



Family Case Initiation Decision Guide

Overview

Use this table to help you decide whether to file your documents in a new family case or into an existing case. Answer the questions in order and follow the instructions in the Answer column. If you are unsure about how to file, contact the local court administration office.

The Family Case Initiation Flowchart shows the questions in a different format and may also be helpful.

Question	Answer
1. Does the family have an existing family case?	If YES , go to question 2. If NO , file a new case.
2. Are you asking for something that is included in the existing file? For example, support can be requested in a custody file, but custody cannot be requested in a support file.	If YES , go to question 3. If NO , file a new case.
3. Are the children the same in the existing family case as in the action you are filing? Note: A “new” child cannot be added to an existing file.	If YES , go to question 4. If NO , file a new case.
4. Are all the parties the same in the existing case as in the action you are filing?	If YES , file in the existing case. If NO , go to question 5.
5. Are you filing as a county agency and intervening in the case?	If YES , file in the existing case. If NO , go to question 6.
6. Are you a third party intervening in the case?	If YES , go to question 7. If NO , file a new case.
7. Has the court issued a final order resolving the case?	If YES , file a new case. If NO , file in the existing case.