

IN THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA
AMENDED
GENERAL ASSIGNMENT OF JUDGES NO. 2021- 42
November 15, 2021 – DECEMBER 31, 2021

WHEREAS, Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215(b) vests in the Chief Judge the authority and responsibility to implement an administrative plan that will effect the prompt disposition of cases, including the assignment of judges, court officers, and other court personnel;

WHEREAS, rule 2.215(b)(3) also provides that the Chief Judge shall consider the available resources and utilize them in a manner that ensures the efficient and proper administration of all courts within this circuit;

WHEREAS, rule 2.215(b)(4) permits the Chief Judge to assign any judge to temporary service for which the judge is qualified in any court within this circuit;

It is therefore **ORDERED**:

The judicial assignments for the Third Judicial Circuit are as follows, with the exception of any standing assignment orders entered due to conflicts or recusals, and any special appointments made due to extenuating or exigent circumstances by the Chief Judge that are not in accordance with the below assignments:

CIRCUIT COURT

| Columbia County | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Civil | Judge Wesley R. Douglas ¹ | One third of all civil cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Bryan, then Judge Feagle</i> |
| | Judge Paul S. Bryan ² | One third of all civil cases and forfeiture cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Feagle, then Judge Douglas</i> |
| | Judge Mark Feagle ³ | One third of all civil cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Douglas, then Judge Bryan</i> |
| Criminal | Judge Paul Bryan ² | Division A: All felony cases in which defendant’s last name begins with the letters A-K <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Leandra Johnson</i> |
| | Judge Leandra G. Johnson | Division B: All felony cases in which defendant’s last name begins with the letters L-Z <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Bryan</i> |

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| Family | Judge Wesley R. Douglas ¹ | Domestic relations and DOR cases in which petitioner's last name begins with the letters H-O; injunctions for protection if companion to a domestic relations case assigned to Judge Douglas; Marchman and Baker Acts; and Risk Protection Orders <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Olin, then Judge Feagle, then Judge Bryan</i> |
| | Judge Paul Bryan ² | Injunctions for protection <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge alphabetically assigned other family law cases, then Judge Douglas, then Judge Feagle, then Judge Olin</i> |
| | Judge Mark E. Feagle ³ | Domestic relations and DOR cases in which petitioner's last name begins with the letters A-G; and injunctions for protection if companion to a domestic relations case assigned to Judge Feagle <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Olin, then Judge Douglas, then Judge Bryan</i> |
| | Judge Melissa G. Olin ⁴ | Domestic relations and DOR cases in which petitioner's last name begins with the letters P-Z; and probate and guardianship <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Douglas, then Judge Feagle, then Judge Bryan</i> |
| | Judge Leandra G. Johnson | Delinquency; TIPP and truancy; and dependency <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Bryan, then Judge Douglas</i> |
| Dixie County | | |
| Civil | Acting Circuit Judge Jennifer J. Johnson | All civil cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Feagle, then Judge Blue</i> |
| Criminal | Acting Circuit Judge Jennifer J. Johnson | All felony cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Fina, then Judge Blue</i> |
| Family | Judge Mark Feagle ³ | Domestic relations; DOR cases; and DV injunctions for protection <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Jennifer Johnson, then Judge Blue</i> |
| | Acting Circuit Judge Jennifer J. Johnson | Juvenile delinquency; dependency; truancy; Marchman and Baker Acts; probate and guardianship; and Risk Protection Orders <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Blue, then Judge Feagle</i> |

| Hamilton County | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| Civil | Judge Paul S. Bryan ² | All civil cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Douglas, then Judge Browning</i> |
| Criminal | Judge Wesley R. Douglas ¹ | All felony cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Bryan, then Judge Browning</i> |
| Family | Judge Paul S. Bryan ² | Domestic relations; injunctions for protection if companion to a domestic relations case assigned to Judge Bryan; DOR cases; and probate and guardianship <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Douglas, then Judge Browning</i> |
| | Acting Circuit Judge Sonny Scaff ⁵ | Injunctions for protection; juvenile delinquency; dependency; Marchman and Baker Acts; and Risk Protection Orders <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Bryan, then Judge Douglas, then Judge Browning</i> |
| Lafayette County | | |
| Civil and Criminal | Acting Circuit Judge Darren K. Jackson | All civil and felony cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Fina, then Judge Jennifer Johnson</i> |
| Family | Acting Circuit Judge Darren K. Jackson | Domestic relations; DOR cases; injunctions for protection; juvenile delinquency; dependency; Marchman and Baker Acts; Risk Protection Orders; and probate and guardianship <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Fina, then to Judge Jennifer Johnson</i> |
| Madison County | | |
| Civil and Criminal | Judge Melissa G. Olin ⁴ | All civil and felony cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Browning, then Judge Parker</i> |
| Family | Judge Melissa G. Olin ⁴ | Domestic relations; DOR cases; and injunctions for protection <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Browning, then Judge Parker</i> |
| | Acting Circuit Judge E. Bailey Browning ⁶ | Juvenile delinquency; dependency; Risk Protection Orders; probate and guardianship; and Marchman and Baker Acts <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Olin, then Judge Parker</i> |
| Suwannee County | | |
| Civil | Judge David W. Fina ⁷ | All civil cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Williams, then Judge Feagle</i> |

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| Criminal | Judge David W. Fina ⁷ | All felony cases (Divisions A and B) <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Williams</i> |
| Family | Judge Mark E. Feagle ³ | Domestic relations cases in which petitioner's last name begins with the letters A-K; injunctions for protection if companion to a domestic relations case assigned to Judge Feagle <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Douglas, then Judge Williams</i> |
| | Judge Wesley R. Douglas ¹ | Domestic relations cases in which petitioner's last name begins with the letters L-Z; and injunctions for protection if companion to a domestic relations case assigned to Judge Douglas <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Feagle, then Judge Williams</i> |
| | Judge David W. Fina ⁷ | Probate and guardianship |
| | Acting Circuit Judge William F. Williams | DOR cases; injunctions for protection; juvenile delinquency; dependency; truancy; and Marchman and Baker Acts; and Risk Protection Orders <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Fina, then Judge Douglas</i> |
| Taylor County | | |
| Civil and Criminal | Judge Greg S. Parker | All civil and felony cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Blue, then Judge Jackson</i> |
| Family | Judge Greg S. Parker | Domestic relations; DOR cases; Marchman and Baker Acts; Risk Protection Orders; juvenile dependency; and probate and guardianship <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Blue, then Judge Jackson</i> |
| | Acting Circuit Judge Bill Blue | Juvenile delinquency; truancy; and injunctions for protection. <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Parker, then Judge Jackson</i> |
| Standing orders of recusal: | | |
| <p>¹ Cases that would be assigned to Judge Wesley Douglas pursuant to the above, and in which the Douglas & Douglas law firm or the law firm of Thomas T. Demas represents a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for his recusals as outlined above.</p> <p>² Cases that would be assigned to Judge Paul Bryan pursuant to the above, and in which the law firm of Joel Foreman; law firm of McRae and McRae a/k/a law firm of McRae and Mc Neill; law firm of Rhett Bullard; law firm of Robinson, Kennon, and Kendron, or the Decker Law Firm,</p> | | |

represent a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for his recusals as outlined above.

³ Cases that would be assigned to Judge Mark Feagle pursuant to the above, and in which the law firm of Marlin Feagle represents a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for his recusals as outlined above.

⁴ Cases that would be assigned to Judge Melissa Olin pursuant to the above, and in which the law firm of Darby, Peele & Greene represent a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for her recusals as outlined above.

⁵ Cases that would be assigned to Judge Sonny Scaff pursuant to the above, and in which Bruce Robinson, Esq. represents a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for his recusals as outlined above.

⁶ Cases that would be assigned to Judge E. Bailey Browning pursuant to the above, and in which the law firm of Davis Schnitker, Reeves and Browning, PA, represent a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for his recusals as outlined above.

⁷ Cases that would be assigned to Judge David W. Fina pursuant to the above, and in which the law firm of Cole, Scott & Kissane or law firm of Schutt, Schmidt & Noey represent a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for his recusals as outlined above.

UNIFIED FAMILY COURT

Family court assignments include unified family court (Division “UFC”) and all family law matters within Florida Family Law Rule of Procedure 12.010. Unified family court matters, which are governed by Administrative Order 2015-002, shall take precedence over other assignments contained in this plan.

Cases involving Petitions for Judicial Waiver of Parental Consent to or Notice of and Consent to Termination of Pregnancy in the Third Judicial Circuit shall be immediately referred to the Chief Judge, who may either handle the matter or assign the case to the family division judges on a rotating basis.

In addition, all county court judges, when acting as circuit judges of the Third Judicial Circuit, are designated as juvenile court judges for the purpose of chapters 39 and 985, Florida Statutes, and may conduct detention or shelter hearings as appropriate. A review pursuant to section 39.402(12), Florida Statutes, shall not be required when the shelter hearing was conducted by a juvenile court judge.

TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT OF COUNTY COURT JUDGES AS CIRCUIT JUDGES

Each county court judge in the Third Judicial Circuit is hereby temporarily appointed circuit judge for the Third Judicial Circuit, pursuant to section 26.57, Florida Statutes, and Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215(b)(4). They are hereby vested with the respective powers and prerogatives conferred by the Constitution and laws of the State of Florida as a circuit judge on a temporary basis to hear, conduct, and determine all matters consistent with section 26.012, Florida Statutes, which are presented to them. Additionally, the county court judges are temporarily appointed as circuit court judges to adjudicate any issue pending in any circuit court case in the Third Circuit that will provide prompt disposition of cases and efficiently administer the courts.

COUNTY COURT

| | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Columbia County | Judge Sara J. Carter ¹ | First appearance; misdemeanor; traffic; county civil; and small claims <i>**County criminal disqualifications and recusals to Judge Bryan. County civil disqualifications and recusals will be assigned to the other county judges on a rotating basis</i> |
| Dixie County | Judge Jennifer J. Johnson | First appearance; misdemeanor; traffic; county civil; and small claims <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Blue, then Judge Fina</i> |
| Hamilton County | Judge Sonny Scaff ² | First appearance; misdemeanor; traffic; county civil; and small claims <i>**Disqualifications and recusals, to Judge Douglas, then to Judge Browning</i> |
| Lafayette County | Judge Darren K. Jackson | First appearance; misdemeanor; traffic; county civil; and small claims <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Jennifer Johnson, then to Judge Fina</i> |
| Madison County | Judge E. Bailey Browning ³ | First appearance; misdemeanor; traffic; county civil; and small claims <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Scaff, then Judge Olin</i> |
| Suwannee County | Judge William F. Williams | First appearance; misdemeanor; traffic; county civil; and small claims <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Fina, then Judge Feagle</i> |
| Taylor County | Judge Bill Blue | First appearance; misdemeanor; traffic; county civil; and small claims <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Parker, then to Judge Jackson</i> |

Standing orders of recusal:

¹ Cases that would be assigned to Judge Sara Carter pursuant to the above, and in which the law firm of Douglas & Douglas, Darby, Peele & Greene or Seifert Law Firm, P.A. represent a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for her recusals as outlined above.

² Cases that would be assigned to Judge Sonny Scaff pursuant to the above, and in which Bruce Robinson, Esq. represents a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for his recusals as outlined above.

³ Cases that would be assigned to Judge E. Bailey Browning pursuant to the above, and in which the law firm of Davis Schnitker, Reeves and Browning, PA, represent a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for his recusals as outlined above.

SUPPLEMENTAL ASSIGNMENT SUCCESSION

If all steps for disqualification or recusal within a specific county and division are exhausted and a case still needs to be reassigned, all circuit cases will be assigned utilizing an alphabetical rotation of all judges, both circuit and county. County court cases will be assigned using an alphabetical rotation of county judges. Court Administration will be responsible for determining these supplemental assignments. If necessary or appropriate, the case will be assigned by special appointment of the Chief Judge.

JUDICIAL ROTATIONS

Upon an election, an appointment, or any other assignment changes, the entire affected case load, including recusals, transfers to an incoming judge. If there are specific complex cases or cases close to resolution, in the interest of judicial economy and after consultation with the affected judges, the case may remain with the previously assigned judge.

**ASSIGNMENT OF COUNTY COURT JUDGES
OF THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
TO OTHER COUNTIES WITHIN THE CIRCUIT**

As provided in this Order (i.e., certain recusals from one county judge to another county judge) and when otherwise assigned by specific order of the Chief Judge, the county court judges of the circuit are hereby appointed to hear, conduct, and determine matters of county court jurisdiction that are presented to them in all counties of the circuit.

**TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT
OF CIRCUIT JUDGES AS COUNTY COURT JUDGES**

All circuit court judges of the Third Judicial Circuit are temporarily appointed to adjudicate any pending issue in any county court case in the Third Judicial Circuit.

**JURISDICTION OF
CHILD SUPPORT HEARING OFFICER, CIVIL TRAFFIC INFRACTION
HEARING OFFICER, AND GENERAL MAGISTRATE**

| Name of Officer | Title | Duties and/or Venue |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Stephen P. Johnson | Child Support Hearing Officer | DOR/Title IV-D child support hearings in all counties |
| Christina Seifert | Civil Traffic Hearing Officer | Columbia County civil traffic infraction hearings |
| Jennifer K. Griffin | General Magistrate | Mortgage foreclosure; probate and guardianship; and <i>pro se</i> domestic relations cases as specifically assigned in all counties |

CONTROL OF DOCKETS

The control of the dockets for the various divisions of court shall rest with the presiding judge at the discretion of the Chief Judge.

INMATE REVIEW

Each County Jail within the Third Judicial Circuit submits their jail population statistics to Court Administration for monthly review.

REGULATION AND USE OF COURTROOMS

Management and use of the courtrooms and associated court space in each of the seven counties of the circuit shall be determined by the Chief Judge in consultation with the local county and circuit judges. Criminal matters will take precedence over civil matters.

PROCEDURE FOR CALENDARING CIRCUIT COURT CASES

All cases under circuit court jurisdiction shall be calendared before the judge assigned to the division in which the case has been filed. When a rule, statute, or procedure mandates expedited judicial action on a matter and the judge assigned to the division is unavailable, the Chief Judge shall assign a judge to hear the case or cases pursuant to this order. This judge will be the next available circuit judge or a county judge in the county of jurisdiction.

This order replaces all prior orders of General Assignment of Judges.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers in Columbia County, Florida, on this 15th day of November, 2021.

MARK E. FEAGLE, Chief Judge

Original: Columbia County Clerk of Court
Copies: All Judges
All JA's
Third Circuit Clerks of Court
Third Circuit Staff
State Attorney's Office
Public Defender's Office
Regional Conflict Counsel
DCF
Partnership for Families
GAL