

**484.65 FAMILY COURT DIVISION; FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT.**

Subdivision 1. **Presiding judge.** In the Fourth Judicial District, a Family Court Division of the district court is hereby created to be presided over by a district court judge appointed by the chief judge of the judicial district to serve for a term not exceeding six years. The judge appointed to this office shall be designated as the district court judge, Family Court Division. No judge may be appointed to serve consecutive terms as the district court judge, Family Court Division.

Subd. 2. **Assignment of matters.** Said district court judge shall hear and determine all family matters assigned by the chief judge of the Fourth Judicial District with the approval of the majority of the judges of said district.

Subd. 3. **Space; personnel; supplies.** The Board of County Commissioners of Hennepin County shall provide suitable chambers and courtroom space and bailiffs, together with necessary library supplies and other expenses necessary. The state shall provide referees, court reporters, law clerks, and guardian ad litem program coordinators and staff.

Subd. 4. **Vacancy.** In cases of vacancy in the office, or if work load, absence, sickness or other disability prevents a judge from fully performing duties, the chief judge of the district court of the Fourth Judicial District may orally or in writing designate or assign one or more of the other judges of the district court to perform or assist in the performance of the duties of the district court judge, family court division.

Subd. 5. **Ordinary duties.** The district court judge, family court division, may be designated in writing by the chief judge of the district court of the Fourth Judicial District to the regular or ordinary duties of a judge of the district court.

Subd. 6. **Filling vacancies.** Vacancies in the office of district court judge, family court division, shall be filled in the manner prescribed by law for the filling of vacancies in the office of other judges of the district court.

Subd. 7. **Referees; appointment.** The district court judge, family court division, may, with the consent and approval of the judges of the district court of the Fourth Judicial District, appoint one or more suitable persons to act as referees. Such referees shall be learned in the law and shall hold office at the pleasure of the judges of the district court.

Subd. 8. **Referees; duties.** The duties and powers of referees in the family court division shall be as follows:

(1) hear and report all matters within the jurisdiction of the district court judge, family court division, as may be directed to the referee by said judge;

(2) recommend findings of fact, conclusions of law, temporary and interim orders, and final orders for judgment.

Subd. 9. **Referees; appeal.** All recommended orders and findings of a referee shall be subject to confirmation by said district court judge. Fourth Judicial District Family Court referee orders and decrees may be appealed directly to the Court of Appeals in the same manner as judicial orders and decrees. The time for appealing an appealable referee order runs from service by any party of written notice of the filing of the confirmed order.

Subd. 10. **Referees; findings and orders.** Upon the conclusion of the hearing in each case, the referee shall transmit to said district court judge the court file together with the referee's recommended findings and orders in writing. The recommended findings and orders of a referee become the findings and orders of the court when confirmed by said judge. The order of the court shall be proof of such confirmation.

**History:** *Ex1971 c 7 s 2; 1977 c 432 s 14,15; 1981 c 292 s 3; 1983 c 370 s 2-4; 1986 c 444; 1989 c 335 art 3 s 20,21; 1999 c 216 art 7 s 29; 2006 c 260 art 5 s 23; 2006 c 280 s 8*