§ 501. Transfer, consolidation and severance

1. The court may upon motion by any party:

(a) Transfer for trial to the surrogate's court having jurisdiction over an estate any action or proceeding pending in any court other than the supreme court which affects or relates to the administration of an estate and transfer any action or proceeding other than one which has been previously transferred to it or which affects or relates to the administration of an estate, to any other court, except the supreme court, having jurisdiction of the subject matter in any other judicial district or county provided such other court has jurisdiction over the classes of persons named as parties.

(b) Consent to receive for trial any action pending in the supreme court which affects or relates to the administration of a decedent's estate.

2. Consolidation and severance

(a) Consolidation. When proceedings pending before the court, including actions transferred under subdivision 1, involve a common question of law or fact, the court upon the motion of any party or on its own initiative may order a joint trial of any or all of the matters in issue or order that the proceedings be consolidated or make such other orders concerning proceedings therein as may tend to avoid unnecessary cost or delay.

(b) Severance and separate trials. In furtherance of convenience or to avoid prejudice, the court upon the motion of any party or on its own initiative may order a severance of any or all of the matters in issue or may order a separate trial of any one or all of the matters in issue and upon determination thereof render an appropriate intermediate or final order.