Judicial Practices and Procedures
Division 57
(last modified February 9, 2026

Hon. Rose Marie K. Preddy, Circuit Judge
Gabriella Delgado, Judicial Assistant

Contact Information

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A. Communications with the Judicial Office

- **Method of Communication:** Direct communication with the judge are not allowed. All communications to the judicial office must be made to the Judicial Assistant, Gabriella Delgado, by phone to (904) 827-5665 or by e-

mail to gdelgado@circuit7.org. The subject line of emails should contain the case number, case name, and relevant matter (e.g., DR25-0000 – Smith v. Jones – copy of case law for hearing). **Emails are the preferred method of communication.**

- **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:** Unsolicited communications from non-parties will not be considered by the Court. Parties may only contact the judicial office in accordance with these practices and procedures. Any unsolicited communication may be returned to sender or placed in the court file.

- **Response to Inquiries:** The Court's Judicial Assistant is not authorized to provide legal advice. If the Court's Judicial Assistant is out of the office, you will receive an automated response to your email directing you on how to proceed in her absence. Responses to e-mails will be given in the order in which the e-mails are received.

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

  - 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 any time there is a change in the e-mail account registered for electronic service.

B. Scheduling Procedures

- **Court Schedule**: Available trial weeks are posted on the court's webpage: *www.circuit7.org*. 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.

- **Determine Whether a Hearing Is Needed**: Parties should, whenever possible, contact the opposing party before filing or upon receiving a motion to determine if the matter can be resolved in whole or in part. This may alleviate the need for filing the motion or allow submission of an agreed order in lieu of a hearing.

- **Notice Regarding Hearing Coordination:**
  When a party is represented by counsel, no motion or pleading will be set for hearing or brought to the Court's attention unless the attorney of record contacts the Judicial Assistant to coordinate hearing time in accordance with the Court's scheduling procedures. This requirement applies to all motions and pleadings, including those labeled as emergency**,** unless otherwise directed by the Court.

  The mere filing of a motion or pleading with the Clerk does not bring the matter to the Court's attention and does not result in a hearing being scheduled. The Court will be notified only of those matters for which counsel has requested and coordinated hearing time through the Judicial Assistant.

- **Scheduling Hearings:** Motions must be filed with the Clerk of Court and sent to opposing counsel/self-represented parties prior to scheduling a hearing. All hearings must be coordinated with opposing counsel. Hearings must be requested by contacting the Judicial Assistant at gdelgado@circuit7.org.

- **Unilaterally Scheduling Hearings:** Before scheduling any hearing, the party requesting the hearing time shall make good faith reasonable efforts to coordinate the date and time of the hearing with all opposing parties. If, after making good faith reasonable efforts, the party is unable to coordinate a mutually agreeable date and time, a party may then unilaterally schedule the hearing. The notice of hearing shall indicate that it is unilaterally scheduled, and the party (or counsel) must certify in writing that they have made good faith, reasonable efforts to coordinate the scheduling of the hearing with the opposing parties.

- **Notice of Hearing:** A notice of hearing must be filed and served by the party scheduling the hearing *immediately* after reserving hearing time. Due to the volume of hearings being requested, failure to file a Notice of Hearing within 24 hours may result in that hearing time being assigned to another party.

  A Notice of Hearing must include the following minimum information: the case style including case number; the date, time, and location of the hearing; the matter(s) to be heard including docket number or filing date of each motion; the judge presiding over the hearing; and the amount of time reserved for the hearing. A notice of hearing involving any remote appearance must list the Zoom meeting information. All notices of hearing must contain the ADA notification required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.540.

- **Materials Submission Deadlines:** The Court will review motions set for hearing before the hearing. The Court welcomes the filing of additional memoranda of law or copies of legal authority (statutes, regulations, case law) the parties desire for the Court to review at least three (3) business days before the hearing. A copy must be sent to all opposing parties simultaneously.

- **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 3 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:** Hearings noticed by the Court may only be cancelled by the Court. Hearings noticed by one or more parties may only be cancelled by the Court, the scheduling party, or by agreement of all parties involved in the hearing. To cancel a hearing, notify the Judicial Assistant immediately by email, including a copy of a filed cancellation notice. You must also immediately file and serve a notice of cancellation on opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant. Further, no hearing may be cancelled fewer than three (3) business days before the hearing, unless the case has settled in its entirety or an agreed order on the motion is submitted to the Court fully resolving the matters to be heard.

C. Remote Appearance

- **Remote Appearance Procedure:**

  All hearings regardless of the number of matters to be heard, scheduled for one hour or longer or that are evidentiary must be attended in person. Non-evidentiary hearings scheduled for less than one hour may be attended in person or through audio-video communication technology, as defined in Rule 2.530(a)(2), Fla. R. Gen. Prac. & Jud. Admin, unless the court orders appearances in a specific manner. Parties and/or counsel planning to attend a non-evidentiary hearing via audio-video communication technology must file at least 72-hours prior to the hearing a notice of their intention to do so.

- **Platform Used:** The Court uses Zoom for remote appearances.

- **Platform Meeting ID#:** Meeting ID#: 904 827 5603 - No passcode required.

- **Requirements:** Persons appearing by Zoom must have audio capabilities, and are requested to have video capabilities. Please ensure your Zoom settings display your name. All participants shall be in

appropriate attire and in an appropriate location. Zoom court is still court. 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. Witnesses who are unable to comply with the above may be prohibited from testifying.

D. Submission of Orders and Judgments

- **Format:** Proposed orders should be submitted in Microsoft Word format using the Court's division email address: division57@circuit7.org. PDF orders will not be accepted unless necessary. The division email is solely for the purpose of submitting proposed orders. Do not submit other pleadings or requests via this division email address.

- **Agreed Orders:** If the proposed order is agreed, the email should indicate agreement and the title of the order should be "Agreed Order…", "Unopposed Order…" or "Consent Order…"

- **Contested Orders:** If the parties disagree as to the form of the order, a red-line version of the proposed order should be submitted. Do not submit a competing Order unless requested by the Court.

- **Ex-Parte Orders Compelling Discovery:** If you are sending in a proposed ex-parte order compelling the production of discovery, you must comply with Administrative Order FM-2022-011-SC which requires written notice to the opposing party giving 10 days to provide discovery and attaching that notice to the motion to compel.

- **Consent Final Judgments in Dissolution of Marriage Cases:**
  All parties filing a Consent Final Judgment for entry by the Court without appearance must file the *Final Hearing Checklist* (with the Consent Final Judgment of Dissolution in the Court file. The proposed Consent Final Judgment and checklist should be emailed to division57@circuit7.org.

- **Status of Proposed Orders**: If you have submitted a proposed order and it has not been entered within a reasonable time, you may inquire regarding the status by emailing the Judicial Assistant. *Please do not submit the same proposed order multiple times.*

- **Deadline for Submissions:** Proposed orders must be submitted within 10 business days after any hearing, unless otherwise instructed by the Court.

E. Courtesy Copies of Case Law and Other Documents

- **When Required:** Courtesy copies of case law are never required but may be submitted to the Court for any proceeding.

- **Format:** Electronic submission in PDF format to the Judicial Assistant is the preferred method.

- **Deadline for Submissions:** Courtesy copies must be delivered to the court no later than five (5) business days before any evidentiary proceeding.

F. Emergency and Other Urgent Matters

- **Deemed Emergencies**: Matters referred to as an "emergency" that do not constitute a true emergency may be summarily denied. Generally, emergencies occur when persons or property face the threat of imminent harm, without court intervention.
- **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) the reasons why an emergency hearing is necessary, and (3) the amount of time needed for each party's presentation.

- **Scheduling:** After filing the emergency motion and motion for hearing, a party should contact the Judicial Assistant to schedule a hearing by emailing a copy of the motions. If the court determines that an emergency exists, a hearing will be scheduled by the Court. All parties must make themselves available for the emergency hearing, barring exigent circumstances.

G. Exhibits for Evidentiary Proceedings

- **Format:** A document filed with the Clerk of Court is not an exhibit. The Court must accept your exhibits at a trial or hearing. Original exhibits should be pre-marked before the hearing with the Clerk of Court.

- **Submission Method:** The Court will keep the original exhibits entered into evidence at trials and hearings. If you are not otherwise required to provide your evidence to the opposing party before the hearing, please bring two (2) additional copies, one for you to keep and one to give to the opposing party. Parties are encouraged to pre-mark original exhibits by labelling them with an "A," "B," etc. prior to any trials or hearings.

- **Electronic Exhibits:** The Court will not accept texts, photos, or videos that are only available on a cell phone, tablet, or laptop. You must print off copies of texts or photos. You must save videos to a flash drive. Court computers cannot be used to display any videos. For the video on a flash drive to be played, you must bring a laptop to the trial or hearing to play it. You may provide the flash drive with the Clerk of Court.

H. Pretrial Procedures and Conferences

- **Case Management Conference:**
  - All cases will be set for a Case Management Conference (CMC). See Fla. Fam. L. R. P. 12.200 (a). 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 CMC.

  - After an action is at issue, the Court may, or upon motion of either party, set the case for a Pretrial Conference. See Fla. Fam. L. R. P. 12.200 (b).

I. Setting Case for Trial

- **Procedure:** See Fla. Fam. L. R. P. 12.440. Provided the case is at issue, at a CMC the Court will generally set the case on a trial docket at the appropriate time without a party having to file a notice.

- **Notice Period:** Trials will be set for docket call and a trial week by the Court. The trial date will be determined at docket call. The Court may assign back-up cases. Attorneys, self-represented litigants, parties, and

witnesses are expected to be available during the entire trial period. Parties should advise the Court of any scheduling conflicts at the docket sounding. All trial counsel and pro se parties must attend docket sounding, bringing with them their calendars and the availability of all important witnesses for the trial week.

J. Forms

- **Florida State Courts System Self-Help Center:**
  The State of Florida provides a *Self-Help Center* which includes family law forms.

K. Other Division Procedures

- **Bringing Minor Children to Court:** Except in certain circumstances (i.e., dependency, delinquency, adoption, name change) children may not attend court proceedings unless the judge has issued an order authorizing the appearance. See Fla. Fam. L. R. P. 12.407

- **Notice of Substitution of Counsel/Motion to Withdraw as Counsel:** Absent written consent of the client, a hearing is required on a Notice of Substitution of Counsel / Motion to Withdraw as Counsel. If you have written consent from the client which has been filed with the Clerk of Court, you may forward a proposed order via email to the division email address listed above.

- **Uniform Pre-Trial Procedures in Family Cases:** Pursuant to Administrative Order, *Uniform Pretrial Procedures in Family Cases* have been adopted and the Order applies in all Family Law Cases. Parties should familiarize themselves with the Order establishing these procedures and comply with its terms.

- **Standing Family Law Court Order:** Pursuant to Administrative Order, a *Standing Family Law Court Order* is to be issued in all cases involving dissolution of marriage, paternity and/or support actions. Parties should familiarize themselves with the Order and comply with its terms.

- **ADA Accommodations:** If you need ADA accommodation, please contact Court Administration, 101 N. Alabama Ave., Ste. B-206, DeLand, FL 32724; 386-257-6096; adarequest@circuit7.org.

- **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: Court Interpreting Services - Seventh Judicial Circuit Court of Florida

- **Family Mediation:** The Seventh Judicial Circuit's Family Mediation Program provides low-cost mediation services for parties to family law cases whose combined income is less than $100,000 per year. Parties who are order to the Family Mediation Program can schedule mediation by contacting the mediator's office at (904) 827-5638.