

Rule 31. Consolidation and Reassignment of Cases

(A) For purposes of this rule, the following definitions apply:

- (1) Consolidation of cases means to combine more than one case pertaining to the same child into one case relative to the child. Once the case is consolidated, the action proceeds under one case number and all motions and pleadings are to be filed under one case number.
- (2) Linking of cases means multiple cases are to be assigned to the same jurist and heard together. Each child retains his or her own case and case number. Linking of cases occurs in Abuse/Dependency/Neglect, Private Custody, Paternity Establishment, and Support cases. Linking of cases can occur in Delinquency cases where there are co-delinquents and in Civil Protection Order cases where there are co-respondents.
- (3) Recusal from a case means the jurist removes him- or herself from a case due to a conflict of interest, prejudice, or to avoid the appearance of impropriety.

(B) When actions involving a common question of law and fact are pending before this the Court, upon the motion of any party or the Court's own motion, the Court may order a joint adjudicatory hearing or trial of any or all of the matters in issue and it may make such orders concerning proceedings as may tend to reduce unnecessary costs or delays.

(C) In cases of multi-judge assignments, a motion for consolidation or reassignment shall be filed in all actions for which consolidation or reassignment is appropriate. The motion shall be directed to the administrative judge for ruling. Upon the granting of the motion by the administrative judge and journalization, the judicial assignment shall be changed.