

# **District Court of Tulsa County**

## **Family Court – Families in Transition**

### **First Quarter Report**

### **2010**

Report by:  
Nicole W. Kirkland, MSW  
Family Court Case Coordinator

Tulsa County Courthouse  
500 S. Denver Ave., Room 109  
Tulsa, OK 74103  
(918) 596-5410

Families in Transition website:  
[www.familiesintransition.com](http://www.familiesintransition.com)

# **Tulsa County Family Court**

## **Domestic Judges**

FD Docket A  
The Honorable Carl Funderburk  
Clerk: Nikki Godwin

FD Docket B  
The Honorable Wilma Palmer  
Clerk: KimberLee Rutledge

FD Docket C  
The Honorable Mark Barcus  
Clerk: Linda McMurray

FD Docket D  
The Honorable William Musseman, Jr.  
Clerk: Suzi Collins

FD Docket E  
The Honorable Rodney Sparkman  
Clerk: Shana Grandstaff

## **Protective Order Judge**

The Honorable Charles Hogshead  
Clerk: Kimberly Wiley

## **Referee**

The Honorable Russell Anderson  
Clerk: Ash Jones

## **Family Court Case Coordinator**

Nicole W. Kirkland, MSW

## **Family Resource Coordinator**

Cheryl Conklin

## **DHS Child Support Services**

Ross Aston

# Family Court – Families in Transition

## First Quarter 2010

Tulsa County's Family Court, Families In Transition (FIT), provided triage for the Family Court Judges by reducing court involvement and providing services and resources to litigants. The following report illustrates the specialized dockets and services in place for Tulsa County.

### Parenting Plan Conference Docket

All Dissolution of Marriage, Legal Separation, and Paternity cases involving minor children are scheduled on the PPC docket two to three weeks after the petition is filed. This docket is managed by the Referee.

**Total PPC dockets:**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 33

**Total cases on dockets:**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 827

**Total litigants on dockets:**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 1,654

**Children affected in cases:**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 1,269

Data collected on the PPC Survey.

**Self-Represented Litigants:**

(One or both sides Pro Se.)

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 35%

Data collected on the PPC Survey.

#### 1. Referee:

- a. Helped families understand the effects of divorce and conflict on their children and encouraged families to create a Temporary Order Agreement;
- b. Self-represented cases without an attorney on both sides were sent to the Family Resource Coordinator for mediation services;
- c. Cases with at least one attorney involved, that could not reach an agreement, conferenced with the Referee Judge. If an agreement could not be reached the Referee referred the case to their Assigned Judge to schedule a Temporary Order Hearing:

#### Case data:

- Total cases stricken/passed:  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010: 58%      4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2009: 54%
- Total self-represented cases sent to the Family Resource Coordinator (both sides Pro Se):  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010: 9%      4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2009: 9%
- Temporary Order (TO) to be submitted:  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010: 3%      4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2009: 12%
- Submitted TO without a conference:  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010: 15%      4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2009: 7%
- Conferenced with the Referee:  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010: 15%      4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2009: 18%

After conferencing with the Referee:

- Submitted TO:  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010: 69%                      4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2009: 43%
- Referred to Temporary Order Hearing:  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010: 4%                      4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2009: 40%
- Passed:  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010: 27%                      4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2009: 17%

## **2. Family Resource Coordinator:**

- a. Provided community resources to all litigants;
- b. Distributed the Parenting Plan Conference Survey to all litigants. Results on page 5;
- c. Worked with self-represented litigants at the Parenting Plan Conference docket to achieve financial and visitation agreements through mediation:

### **Total mediations with self-represented litigants:**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 82

### **Total temporary agreements:**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 73

This resulted in 89% of self-represented litigants coming to financial and visitation agreements.

## **3. Family Court Case Coordinator:**

- a. Verified services with the Department of Human Services (DHS) on all cases scheduled for the Parenting Plan Conference docket;
- b. Case data submitted to the DHS – Child Support Enforcement offices each week:

### **Total cases verified by DHS:**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 505

### **Of the cases verified, total disclaimers signed and filed by the Family Court Case Coordinator (family did not have services with DHS):**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 334

### **Of the cases verified, total cases sent to DHS for review/signage (family had services with DHS):**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 171

This resulted in sending 34% of the cases to DHS for review/signage.

# Parenting Plan Conference Survey Totals

**1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Blank</b>
1. I received a Families in Transition packet at the beginning of my divorce process.	400 <b>61.29%</b>	134 <b>20.74%</b>	92 <b>14.24%</b>	20 <b>3.10%</b>
2. The instructions I received in the Families in Transition packet were useful.	379 <b>58.67%</b>	12 <b>1.86%</b>	233 <b>36.07%</b>	22 <b>3.41%</b>
3. The Judge did a good job of reminding us to keep conflict away from our children.	635 <b>98.30%</b>	1 <b>0.15%</b>	2 <b>0.31%</b>	8 <b>1.24%</b>
4. Did the DVD show how children are affected when parents do not work together?	634 <b>98.14%</b>	3 <b>0.46%</b>	1 <b>0.15%</b>	8 <b>1.24%</b>
5. The Family Resource Coordinator was beneficial.	627 <b>97.06%</b>	3 <b>0.46%</b>	9 <b>1.39%</b>	7 <b>1.08%</b>
6. I learned about community resources that are available to help me.	608 <b>94.12%</b>	10 <b>1.55%</b>	21 <b>3.25%</b>	7 <b>1.08%</b>
7. I am willing to work with my co-parent to develop a plan for parenting our children.	619 <b>95.82%</b>	5 <b>0.77%</b>	13 <b>2.01%</b>	9 <b>1.39%</b>
8. I am willing to agree to a Temporary Order.	581 <b>89.94%</b>	16 <b>2.48%</b>	30 <b>4.64%</b>	19 <b>2.94%</b>
9. I am represented by an attorney.	406 <b>62.85%</b>	224 <b>34.67%</b>	8 <b>1.24%</b>	8 <b>1.24%</b>
10. My relationship with my co-parent may improve because of the information I learned at the PPC.	497 <b>76.93%</b>	77 <b>11.92%</b>	49 <b>7.59%</b>	23 <b>3.56%</b>
11. I plan to use the information I received today to help my children.	625 <b>96.75%</b>	3 <b>0.46%</b>	5 <b>0.77%</b>	13 <b>2.01%</b>
12. Total children affected by Dissolution of Marriage, Legal Separation, or Paternity action.	<b>1,269</b>			

<b>Gender:</b>	<b>Age:</b>	<b>Race:</b>
<b>Male:</b> 46.90%	<b>18 and under:</b> 2.17%	<b>African American:</b> 11.30%
<b>Female:</b> 50.00%	<b>19 to 35:</b> 56.19%	<b>Asian:</b> 1.24%
	<b>36 to 64:</b> 38.39%	<b>Hispanic:</b> 5.57%
	<b>65 and up:</b> 0.00%	<b>Native American:</b> 7.89%
		<b>White:</b> 70.12%
		<b>Other:</b> 0.77%

**Total Surveys:** 646

**Total Litigants Surveyed:** 1,654

**Percent Complete:** 39.06%

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## Protective Order Docket

All Protective Order cases are scheduled on the Protective Order docket. This docket is managed by the Protective Order Judge:

- Assisted the Domestic Judges by ruling on all Protective Order cases;
- The Family Resource Coordinator provided community resources to all litigants;
- Averaged 16 dockets per month.

### Total Protective Orders filed:

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 1,022

(Data collected from OSCN).

### Court Watch observed 661 Protective Order cases:

- 44% Dismissed
  - 18% Plaintiff failed to appear
  - 17% Plaintiff and Defendant failed to appear
- 18% Granted
  - 28% named children on the PO
- 13% Continued
- 13% Alias EPO Continued
- 5% Consolidated
- 5% Other Action (i.e. Motion)

### Self-represented litigants:

- 80% Plaintiff Pro Se
- 67% Defendant Pro Se

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## Agreed-To Docket

All Dissolution of Marriage, Legal Separation, or Paternity cases where both parties agree or do not contest may attend the Agreed-To Docket. The five (5) Domestic Judges rotate the daily Agreed-To docket each week. This docket is held once a day and averages 28 cases per week.

### Family Resource Coordinator:

1. Assisted the Family Court Judges, using a check list to sort self-represented litigant paperwork before seeing the Judge.

#### Total self-represented cases agree:

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 365

#### Total self-represented cases processed to the Judge:

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 250

This resulted in 68% of the cases being processed to the Judge and preventing 32% from seeing the Judge with incorrect or missing paperwork.

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## High Conflict/Complex Cases

High conflict/complex cases are identified at the PPC docket by the Referee or by the five (5) Domestic Judges. The Family Court Case Coordinator is assigned to a case by Court Order and only works with cases involving minor children.

The Family Court Case Coordinator (FCCC):

1. Provided case management, mediation, and resources to high conflict/complex families;
2. Assisted the Family Court Judges by communicating with attorneys and litigants to move high conflict cases to resolution;
3. Decreased conflict, number of court appearances, and time involved with the court:

### Case Data:

Total cases ordered to FCCC: 43

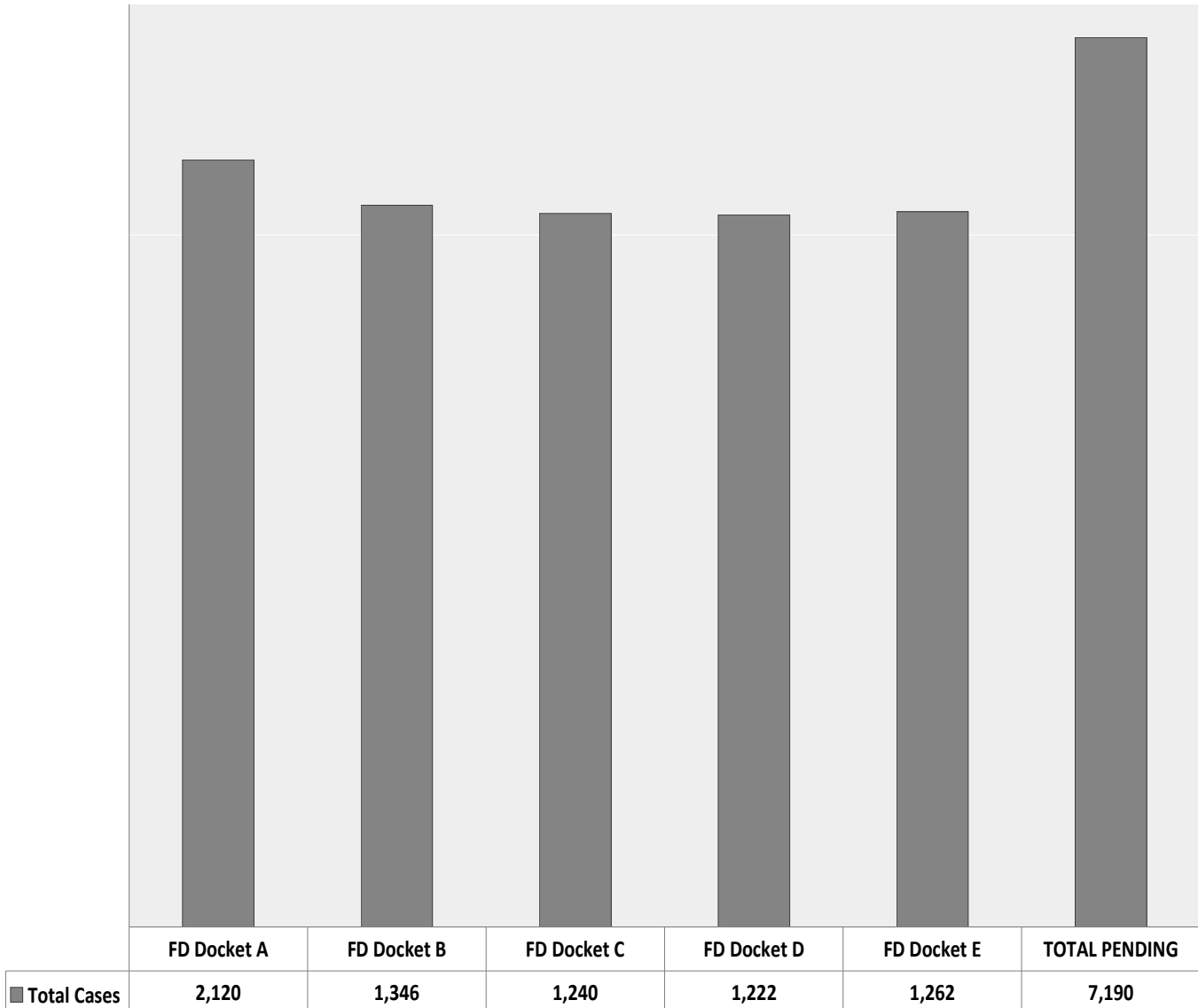
- Active: 77%
  - Temporary Order Agreements filed and working towards Final Order: 58%
  - Pending Motions to Modify: 10%
  - Pending Temporary Order Agreements: 32%
- Closed (final decree filed): 13%
- Dropped (parties reconciled): 10%

These services helped reduce conflict for 43 families, including 86 minor children. The FCCC helped reduce conflict by providing the litigants with information and resources, facilitated communication amongst the parties, and kept cases moving forward through docket management.

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The following data was compiled from The Oklahoma State Courts Network (OSCN).

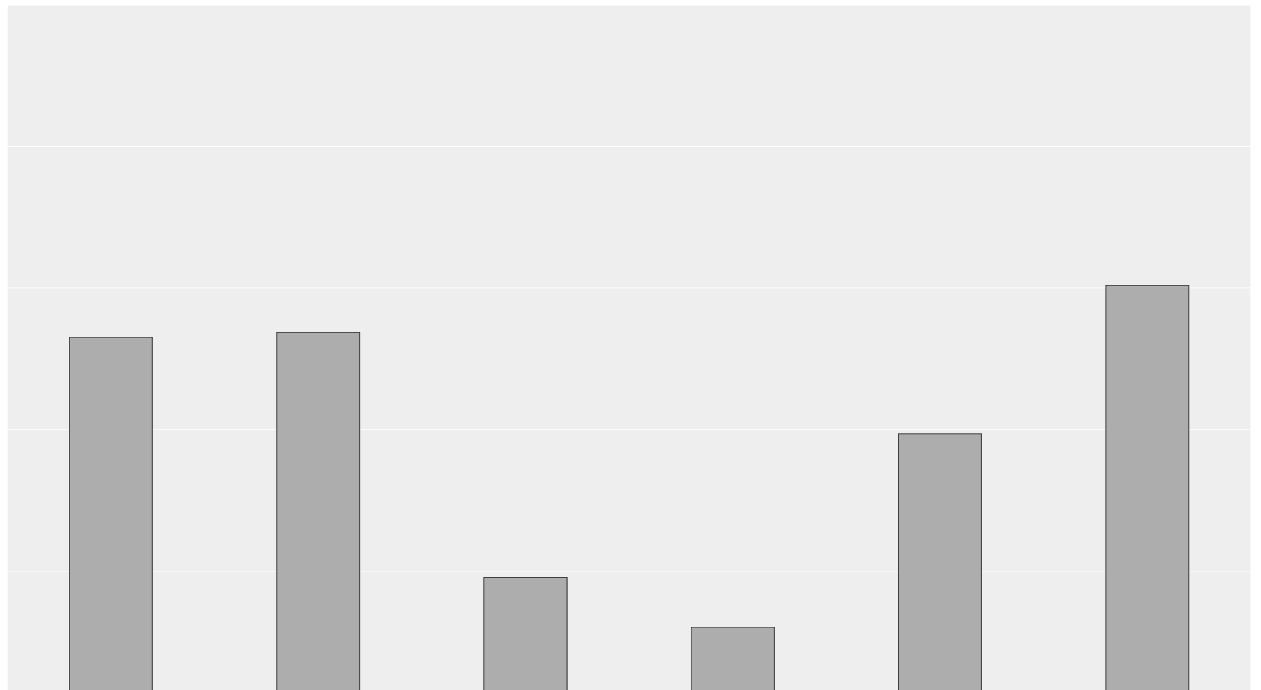
## 2010 FAMILY COURT Pending Cases by Judge





## 2010 FAMILY COURT FILINGS

### Dissolution of Marriage (Divorce), Legal Separation, and Paternity Cases



	<b>Divorce with Minor Children</b>	<b>Divorce without Minor Children</b>	<b>Legal Separation with Minor Children</b>	<b>Legal Separation without Minor Children</b>	<b>Paternity</b>	<b>TOTAL FILINGS</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	486	449	9	4	93	1,041