

CIRCUIT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE # _____

ATTORNEY QUALIFICATIONS IN CHILD CUSTODY MATTERS

A. The Sixth Judicial Circuit shall maintain a list of approved attorneys qualified to be appointed in child custody and visitation matters covered under Section IX of the Supreme Court Rules as guardians ad litem, child representatives, or attorneys for children.

B. In order to qualify for the approved list each applicant for the list shall meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Each attorney shall be licensed and in good standing with the Illinois Supreme Court.

2. Each attorney shall have attended the education program created by the Illinois State Bar Association for education of attorneys appointed in child custody cases or equivalent education programs consisting of a minimum of ten hours of continuing legal education credit within the two years prior to the date the attorney applies to be appointed.

3. To remain on the approved list, each attorney shall attend continuing legal education courses consisting of at least ten hours every two year period and submit verification of attendance to the Office of the Chief Circuit Judge at the time of attendance or upon request. The ten hours should include courses in child development, ethics in child custody cases, relevant substantive law in custody, guardianship and visitation issues, domestic violence, family dynamics including substance abuse and mental health issues, and education on the roles and responsibilities of guardians ad litem, child representatives, and attorneys for children. Attendance at programs sponsored by this circuit may be included as a portion of this continuing education requirement.

4. Each attorney must complete the Child Representation Information Sheet provided by this circuit and return it with a statement or other verification of attendance at continuing education. A copy of said sheet is attached hereto as "Attachment A."

5. Each attorney must adhere to the minimum duties and responsibilities of attorneys for minor children as delineated in Supreme Court Rule 907.

C. Each attorney placed on the approved list and appointed shall be paid by the parties to the litigation as ordered by the judge handling the file or as agreed between the litigants. The costs for the appointed attorneys shall be paid as ordered and the court may enforce the orders and judgments as in other proceedings, including the imposition of sanctions.

D. In the event the court deems it is in the best interests of the child or children to have an attorney appointed in a proceeding under Section IX of the Supreme Court Rules but finds that the parties are both indigent, the court may appoint an attorney from the approved list to serve pro bono.

E. The Chief Judge and/or Presiding Judge of the Family Division of each county shall maintain the list of the approved attorneys and shall rotate the appointment of pro bono representations.

F. Each attorney on the approved list for the Judicial Circuit shall only be required to accept one pro bono appointment each calendar year.

G. The Chief Judge of this Circuit maintains the authority to remove any attorney from the list of approved attorneys based upon the failure to meet the listed qualifications or for good cause, including the failure of any appointed attorney to perform as provided in Supreme Court Rule 907.

H. If recommended by the Presiding Judge of each county of the Sixth Judicial Circuit, the Chief Judge may authorize designated attorneys for the approved list prior to the effective date of this Order even though they have not attended the education program referred to in paragraph B.2 if the said attorneys have extensive qualifications and experience in the area of family law.

Entered this _____ day of _____, 2006

CHIEF JUDGE OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

CIRCUIT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE # _____

CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCES

A. In accordance with Supreme Court Rule 923 in all child custody proceedings an initial case management conference pursuant to Rule 218 shall be held not later than ninety (90) days after service of the petition.

B. At the case management conference the parties shall show proof of completion of Children's First or TransParenting, the parties shall provide the court with an agreed custody and visitation order, the court shall schedule the matter for mediation if custody and visitation is in dispute, and the court may address any other appropriate issues with the parties.

C. A full case management conference shall be held not later than thirty (30) days after mediation has been completed.

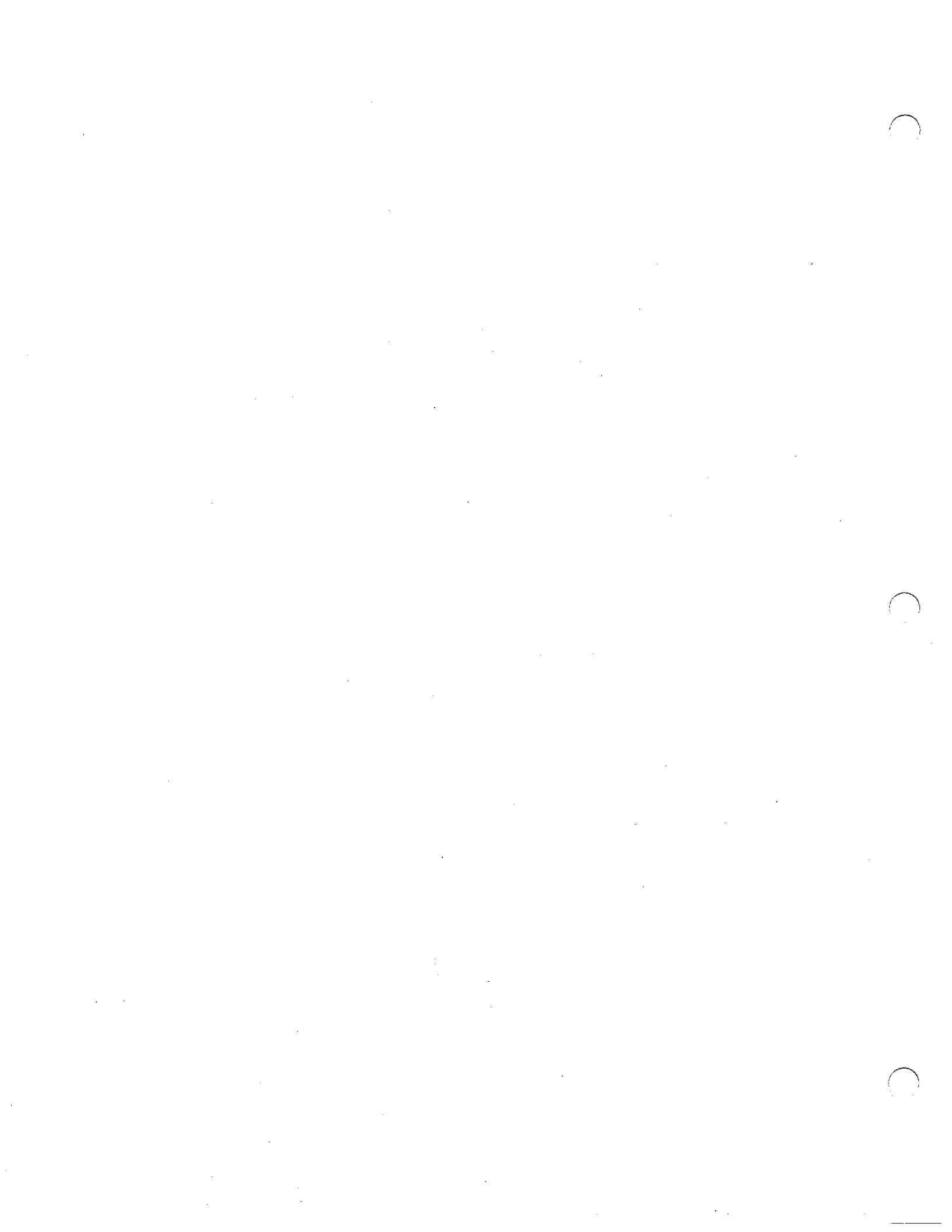
D. The court, if custody and visitation is still in dispute, may at the subsequent case management conference appoint an attorney for the child or a guardian *ad litem* or a child representative and may discuss any other appropriate issue.

E. At the original and/or the subsequent case management conference the court shall issue a Case Management Order in substantially the form contained in "Attachment D".

F. It is the responsibility and obligation of the Petitioner's attorney or the Petitioner in a contested custody and/or visitation case to request and schedule an initial case management conference with the Court not later than ninety (90) days after service of the petition on the Respondent or after notice is sent to the Respondent. It is also the responsibility and obligation of the Petitioner's attorney or the Petitioner to request and schedule a subsequent case management conference not later than thirty (30) days after mediation has been completed. The failure of Petitioner's attorney or the Petitioner to schedule such hearings may subject that party to appropriate sanctions imposed by the Court.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 2006

CHIEF JUDGE OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



CIRCUIT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE # _____

COORDINATION OF CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDINGS

In accordance with Supreme Court Rule 903, whenever possible and appropriate, all child custody proceedings relating to an individual child shall be conducted by a single judge. Whenever a child custody proceeding (as defined in Rule 900 of the Supreme Court Rules) is filed and there is a child custody matter already pending before another judge involving the same child, the judges involved shall confer as often as needed and jointly determine which court shall control and hear said issues and shall consider the impact of such orders on siblings, relatives and parties in each case as well as whether consolidation of such cases may be impracticable because of the issues involved or the arrangement of courtrooms, facilities and assignment of auxiliary court personnel.

Entered this _____ day of _____, 2006.

CHIEF JUDGE OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

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CIRCUIT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE # _____

EXPEDITED CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDINGS

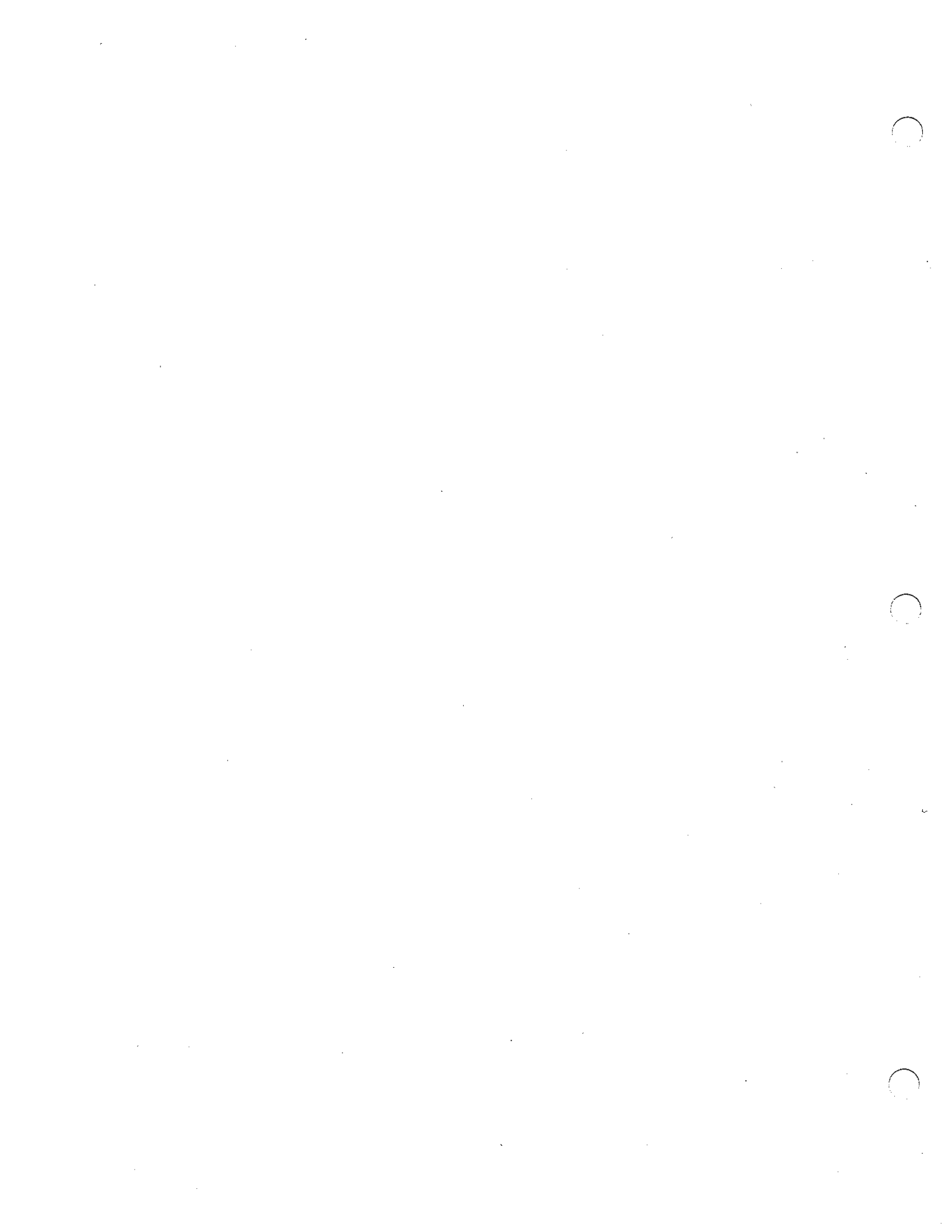
A. In accordance with Supreme Court Rule 901 all child custody proceedings shall be scheduled and heard on an expedited basis. Continuances shall not be granted in child custody proceedings except for good cause shown and only may be granted if consistent with the health, safety and best interests of the child. The party requesting the continuance and the reason for the continuance shall be documented in the record.

B. In accordance with Supreme Court Rule 922 all child custody proceedings shall be resolved within eighteen (18) months from the date of service of the petition to final order. In the event this time limit is not met, the trial judge shall make written findings as to the reasons for the delay and shall consider whether an extension should be allowed for good cause shown.

C. In any child custody proceeding taken under advisement by the court, the trial judge shall render a decision as soon as possible but not later than 60 days after the completion of the hearing.

Entered this _____ day of _____, 2006

CHIEF JUDGE OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



CIRCUIT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE # _____

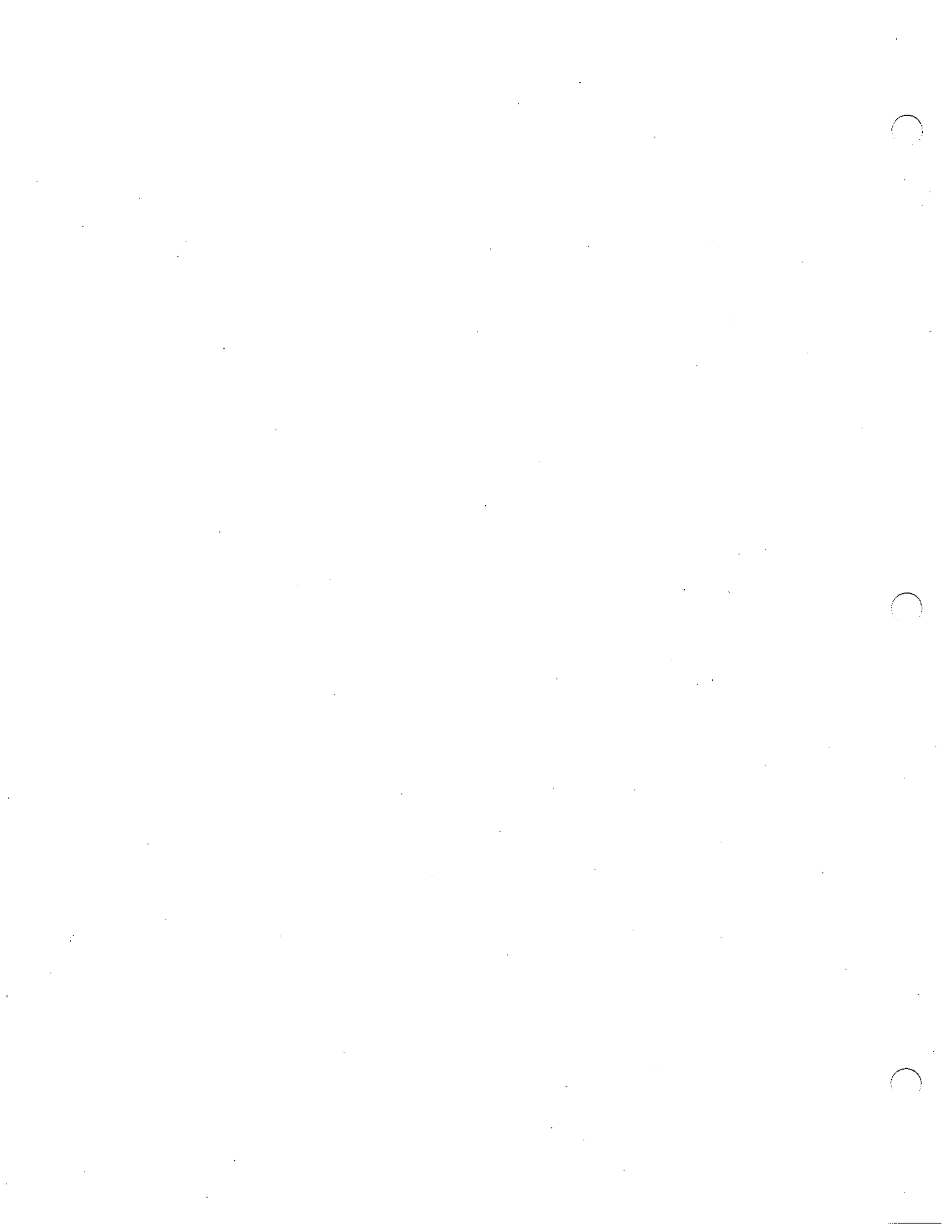
JUDICIAL TRAINING IN CHILD CUSTODY ISSUES

A. In the Sixth Judicial Circuit all judges assigned to hear child custody cases shall be carefully selected by the Chief Judge or his designee with consideration being given to the judge's judicial and legal experience and prior training.

B. All judges hearing child custody cases in the Sixth Judicial Circuit should attend and participate regularly in seminars and judicial education opportunities approved by the Supreme Court on topics dealing with issues related to child development, child psychology and family dynamics, domestic violence, alternative dispute resolutions, child sexual abuse, financial issues in custody matters, addiction and treatment issues, statutory time limitations, and cultural and diversity issues.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2006

CHIEF JUDGE OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



CIRCUIT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE # _____

MANDATORY MEDIATION OF CUSTODY AND VISITATION ISSUES

A. The Sixth Judicial Circuit shall maintain a list of mediators involving custody and visitation issues.

B. The mediator's training and experience shall be as follows:

1. Completion of a Master's Degree in a relevant behavioral science, conflict resolution, or law degree, and specialized training in mediation as defined below.

2. Specialized training in family mediation shall consist of at least forty (40) hours of training with a minimum of five (5) hours in each of the following areas of knowledge:

- (a) Conflict resolution theory;
- (b) Psychological issues in separation, dissolution and family dynamics;
- (c) Issues and needs of children in dissolution and family proceedings;
- (d) Mediation process and technique;
- (e) Knowledge of substantive areas of family law as it relates to custody and visitation.

This specialized training may consist of lectures, conferences, continuing education programs, graduate classes, seminars or specialized training programs in custody and visitation mediation.

3. The mediators must participate in continuing education in the above areas.

4. The mediators must agree to provide some minimal mediation service in the community for nominal or no fee for individuals meeting the relevant poverty guidelines in the community.

C. The list of approved mediators in the Sixth Judicial Circuit shall be retained in the Office of the Chief Judge and presiding Judge of each county of the Sixth Judicial Circuit.

D. No contested final hearing on the issues of custody and visitation shall be set by the court until the parties have completed mediation.

E. The court may excuse mediation if it is determined that an impediment to mediation exists.

F. If recommended by the Presiding Judge of each county of the Sixth Judicial Circuit, the Chief Judge may authorize designated mediators for the approved list prior to the effective date of this Order even though they have not obtained the specialized training referred to in paragraph B.2 if the said mediators have extensive qualifications and experience in the mediation of family law issues.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2006

CHIEF JUDGE OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

CIRCUIT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE # _____

PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM REQUIREMENT

A. The Sixth Judicial Circuit approves Children's First and TransParenting as approved parenting education programs for the Sixth Judicial Circuit. There programs consist of at least four (4) hours of training covering the subjects of visitation and custody and their impact on children.

B. Except when excused by the court for good cause shown, all parties prior to the entry of a custody order shall be required to attend and complete an approved parenting education program as soon as possible, but not later than 60 days after an initial case management conference. The court shall not excuse attendance unless the reason is documented in the record and a finding is made that excusing one or both parties from attendance is in the best interests of the child.

C. The Order requiring completion of Children's First and TransParenting which shall be entered at the initial case management conference in substantially the form noted herein is attached hereto as "Attachment B."

D. Each county of the Sixth Judicial Circuit will provide its respective contact number of its parenting education program to the Office of the Chief Judge.

E. The court may impose sanctions on any party willfully failing to complete the program.

Entered this _____ day of _____, 2006

CHIEF JUDGE OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

