

### **Rule A. Branches, Sections, and Scope**

(a) The Family Court shall be divided into such branches and sections as the Chief Judge shall direct.

(b) To the greatest extent practicable, feasible, and lawful, all cases assigned to the Family Court concerning the same or immediate family or household members, and any subsequent case, shall be assigned to the same judicial officer and shall remain with him or her until final disposition. See D.C. Code § 11-1104.

### COMMENT

The Family Court is divided into the following branches:

(a) The Domestic Relations Branch. The proceedings enumerated in D.C. Code §§ 11-1101(a)(1) to (9), (12) are conducted in the Domestic Relations Branch.

(b) The Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect Branch. The Counsel for Child Abuse and Neglect Branch provides and trains attorneys for the representation of children in cases of abuse or neglect, as defined in D.C. Code § 16-2301. The Branch also trains attorneys for eligible parents and caretakers in abuse and neglect cases.

(c) The Juvenile and Neglect Branch. Proceedings in which a child, as defined in D.C. Code § 16-2301, is alleged to be neglected, abused, delinquent or in need of supervision (D.C. Code § 11-1101(a)(13)), and proceedings under the Interstate Compact on Juveniles (D.C. Code § 11-1101(a)(16)), are conducted in the Juvenile and Neglect Branch.

(d) Marriage Bureau Branch. Licenses to solemnize marriages pursuant to D.C. Code § 46-401 et seq. are issued in the Marriage Bureau Branch.

(e) Mental Health and Habilitation Branch. Proceedings under D.C. Code § 21-1101 et seq. relating to the commitment of the mentally ill, and proceedings under D.C. Code § 7-1301.01 et seq. relating to the admission of the mentally retarded and the commitment of the at least moderately mentally retarded, are conducted in the Mental Health and Habilitation Branch.

(f) Paternity and Child Support Branch. Proceedings to determine the paternity of any child born out of wedlock (D.C. Code § 11-1101(a)(11)), and proceedings for the support of children under the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act of 1995, D.C. Code § 46-301.01 et seq., are conducted in the Paternity and Support Branch.