All cases are set for hearing before a judge no more than 60 days from date of service. Paternity and child support establishment hearings are assigned to a judge designated to hear those cases.

All cases are set for a single hearing, although the judge may elect to set a case for future review.

A Show Cause or Summons is issued for the parties' appearances. Upon reporting to the court, the parties appear for either a contested or uncontested case.

Uncontested Cases. Uncontested cases are defined as establishment of paternity and/or establishment of child support case in which the Defendant consents to entry of an Order establishing paternity and/or establishing child support.

Contested Cases. Contested cases are defined as establishment of paternity and/or establishment of child support cases in which the Defendant denies any allegations of the Complaint. Contested cases may require multiple hearings.

### **Contempt**

Petitions for Contempt for failure to pay child support are filed by the Office of Child Support Enforcement, and are initially scheduled before the IV-D Magistrate for examination and referral to services, including the Reporter Program, if appropriate.

If parties do not respond to the efforts of the IV-D Magistrate, the magistrate will refer the parties to open court for further adjudication by a judge.

### **Modification of Child Support**

Cases for modification of IV-D child support (including dismissal) are filed by individuals who have an open case with the Office of Child Support Enforcement, or by the Office of Child Support directly.

The cases are set before the IV-D Magistrate or the part-time IV-D Magistrate.

### **UIFSA Cases (Track 6A)**

UIFSA cases are instituted by the States Attorney Office and scheduled for hearing by the Clerk's office after service of a show cause order on the defendant. UIFSA cases are designated Track 6A and retain that designation whether the pending case is initial or reopened.

## **Domestic Violence Cases (Track 1A)**

### **Temporary Protective Orders**

Individuals seeking protection under Title 4, Subtitle 5 (Domestic Violence) of the Family Law Article will be referred to a designated worker who will conduct an interview with the party, provide appropriate paperwork, enter the provided information on the computer system, and accompany the party to an immediate hearing before the Special Magistrate.

The Special Magistrate will take *ex parte* testimony and, if deemed appropriate, recommend issuance of a temporary protective order. Upon the recommendation of the Special Magistrate, a temporary protective order is generated immediately reviewed, and signed, if appropriate, by a judge.

### **Final Protective Orders**

Upon issuance of a temporary protective order, the person designated to assist in domestic violence cases will insure that the case is set for hearing before a judge for a determination of whether a final protective order should be issued. All hearings are initially set within 7 days. The designated assistant also insures that the appropriate papers are sent to the Sheriff's Office for service on the Respondent.

A judge may extend a temporary protective order for an additional seven (7) days if the respondent has not been served at the time of the final protective order hearing.

### **District Court Appeals**

Appeals from the District Court are set by the Clerk's office on the regular domestic violence rotation.

### **Post-Order Hearings (Motions for Modification, to Rescind and/or Extension)**

Upon receipt of a motion for modification, to rescind and/or extension of a final protective order, the clerk who is assigned to oversight of domestic violence cases will insure that the motion contains a proper certification of mailing, and will immediately send the case to the designated assistant. The case will be set on the regular domestic violence hearing calendar.

### **Post-Order Hearings (Civil Contempt for Violation of an Ex Parte Order)**

Upon receipt of a petition for contempt, the clerk who is assigned to oversight of domestic violence case will issue a show cause order per Maryland Rule 15-206(c), and immediately send the file to the designated domestic violence assistant.

The assistant will find an appropriate date on the judge's domestic violence hearing calendar and request that civil assignment set in the date.

## **Requests for Emergency Hearing**

Any request for a hearing under Maryland Rule 1-351 shall be treated as a request for emergency hearing. All requests for emergency hearing are forwarded to the Special Magistrate for review in as expeditious a manner as possible.

Hearings on emergency issues are set at the Special Magistrate's discretion after a determination of whether the circumstances alleged constitute an "emergency" as defined by the judge-in-charge of the division. Emergency hearings are treated the same as *pendente lite* hearings in that any orders generated are temporary in nature.

## **IMPORTANT POLICIES**

### **Postponements and Rescheduling**

#### **General Policies**

It is the general policy of the Family Division that all cases will be heard as scheduled, unless a date is postponed or vacated.

Postponements will only be granted in the event of exigent circumstances. Exigent circumstances are defined as, "an unforeseen development occurring within 30 days of the date for which postponement is sought."

Requests for postponement of events that are more than 30 days away may be filed by motion.

Please note that requests for postponement will be granted at the discretion of the postponement judge, taking into account the timeline of the track to which the case has been assigned and good cause shown. "Good cause reasons" may include the following:

- Trial date conflict, except as provided in Md. Rule 16-804;
- Serious illness of, or death in the family of, a party, counsel, or necessary witness;
- Vacation(s) scheduled prior to any assigned trial or hearing date. For vacations, requests for postponement must be made within ten (10) calendar days of issuance of Scheduling Order notification of the scheduled event if counsel was not in the case at the time the Scheduling Order was signed;
- Counsel is in trial in another matter that carries over to cause a conflict with the Baltimore City date;
- A party did not receive notice of the hearing or trial, through no fault of the party or their counsel;
- Facts or circumstances arising or becoming apparent too late in the proceedings to be corrected in advance of the hearing, and which, in the view of the court, would likely cause undue hardship or a possible miscarriage of justice if the hearing or trial proceeded as scheduled.



The following are generally NOT considered good cause for postponement:

- Vacation(s) scheduled after establishing a trial or motion date;
- Consent of counsel without compelling reason or a substantive basis;
- The matter has not previously been postponed (no preemptory postponements);
- Any matter known or which should have been known when the trial date became firm;
- New counsel has entered an appearance or a party wishes to change counsel;
- Discovery is incomplete or was just provided;
- A party wishes to conduct further investigation;
- A party or counsel is unprepared to try the case for reasons including, but not limited to, the party's failure to cooperate with or maintain necessary contact with counsel.

### **Postponement Procedures**

If the Hearing is **30+** days away. If a scheduled date is more than 30 days away, a party may request a postponement by Motion. Motions for Postponement are forwarded to the Motions Judge or directed to the Postponement Judge.

If the Hearing is **-30** days away. If a scheduled date is less than 30 days away, a party may only be granted a postponement after an appearance at postponement court. All necessary parties must be available to comment on the request and exigent circumstances must exist.

**APPENDIX 1**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Plaintiff  
v.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant

\* IN THE  
\*  
\* CIRCUIT COURT  
\*  
\* FOR  
\*  
\* BALTIMORE CITY  
\*  
\* Case No.:  
\*  
\*  
\* \* \* \* \*

**SCHEDULING ORDER**

Pursuant to Maryland Rule 2-504, after a scheduling conference held on \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ at which [the parties appeared without counsel // with counsel // Plaintiff appeared without counsel // with counsel // and Defendant appeared without counsel // with counsel](#); it is this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_, by the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, hereby

**DISCOVERY/MOTION DEADLINES:**

- \_\_\_\_ 1. ORDERED, that all Discovery, except updates, shall be concluded by \_\_\_\_\_; and it is further
- \_\_\_\_ 2. ORDERED, that Plaintiff’s Expert Reports and Md. Rule 2-402(f)(1) Disclosures shall be filed by \_\_\_\_\_; and it is further
- \_\_\_\_ 3. ORDERED, that Defendant’s Expert Reports and Md. Rule 2-402(f)(1) Disclosures shall be filed by \_\_\_\_\_; and it is further
- \_\_\_\_ 4. ORDERED, that all Motions (excluding Motions in Limine) shall be filed by 18 days before the Pre-trial Conference specified below; and it is further

**EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS:**

- \_\_\_\_ 5. ORDERED, that the parties shall attend the Co-Parenting Education Seminar (“COPE”) [per an Administrative Order to follow/as previously ordered](#); and it is further
- \_\_\_\_ 6. ORDERED, that the parties shall attend the Shared Parenting Education Seminar (“SHAPE”) [per an Administrative Order to follow/as previously ordered](#); and it is further
- \_\_\_\_ 7. ORDERED, that the child(ren) shall attend the Children’s Group [per an Administrative Order to follow/as previously ordered](#); and it is further

**ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION:**

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. ORDERED, that the parties shall attend Mediation on the issues of custody and visitation (see attached order)/ pursuant to the Order for Mediation of Custody/Visitation Issues dated ---, 2016; and it is further

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. ORDERED, that the parties shall participate in the Property ADR Program by meeting with a court-appointed mediator to discuss all property-related issues in their case for possible settlement (see attached order); and it is further

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. ORDERED, that the parties and their attorneys, if they are represented, shall attend a Court-Ordered Settlement Conference on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ p.m. in Room 112E. The Information for Settlement Conference form sent in the mail shall be completed and brought to the Settlement Conference. **A witness, for the purpose of placing testimony on the record that day, should be present if you believe the case can settle.**

**ADDITIONAL SERVICES:**

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. ORDERED, that an attorney is appointed to represent the child(ren) per the attached order;

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. ORDERED, that an investigation and/or home study by the Adoption and Custody Unit is to be conducted (see attached order); and it is further

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. ORDERED, that the parties are to undergo a custody evaluation to be performed by the Court's Medical Services Office (see attached order); and it is further

\_\_\_\_\_ 14. ORDERED, that \_\_\_\_\_ are referred to \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ (see attached order); and it is further

\_\_\_\_\_ 15. ORDERED, that \_\_\_\_\_ are referred to the following program (see attached order) regarding the children:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Supervised Visitation;
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Neutral Child Exchange Program; and it is further

**MAGISTRATE'S HEARING**

\_\_\_\_\_ 16. ORDERED, that the issues of [modification of]:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Child Support;
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Alimony;
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Custody;
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Visitation;
- \_\_\_\_\_ e. Use and Possession;
- \_\_\_\_\_ f. Initial Counsel Fees;
- \_\_\_\_\_ g. Contempt;
- \_\_\_\_\_ h. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

shall be heard before this Court on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_. in courtroom \_\_\_\_\_ before \_\_\_\_\_. The hearing shall be limited in time to \_\_\_\_\_ hours; and it is further

**PRE-TRIAL CONFERENCE:**

\_\_\_\_\_ 17. ORDERED, that there shall be a Pre-trial Conference before this Court on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ a/p.m. in courtroom \_\_\_\_\_ before the Honorable Judge \_\_\_\_\_. *The Pre-trial Conference shall be held before a judge or other designated officer of the Court. Counsel and/or parties should be prepared to discuss ALL aspects of the case in anticipation of settlement. Failure to prepare the case for the Pre-trial Conference, or failure to comply with the deadlines delineated above could result in an order limiting evidence or testimony in the case, or imposing counsel fees;* and it is further

**TRIAL ON MERITS:**

\_\_\_\_\_ 18. ORDERED, that there shall be a Trial on the Merits before this Court on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ a/p.m. in courtroom \_\_\_\_\_, Courthouse East, 111 N. Calvert Street, before the Honorable Judge \_\_\_\_\_. The hearing shall be limited in time to \_\_\_\_\_ hour. If the primary issue is divorce, **THE PERSON SEEKING THE DIVORCE MUST BRING A WITNESS WITH THEM ON THE DAY OF THE MERITS HEARING;** and it is further

**REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:**

\_\_\_\_\_ 19. ORDERED, that the parties shall comply with the following document requirements:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Rule 9-207 Joint Statement of Marital and Nonmarital Property shall be filed at least 10 days prior to the Trial on the Merits;
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Parties shall complete a Financial Statement pursuant to Maryland Rule 9-203;
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Parties/counsel shall prepare a Child Support Guidelines Worksheet;
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. The parties shall each bring to the hearing documentation of current income from all sources, including the last four (4) paycheck stubs, and most recent federal and state income tax returns;
- \_\_\_\_\_ e. Prior to the Pre-trial Conference, parties/counsel shall exchange lists of all exhibits intended to be introduced at trial and of witnesses to be called at trial.

**ADDITIONAL ORDERS:**

\_\_\_\_\_ 20. ORDERED, that:

\_\_\_\_\_ 21. AGREEMENT REACHED-ORDER ATTACHED: The parties were able to reach an agreement on the following issues: --- and that agreement was placed on the record by the Court. The following Order(s) incorporating that agreement are attached: ----. Any additional issues will be dealt with in accordance with this Scheduling Order.

\_\_\_\_\_ 22. AGREEMENT REACHED-COUNSEL TO PREPARE CONSENT ORDER. The parties were able to reach an agreement on the following issues: \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ a/p.m. in courtroom \_\_\_\_\_ before the Honorable Judge \_\_\_\_\_ and that agreement was placed on the record by the Court. Counsel for \_\_\_\_\_ will be submitting a consent Order to the court within \_\_\_\_\_ days. Any remaining issues will be dealt with in accordance with this Scheduling Order.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**JUDGE**

THIS IS A PROPER ORDER TO BE SIGNED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
FAMILY MAGISTRATE

TO: THE CLERK OF THE COURT:

Kindly forward copies of this Order to:

1.

Baltimore, Maryland  
*Plaintiff // Counsel for Plaintiff*

2.

Baltimore, Maryland  
*Defendant // Counsel for Defendant*