**RULE 1915.3 CUSTODY ACTIONS**

(a) Commencement of Custody Actions

 1. A custody action shall be commenced by the filing of an original and one copy of either a Custody Complaint or a Divorce Complaint or Counterclaim that contains a custody count with the Prothonotary in accordance with Pa.R.C.P. 1915.3.

 2. In addition to the filing fees assessed for the filing of complaints, an additional administrative fee in the amount of $150.00 shall be paid to the Prothonotary simultaneously with the filing of the Custody action.

(b) A Custody Action shall include the following attachments:

 1. A Criminal or Abuse History Verification in accordance with Pa.R.C.P. 1915.3-2. This form is available at the Dauphin County Website on the Self-Help Center page.

 2. Self-Represented Party Entry of Appearance, if not represented by legal counsel, in accordance with Local Rule 1930.8. This form is available at at the Dauphin County Website on the Self-Help Center page.

 3. The Confidential Information Form.

(c) The Prothonotary shall promptly forward the original Custody Complaint with the attachments listed above to the Court Administrator’s Office for assignment to a Custody Conference Officer.

(d) If the parties do not reach an agreement at the Custody Conference (see Local Rule 1915.4-2), the Conference Officer may recommend an Interim Order and the case will be assigned to a Family Court Judge.

(e) As a general rule, if a Judge has handled a contested family law case for that family, the matter will be assigned to that Judge.