



SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON PRO SE LITIGATION



February 1-3, 2007, Houston Texas

FULTON COUNTY FAMILY DIVISION

State: Georgia

Name of Program & Brief Description: Fulton County Family Division

The Family Division seeks to provide a comprehensive approach to helping families in crisis by using both judicial adjudication and service intervention methods. Though the proceedings are adjudicatory, there is an effort to reduce their adversarial nature.

Parties are encouraged to take advantage of court annexed mediation which is provided at no cost. The Family Division has a Family Law Information Center which provides assistance to people who wish to represent themselves in domestic legal matters or educate themselves about domestic legal issues. The One Stop provides assistance to individuals seeking protection from domestic violence and stalking. The Families in Transition Seminar is a mandatory four-hour court-ordered educational program for parties engaged in domestic relations actions involving an original question of custody of minor children. Assisting Children in Transition is a free, voluntary seminar for children, ages 5 to 17, whose parents or guardians are attending the Families in Transition Seminar. Pursuant to the Order of the Court, Family Division provides drug testing services (at no cost) and paternity testing services (at a much reduced cost) on site.

Date Program Was Established: July 1998

Cost/Funding Source(s): \$ 1,000,041/Fulton County

Program Sponsor(s): Fulton County

Partnerships: N/A

Target Group(s)/No. Clients Served per Year:

The Family Division serves litigants involved in domestic legal actions filed in Fulton County Superior Court.

Cases Assigned to Family Division Judges in 2005: 5357

Cases Disposed by Family Division Judges in 2005: 5284

Domestic Violence Petitions Heard 2005: 1,873

Family Law Information Center 2005:

Walk-in Visitors	9280
Telephone Calls Received	22,857
Attorney Consults	956

On Site Mediations 2005: 1,180 Cases Mediated

Staffing (FTE, Part-Time, Titles):

Three Superior Court Judges hear cases assigned to the Family Division. There are 10 Judicial Officers (part-time magistrates) who provide assistance to the Family Division Judges. Through On Site Mediation, domestic mediators from the Fulton County Alternative Dispute Resolution Program provide free mediation to litigants in the Family Division when they appear in court for status conferences. Additionally, the Georgia Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers has trained case evaluators who provide late case evaluation services for litigants at no cost for the first three hours of service. *Guardians ad Litem* are provided through the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation.

The Family Division Administrative Office has 15 full-time permanent employees and one full-time temporary employee. The Family Division also uses volunteers from the Partnership against Domestic Violence and Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation to provide assistance to individuals seeking protection from domestic violence and stalking. Family Division has a contract with Atlanta Legal Aid to provide free 30 minute consultations with individuals who come to the Family Law Information Center with questions about domestic legal matters.

The Family Division Administrative Staff includes:

Director
Staff Attorney
Social Services Coordinators (3 positions, one coordinator per Family Division Judge)
Staff Psychologist
Family Law Information Center Legal Assistants (3 positions, includes one full time temporary employee)
Intake Case Manager
Intake Assistant
Families in Transition Seminar Coordinator
Domestic Violence Case Manager
One Stop Assistant
Administrative Coordinator
Administrative Assistant

Contact Person and Contact Information:

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