

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 14-20**

**Timeline for Resolution of Motions and Entry of Written Findings of Fact and
Conclusions of Law in Neglect, Adoption, and
Termination of Parental Rights Cases**

WHEREAS, pursuant to D.C. Code § 11-906(a), the chief judge shall administer and superintend the business of the Superior Court; and

WHEREAS, it is in the interests of the residents of the District of Columbia – specifically, the parties to neglect, adoption, and termination of parental rights (TPR) cases – to have decisions on motions and entry of written findings of fact and conclusions of law made in a timely and efficient manner; and

WHEREAS, timely resolution of motions and the timely entry of findings of fact and conclusions of law following neglect, adoption, and TPR trials would serve the best interests of the children, promote timely resolution of issues, and provide certainty of outcome for all parties;

NOW, THEREFORE, it is by the Court,

ORDERED, that the clerk of the court is authorized to take the following steps to promote timely resolution of these matters:

If a decision has not been rendered within 60 days of the date on which a motion was taken under advisement or written findings of fact and conclusions of law have not been entered within 60 days following the conclusion of a trial, the clerk shall send notice of that fact to the assigned judicial officer and shall repeat such notice every 30 days thereafter until a decision is rendered or a written findings of fact and conclusions of law is entered.

If no decision is rendered or if no written findings of fact and conclusions of law are entered within 30 days of the of the issuance of the first such notice, the clerk thereafter shall so advise that judicial officer, the presiding judge of the Family Court, and the deputy presiding judge of the Family Court.

If no decision is rendered or if no written findings of fact and conclusions of law are entered within 60 days of the issuance of the first such notice, the clerk thereafter shall so advise that judicial officer, the parties and the chief judge, and the assigned judicial officer shall provide to the chief judge and the parties within 30 days a written explanation for why the decision has not been rendered or the written findings of fact and conclusions of law have not been entered.

The chief judge may take any action the chief judge deems appropriate in order to cause the matter to be decided or the written findings of fact and conclusions of law to be entered promptly. If there has been no decision or written findings of fact and conclusions of law have not been entered within six months, the chief judge may reassign the case to another judicial officer for retrial. Any judicial delay in deciding a motion or entering written findings of fact and conclusions of law shall not be a basis for dismissal of a neglect case; and it is further

ORDERED, that this order shall take effect immediately.

SO ORDERED.

DATE: November 21, 2014

/s/

Lee F. Satterfield
Chief Judge

Copies to:

**All Judges
Executive Officer
Clerk of the Court
Division Directors
Attorney Advisor
Judge-in-Chambers
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Clerk of the Court, Court of Appeals**