
INTRODUCTION

TSO is delighted to bring you the new consolidated Family Procedure Rules. The publication contains the complete text of the Family Procedure Rules, supporting Practice Directions and court Forms.

The Courts Act 2003 required new Family Procedure Rules to be made with a view to securing that (a) the family justice system is accessible, fair and efficient and (b) the rules are both simple and simply expressed. With these requirements in mind the Family Procedure Rule Committee (the body established to make the rules) has developed a set of rules to cover all family proceedings in the High Court, the County Court and the Family Proceedings Court. The new Rules will bring a number of benefits, for example:

- harmonisation with the Civil Procedure Rules
- a single unified code of practice for all family courts
- modernisation of some language

The most significant changes introduced by the Family Procedure Rules are:

- Procedures to be aligned in the family proceedings court, the county court and the High Court
- The opportunity for electronic service of documents by email between parties where the receiving party has agreed in writing in advance to be served electronically
- Provisions for enforcement of financial orders enabling people to apply for whatever method of enforcement the court thinks best rather than having to apply for one type of enforcement, which may not be the best
- New simpler approach for contested divorce and civil partnership dissolution
- Shorter statement of arrangements for children to be introduced
- Application of Ancillary Relief rules to other financial proceedings so that the procedures will be the same for most financial applications
- Appointment of a litigation friend for a child or a person under disability in the family proceedings court, which has not previously been available

The printed version of this official publication is currently the authoritative version. A CD-ROM version of the Rules is supplied as part of each subscription, to provide portability and a very useful search facility for the subscriber. The CD-ROM can also be networked; for enquiries about licences call our sales team on 01603 696860 or e-mail tsls@tso.co.uk.

As part of your subscription, updates will be sent to you as and when the Family Procedure Rule Committee introduces new Rules or Rule changes. There will normally be only two updates a year, unless additional updates become essential. The two updates will be in October and April. A new CD-ROM will be provided with each update. We endeavour to synchronise the publication of each update with the commencement of amendments included in that update. However, although the Rule Committee is working towards common commencement dates for Rule changes, it is still possible that a number of amendments with different commencement dates will be included in the same update. To be certain of when individual amendments come into force, please refer to the information under the 'Commencement Dates' heading in the Notes to Accompany published with each update.

Should you have comments or suggestions as to how we could improve the presentation of the Rules, or any queries regarding this publication, please call the TSO Customer Services Subscriptions Team on 0870 600 5522 or e-mail subscriptions@tso.co.uk.