

The Illinois Family Law Paralegal

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Notes

People form families in many ways: as single parents, as adoptive parents, and with same-sex and opposite-sex partners. In recognition of this fact, I have attempted to use gender-neutral language. However, there are times when, for clarity, singular nouns require a single pronoun. In order to both avoid ambiguity and be gender-neutral, I have adopted Rule 101(d) from the Circuit Court of the 18th Judicial Circuit, which provides:

Gender. When used in the Rules of the Circuit Court of the 18th Judicial Circuit, words or phrases that import the masculine or feminine genders shall be construed to include all genders, unless such construction would be inconsistent with the manifest intention of the context.

As applied, “a respondent must file his answer” may be construed as “a respondent must file her answer.” And “Wife and Husband” may be construed as “Wife and Wife” and “Husband and Husband.”

Equally important, families are formed by people of all ethnicities and cultures, which they may express in their children’s names. To avoid the appearance of favoring or discriminating against any particular ethnicity or culture, when I needed a name in an example, I referred to the Social Security Administration’s list of most commonly reported baby names in 2000.

This book celebrates all families, however and by whomever they are formed.

