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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2005 No. 2795**

**The Family Procedure (Adoption) Rules 2005**

**PART 5**

**PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATIONS IN ADOPTION,  
PLACEMENT AND RELATED PROCEEDINGS**

**The first directions hearing**

- 26.**—(1) At the first directions hearing in the proceedings the court will—
- (a) fix a timetable for the filing of—
    - (i) any report relating to the suitability of the applicants to adopt a child;
    - (ii) any report from the local authority;
    - (iii) any report from a children’s guardian, reporting officer or children and family reporter;
    - (iv) if a statement of facts has been filed, any amended statement of facts;
    - (v) any other evidence, andgive directions relating to the reports and other evidence;
  - (b) consider whether an alternative dispute resolution procedure is appropriate and, if so, give directions relating to the use of such procedure;
  - (c) consider whether the child or any other person should be a party to the proceedings and, if so, give directions in accordance with rule 23(2) or (3) joining that child or person as a party;
  - (d) give directions relating to the appointment of a litigation friend for any patient or non-subject child unless a litigation friend has already been appointed;
  - (e) consider whether the case needs to be transferred to another court and, if so, give directions to transfer the proceedings to another court in accordance with any order made by the Lord Chancellor under Part I of Schedule 11 to the 1989 Act;
  - (f) give directions about—
    - (i) tracing parents or any other person the court considers to be relevant to the proceedings;
    - (ii) service of documents;
    - (iii) subject to paragraph (2), disclosure as soon as possible of information and evidence to the parties; and
    - (iv) the final hearing; and
- (2) Rule 77(2) applies to any direction given under paragraph (1)(f)(iii) as it applies to a direction given under rule 77(1).

(3) In addition to the matters referred to in paragraph (1), the court will give any of the directions listed in the relevant practice direction in proceedings for—

- (a) a Convention adoption order;
- (b) a section 84 order;
- (c) a section 88 direction;
- (d) a section 89 order; or
- (e) an adoption order where section 83(1) applies (restriction on bringing children in).

(4) The parties or their legal representatives must attend the first directions hearing unless the court directs otherwise.

(5) Directions may also be given at any stage in the proceedings—

- (a) of the court’s own initiative; or
- (b) on the application of a party or any children’s guardian or, where the direction concerns a report by a reporting officer or children and family reporter, the reporting officer or children and family reporter.

(6) For the purposes of giving directions or for such purposes as the court directs—

- (a) the court may set a date for a further directions hearing or other hearing; and
- (b) the court officer will give notice of any date so fixed to the parties and to any children’s guardian, reporting officer or children and family reporter.

(7) After the first directions hearing the court will monitor compliance with the court’s timetable and directions by the parties.