

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 04 –15**

(Family Court Attorney Panel Administration)

WHEREAS, Administrative Order No. 02-15 issued April 26, 2002 created an *ad hoc* Committee designated the Family Court Panels Committee for the purpose of creating panels of attorneys for representation of indigents in Family Court proceedings; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Family Court Panels Committee’s recommendations, the Chief Judge established four panels for appointment of attorneys in juvenile proceedings (“Juvenile Panel”), as guardians *ad litem* (“GAL Panel”), as special education advocates (“SEA Panel”), and as counsel to parties in neglect and termination of parental rights proceedings (“CCAN Panel”); and

WHEREAS, as part of its report, the Committee recommended that a standing committee of judicial officers be appointed to address issues concerning the process by which lawyers may become members of one or more of the Family Court Panels in the future; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Committee’s recommendation, the Superior Court established a Family Court Panel Oversight Subcommittee under the auspices of the Family Court Implementation Committee to make recommendations as to what, if any, application process should be adopted;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY,

ORDERED, there is hereby created the “Panel Oversight Subcommittee of the Family Court Implementation Committee, which shall consist of Family Court judicial officers designated by the Presiding Judge of the Family Court, and whose purpose will be to consider applications to any Family Court Attorney Panel established pursuant to Administrative Order 03-11; and it is further,

ORDERED, to be considered for appointment to any Family Court Panel, an attorney must submit an application on forms to be made available through the Office of the Director of the Family Court and any information that the Committee may request, including compliance with any applicable Practice Standards and requirements for continuing legal education; and it is further,

ORDERED, the Committee may consider applications and make appointments to the Family Court Panels at any time and shall consider applications at least annually on a date or dates scheduled by the Presiding Judge of the Family Court; and it is further,

ORDERED, within 60 days of submission of the application, the Committee shall determine whether an applicant’s education, experience and expressed interest

warrant appointment to one or more of the Family Court Panels and shall recommend those applicants to the Chief Judge; and it is further

ORDERED, in deciding which applicants are best qualified for appointment to the Family Court Panels, the Committee may seek the views of other judicial officers, including present and past members of the Family Court, and shall consider the recommendations of the Family Court Advisory Attorney Selection Committee, composed of attorneys from the Public Defender Service, Family Court Trial Lawyer's Association and the Superior Court Trial Lawyer's Association; and it is further,

ORDERED, after considering the recommendations of the Committee, the Chief Judge, in consultation with the Presiding Judge of the Family Court, will make the final decision on appointment of attorneys to appropriate Family Court Panels pursuant to Administrative Order 03-11; and it is further,

ORDERED, the Chief Judge, in consultation with the Presiding Judge of the Family Court, may appoint attorneys whose qualifications do not warrant full membership on the panels as provisional panel members with the anticipation that after a period of one year they will be considered for full membership upon review of their work during the provisional period; and it is further,

ORDERED, attorneys not selected for any Family Court Panel to which they have applied may not re-apply for selection to those panel for a period of one year from the date notification of non-selection was sent to the applicants.

SO ORDERED.

BY THE COURT

July 23, 2004

Rufus G. King, III, Chief Judge

Copies to:

**Judges
Magistrate Judges
Executive Officer
Clerk of the Court
Division Directors
Director, CCAN Office
Library**

LETTERHEAD

Memorandum to Counsel:

On (date) pursuant to recommendations of Family Court Panels Committee (hereafter referred to as the "Panels Committee"), I issued Administrative Order No. 03-11 that established four panels of attorneys for representation of children and indigents in Family Court neglect and juvenile proceedings. The four panels consisted of attorneys eligible for appointment as guardians *ad litem* ("GAL panel"), special education advocates ("SEA panel"), and parent or caretaker attorneys ("CCAN panel") and as counsel in juvenile matters ("Juvenile panel") (collectively referred to as the "Family Court Panels").

Pursuant to other recommendations of the Panels Committee, I established the Family Court Panel Oversight Subcommittee (hereinafter referred to as the "Oversight Committee") under the auspices of the Family Court Implementation Committee, chaired by the Presiding Judge of the Family Court. The Oversight Committee was requested to make recommendations to me concerning, among other things, a procedure by which the Superior Court would accept and act upon future applications by lawyers for participation on a Family Court Panel. The Oversight Committee recommended an ongoing application procedure that I adopt in its entirety by Administrative Order this date.

Although I commend to you the Administrative Order, in summary the Court is adopting a regular process by which attorneys may apply to be a member of any of the Family Court Panels throughout the year. The Oversight Committee shall consider applications submitted on or before the close of the annual application. In essence, each year the Court will have an ongoing application process with a "cut-off" date for making application. The Oversight Committee will make a decision on any application not more than sixty (60) days after the annual application date.

I am creating a Family Court Advisory Attorney Selection Committee which shall assist the Oversight Committee in identifying and recommending persons who are best qualified to fill positions on the panels. This committee will be composed of lawyers from the Public Defender Service, the Family Court Trial Lawyer's Association and the Superior Court Trial Lawyer's Association.

If an attorney is determined by the Oversight Committee to be qualified for appointment to one or more panels, the attorney may be appointed to cases in the Family Court as set forth in Administrative Order 03-11. In addition to panel membership, the Court may also designate an attorney as a provisional panel member for a period of one year. After this provisional period, the Committee may consider counsel for full panel membership. The Court is establishing this provisional membership to allow attorneys who have a demonstrated interest in this area to begin to practice and gain experience and allow the Court to assess their performance.

The annual application date will be September 1. Thus, if any attorney seeks to become a member of any panel, counsel must file an application before that date. The Committee will consider all applications and make a determination on or before November 1 of each year. For the September 1, 2004 application date any attorney, including those who have applied previously to be a member of the Family Court Panels, may make application. Thereafter, pursuant to the Administrative Order, if an attorney is not selected for one or more panels, he or she may not apply to be selected for that panel for one year from the date notification of non-selection was sent to the applicant.

I am convinced that it is in the best interest of the children of the District of Columbia to allow attorneys who are enthusiastic and committed to providing high quality representation to apply to the Family Court Panels on an on-going basis. The issuance of the Administrative Order continues the process by which the Superior Court ensures that excellent representation is provided to all families, especially the children, involved in neglect and abuse, and juvenile matters.

Sincerely,

Rufus G. King, III
Chief Judge