

Division 35
Judicial Practices and Procedures
(last modified *June 30, 2025*)

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Contact Information

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A. Communications with the Judicial Office

• Method of Communication:

☐ Division E-mail:

☐ All communications to the judicial office must be submitted by e-mail to division35@circuit7.org, the dedicated division e-mail account. The subject line of any e-mail to the judicial office must contain the case number, case name, and relevant matter (e.g., 2024 DR 001234 SC – Doe v. Doe – 2-Hour Hearing Requested).

☐ Judicial E-mail: Please do not send email directly to either the Judge or the Judicial Assistant.

☐ Telephone:

☐ All telephone communications to the judicial office must be submitted by telephone call to (386) 257-6090. The judicial office does not accept text messages.

☐ Email is the preferred method of communication. Telephone communication may be used to confirm receipt of email communication if a response has not been timely received.

• **Ex parte Communications:**

☐ All communications with the judicial office must comply with Canon 3 of the Code of Judicial Conduct, which prohibits a judge from initiating, permitting, or considering ex parte communications and from considering other communications outside the presence of the parties concerning a pending or impending proceeding, unless authorized by law.

☐ All parties must be copied on any e-mail directed to the judicial office, unless an ex parte communication is authorized by law.

• **Unsolicited Communications:**

☐ Parties may only contact the judicial office in accordance with these practices and procedures. Unsolicited communications from non-parties will not be considered by the court.

• **E-Filing Portal Contact Information:**

☐ All attorneys and self-represented litigants must make and receive service by email, which is generally through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, unless excused. Fla. R. Gen. Prac. & Jud. Admin. 2.516.

- ☐ All attorneys and self-represented litigants must provide an e-mail address to receive signed orders electronically, unless excused. Fla. R. Gen. Prac. & Jud. Admin. 2.516. It is the responsibility of attorneys and self-represented litigants to update their contact information using Form 2.603 any time there is a change in the email account registered for electronic service.
- **Response to Inquiries:**
 - ☐ The judicial assistant is not authorized to provide legal advice.
 - ☐ The judicial assistant strives to substantively respond to all inquiries within one business day. If the judicial assistant is unable to substantively respond within one business day, your message will be acknowledged as received with an indication of when to expect a substantive response and alternate contact for immediate assistance.
 - ☐ When the judicial assistant is out of the office, your message will be acknowledged as received with an indication of when to expect a substantive response and an alternate contact for immediate assistance to be used only if immediate assistance is needed.
- **Other Communication Procedures:**
 - ☐ Any e-mail sent to or from the judicial office may be a public record subject to disclosure.

B. Scheduling Procedures

- **Court Schedule:**
 - ☐ Available trial weeks are posted on the court's webpage: <https://circuit7.org/judges/lauren-p-blocker/>. Parties and/or their counsel must review the available trial dates prior to Docket Call and confer as to potential dates. Trial dates will be set at Docket Call.
- **Scheduling Hearings:**
 - ☐ Hearings must be requested by e-mail to division35@circuit7.org.
 - ☐ The judicial assistant will send out a list of at least 3 available hearing dates and times. If counsel and/or self-represented parties are unavailable or unable to agree to a hearing date and time, the judicial assistant will provide a second set of at least 3 dates. If

counsel and/or self-represented parties are still not unavailable, are unable to agree to a hearing date and time, or do not respond to the proposed hearing date and time, Judge Blocker will choose a hearing date and time.

- ☐ A party may not notice additional matters for hearing at the time reserved by another party unless the other party has consented to the addition and the additional matters are confirmed with the Judicial Assistant to ensure that enough hearing time is available. Hearings set without complying with these procedures will be cancelled.
- ☐ The parties must ensure that enough time is reserved to allow for arguments by all parties. All parties will receive equal time during hearings. Hearings scheduled with insufficient time to hear all parties' arguments will be cancelled and continued until sufficient time is available.

• **Notice of Hearing:**

- ☐ A notice of hearing must be filed and served immediately after reserving hearing time.
- ☐ A notice of hearing involving any remote appearance must list the judge's Zoom credentials.
- ☐ All notices of hearing must contain the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) notification required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.540.
- ☐ A notice of hearing must list any and all motions to be heard, including docket identification numbers.
- ☐ If a notice of hearing is not timely filed, the hearing may be cancelled.

• **Submission Deadlines:**

- ☐ The court must receive all materials for the hearing no later than 3 business days before the hearing.
- ☐ If a party intends to cite authority not listed in the motion or written response, the party must email division35@circuit7.org with the

case citations. Neither copies of the cases nor an accompanying memorandum are required.

- **Order of Proceedings:**

- ☐ Matters will be heard in the order in which they appear on the docket.
- ☐ Matters involving parties represented by counsel will generally be heard before other matters.
- ☐ Matters involving an in-custody party will generally be heard before other matters, whether either of the parties to the proceedings are represented by counsel or not.

- **Continuance Procedure:**

- ☐ Motions for continuance are disfavored and will be granted only upon good cause shown. Successive continuances are highly disfavored. Lack of due diligence is not grounds for granting a continuance. Except for good cause shown, the motion must be signed by the party requesting the continuance, as required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(e).
- ☐ Motions for continuance must be submitted at least 5 days prior to the scheduled court date for which the continuance is sought, barring exigent circumstances. Except for good cause shown, the motion must be signed by the party requesting the continuance, as required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(e).
- ☐ Motions for continuance must state with specificity: (1) the basis of the need for the continuance, including when the basis became known to the movant; (2) whether the motion is opposed; (3) the action and specific dates for the action that will enable the movant to be ready, including, but not limited to, confirming the specific date any required participants are available; and (4) the proposed date by which the case will be ready to proceed and whether that date is agreed by all parties. Except for good cause shown, the motion must be signed by the party requesting the continuance, as required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(e).

- **Cancelling Hearings:**

- ☐ You must cancel hearings by notifying the judicial assistant immediately. You must also immediately file with the Clerk of Court and serve a notice of cancellation on opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant.
- ☐ A hearing may only be cancelled by the scheduling party.
- ☐ A hearing or trial set by the court may only be cancelled by the court. If you wish to cancel a hearing or trial that was set by the court, you must email the Judicial Assistant with your request, copying opposing counsel.

C. Remote Appearance

- **Remote Appearance Procedure:**

- ☐ The court maintains a hybrid virtual courtroom, allowing parties to appear either in person or remotely, as provided by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.530. Motions to appear remotely, other than for an evidentiary hearing or trial, are not required.
- ☐ Any objection to the use of communication technology must be filed no later than 5 days before the hearing and include the grounds for the objection.
- ☐ The party filing the notice of hearing must confirm whether any party is appearing for the hearing in person and include that information in the notice so that the courtroom can be appropriately staffed.

- **Platform Used:**

- ☐ The court uses ZOOM for remote appearances.

- **Platform Meeting ID#:**

- ☐ 386-257-6090 (no password required)

- **Requirements:**

- ☐ All hearings are eligible for remote appearance except complex evidentiary hearings and final hearings or trials. An evidentiary

hearing is considered complex if it will require admission of a large number of exhibits or ones that must be shown to various witnesses.

- ☐ Any person appearing remotely must be in a private location that is quiet and free from distractions. Under no circumstances will a participant be permitted to appear remotely from a moving vehicle.
- ☐ Any person appearing remotely must dress and behave professionally in the same manner as if physically present in the courtroom.
- ☐ Any person appearing remotely must enable the person's camera when joining the proceeding and once confirmed to be functioning, kept off until the case they are appearing for is called.
- ☐ Any person appearing remotely must mute the person's microphone when joining the proceeding and keep the microphone turned off until their case is called.
- ☐ If a witness appears remotely, the party calling the witness must ensure the witness has a functioning camera and microphone and has tested the internet connection before the hearing. The oath will be administered in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.530. If the witness appearing by Zoom must be called out of order, the party calling the witness must inform the court and the judicial assistant.
- ☐ Audio and video are both required to appear remotely.

D. Submission of Orders and Judgments

• Format:

- ☐ All proposed orders must be submitted in Word format and provided to opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant.
- ☐ All proposed orders must be attached to an email copied to all parties that either (1) certifies that all parties agree to the order or (2) contains a statement identifying any disagreement of the parties as to the proposed order.

• Submission Method:

- ☐ All proposed orders must be submitted to the court by e-mail to division35@circuit7.org.

- **Deadline for Submissions:**

- ☐ Proposed orders must be submitted no later than 10 days after any hearing unless a different deadline was set at the hearing.

E. Courtesy Copies of Case Law and Other Documents

- **When Required and Deadline for Submission:**

- ☐ The court does not require the submission of courtesy copies of filings; however, if the parties agree to the admission of certain evidence and the review of such evidence will be helpful to the efficient resolution of the matter being heard, the parties shall submit such evidence at least 5 business days prior to the hearing or trial.

- ☐ If a motion has been filed that is time sensitive, or if it is a matter that the court directed the parties to file, the party making the filing may email a courtesy copy of the filing to division35@circuit7.org to bring the filing to the court's attention.

- **Format:**

- ☐ The format of the courtesy copies will vary depending on the type of evidence being submitted.

- **Submission Method:**

- ☐ Courtesy copies of filings, if needed, must be submitted to the court by e-mail to division35@circuit7.org with a copy to all other parties and/or their counsel.

- ☐ Courtesy copies of evidence must be submitted to the court by U.S. mail or hand-delivered to the judicial office with a copy or copies mailed to all other parties and/or their counsel.

F. Emergency and Other Urgent Matters

- **Requirements:**

- ☐ If a party believes there is a factual basis for setting an emergency hearing, a detailed motion setting forth the following must be filed: (1) the issues to be resolved, (2) reasons why an emergency hearing is necessary, and (3) the amount of time needed for each party's presentation.

- ☐ The request must be emailed to division35@circuit7.org. Matters referred to as an emergency that do not constitute a true emergency, may be summarily denied. Generally, emergencies exist where persons or property face the threat of imminent harm without court intervention.

- **Scheduling:**

- ☐ If the court determines that an emergency exists, a hearing will be scheduled unilaterally by the court. All parties shall make themselves available for the emergency hearing, barring exigent circumstances.

G. Exhibits for Evidentiary Proceedings

- **Submission Method:**

- ☐ Hand-deliver or mail all printed exhibits to the clerk of court.

- **Format:**

- ☐ Exhibits must be labeled with letters for identification.
- ☐ All attorneys and self-represented litigants must bring sufficient copies of each exhibit for the clerk, the court, and each party to review during the hearing or trial.

- **Deadline for Submissions:**

- ☐ In accordance with trial procedures and orders, the exhibits must be exchanged between the parties at least 3 business days prior to the trial or evidentiary hearing.

H. Pretrial Procedures and Conferences

- **Case Management Conference (CMC):**

- ☐ All cases will be set for CMC.
- ☐ Unless excused by the court in advance, all CMCs are mandatory for attorneys and self-represented litigants. Parties represented by counsel are not required to appear at a CMC.

- **Status Conference:**

- ☐ Any party may request a status conference when a case requires.

- **Scheduling:**

- ☐ If the court grants the request for a status conference, the moving party must schedule the status conference pursuant to the procedures noted under the above Scheduling Procedures.

I. Setting Case for Trial

- **Procedure:**

- ☐ File a notice for trial to set the case for trial.

- **Notice Period:**

- ☐ As noted above, trials will be set at Docket Call.

J. Forms

- **Access:**

- ☐ If specific division forms are available, they will be located on the court's webpage. .

K. Other Division Procedures

- **ADA Accommodations:**

- ☐ If you need an ADA accommodation, please contact Court Administration at (386) 257 6096.

- ☐ Information on ADA accommodations can be found on the circuit's website at the following link: <https://circuit7.org/ada/>.

- **Interpreter Requests:**

- ☐ If an interpreter is needed for a hearing or trial, please contact Court Interpreting at (386) 626-6566.

- ☐ Information on interpreters' services can be found on the circuit's website at the following link: <https://circuit7.org/court-interpreting-services/>.