

## **TIME RESTRICTIONS REGARDING FINAL INJUNCTION HEARINGS**

Litigants and counsel are hereby advised that Florida law requires the Court to very rapidly resolve petitions for injunctions involving: domestic violence, repeat violence, dating violence, stalking and sexual violence. The reasons the Court makes these cases a high priority is to protect the public from potential harm as well as to protect the accused from unnecessary deprivation of liberty interests.

For these reasons, the Court hears these injunctions on a weekly basis and in every case the parties get an initial hearing no more than 15-days after the filing of a petition. On many of these hearing days the courtroom is packed with myriad petitioners and respondents. Some folks are represented. Many are not. The Court has the duty and obligation to give each and every citizen a full right to be heard.

It is simply ***impossible*** for the Court to do this if a single case is going to take several hours (morning and afternoon sessions should last no more than 4 hours total). When attorneys, *without notice and approval of the Court*, take 2 or 3 hours to litigate a petition they deprive the rest of the litigants in the courtroom of an opportunity to be heard.

This is simply not fair to the public and it is not consistent with best practices and Florida Law. Therefore, the Court will not allow this practice to continue.

The Court will not establish a policy nor will it set strict time limits on the presentation of cases. It is understood that the size of dockets varies and sometimes unexpected events cause cases to take longer than expected to be completed.

However, the Court will now expect all counsel to evaluate their cases in advance **of** hearing. If there is an attorney on the other side they shall consult regarding length of hearing with that colleague. If it is believed that the entire hearing (including cross-examination, closings, etc.) will take longer than forty-five minutes, than the attorney(s) shall notify the Court (prior to the hearing date) and the Court will decide whether to special set the case on another date.

Failure to do so may result in either a *sua sponte* continuance of the matter (even after the presentation has begun) or the Court placing a time limit on each side during the hearing.