

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR DESOTO, MANATEE AND SARASOTA COUNTIES, FLORIDA**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO.: 2002-23-12
(Amends 99-05-12)**

**IN RE: Family Self-Help Programs
 (Amends 99-05-12 to include DeSoto County)**

Administrative Order 99-05-12, which established the Family Law Self-Help Programs,
is

hereby amended to include DeSoto County, and reads as follows:

Pursuant to Rule 12.750, Fla. Fam.L.R.P., self-help programs are hereby established in DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota Counties to facilitate access to family courts for self-represented litigants. The purpose of establishing these programs is not to provide legal advice to self-represented litigants, but to assist them in achieving a fair and efficient resolution of their family law cases. The self-help program is available for all self-represented litigants in family law actions, excluding domestic violence injunctions and matters filed in the juvenile division.

The self-help programs are operated with non-lawyer personnel. The programs encourage self-represented litigants to obtain legal advice from a private attorney, a legal aid agency, or the Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service.

Self-help personnel will provide information about approved forms and instructions for those forms. Self-help personnel will not fill out the approved forms for the self-represented litigants, and will not perform legal research for the litigants.

Self-help personnel will provide general information about the court process, practice and procedure, and will facilitate the scheduling of hearings.

A “Notice of Limitation of Services Provided” is prominently posted in both English and Spanish outside each self-help program office. Each self-represented litigant shall sign an acknowledgment that the disclaimer has been explained and that the litigant understands the limitation of the services provided by the self-help program. The self-help personnel will only provide the litigants with the “Notice of Limitation of Services Provided” if one has not previously been acknowledged and signed.

DONE AND ORDERED in Manatee County, Florida, this 8th day of July, 2002.

Original Signed & Filed with Clerk
Thomas M. Gallen, Chief Judge

Original to:
Clerk of Court, Sarasota County

Copies to:
Clerk of Court, Manatee County
Clerk of Court, DeSoto County
Court Administrator’s Office
Self-Help Program Coordinators