

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER GOVERNING ADOPTION RECORDS
AND PETITIONS FOR ADOPTION**

The purpose of this Administrative Order is to provide attorneys for adoptive parents access to adoption court files without need to file a motion to unseal an adoption court file in virtually every case and to eliminate unnecessary delays and additional financial expense in the filing of an adoption petition.

Section 63.162(2), Florida Statutes, provides that all papers and records pertaining to an adoption are confidential and subject to inspection only upon order of the court. Section 28.29, Florida Statutes, requires the Clerk of Courts to record all final judgments of civil actions in the official records, but the recording of a final judgment of adoption in the official records would frustrate the confidentiality provisions of section 63.162(2).

By the power vested in the chief judge under Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution, section 43.26, Florida Statutes, and Rule 2.215 of the Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration, unless otherwise provided herein, to continue until further order and superseding any provisions in prior Administrative Orders that may be inconsistent, it is **ORDERED**:

1. This Administrative Order is **effective immediately**.
2. Access to Court File by Adoptive Parents' Attorney. An attorney of record for the adoptive parents may have access to the respective adoption court file while the adoption is pending. The adoption is pending from the initial filing until the time expires to file an appeal and, if filed, determined by the appellate court.

3. Final Judgments.

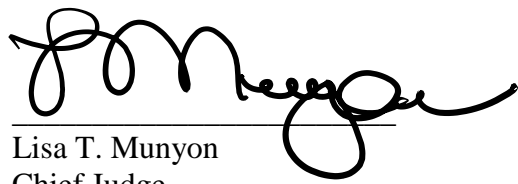
i. Certified Copies for Adoptive Parents' Attorney. If requested by an attorney of record for the adoptive parents, and subject to payment of the appropriate fees, the clerk will provide to an attorney of record for the adoptive parents certified copies of the final judgment of adoption.

ii. No Recording. Unless otherwise ordered by the presiding judge in the respective Unified Family Court division, the clerk must not release final judgments of adoption from the court file for recording in the official records.

4. Pursuant to section 63.112(1), Petitions for Adoption must be signed and verified. This may be accomplished on the part of the adoptive parents through electronic signature. Further, under section 92.525(4)(c), Florida Statutes, "The requirement that a document be verified means that the document must be signed or executed by a person and that the person must state under oath or affirm that the facts or matters stated or recited in the document are true, or words of that import or effect." The Petition is not required to be notarized.

5. To the extent that this Administrative Order may conflict with law, statute, or rule, the law, statute, or rule shall prevail.

DONE AND ORDERED at Orlando, Florida, this 9th day of October, 2023.



Lisa T. Munyon
Chief Judge

Copies provided to:

Clerk of Court, Orange County
Clerk of Court, Osceola County
General E-Mail Distribution List
<http://www.ninthcircuit.org>