

# JUDICIAL COMMUNICATIONS ACROSS CIRCUIT, COUNTY, OR STATE LINES

## Background & Analysis

The Code of Judicial Conduct, Canon 3B(7)(c) states, “A judge may consult with other judges or with court personnel whose function is to aid the judge in carrying out the judge’s adjudicative responsibilities.” The same Canon also specifically authorizes judges to communicate regarding case management and coordination. Likewise, Fla. Fam. L. R.P. 12.003(a)(2) says:

(i)f it is impractical for one judge to handle all related family cases, the judges assigned to hear the related cases involving the same family and/or children may confer for the purpose of case management and coordination of the cases. Notice and communication shall comply with Canon 3B(7) of the Code of Judicial Conduct.

Section 61.511(3), Florida Statutes, part of the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act, allows courts in different states to confer regarding proceedings regarding schedules, calendars, court records and other matters without informing the parties. However, if the courts will be discussing substantive matters, the court must allow the parties to participate, and if they elect to do so, the parties must have a chance to present facts and legal arguments regarding jurisdiction, and the court must make a record of the communication. §§61.511(2)(4), Florida Statutes.