

IN THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA
AMENDED GENERAL ASSIGNMENT OF JUDGES NO. 2020-039A
AUGUST 11, 2020 – DECEMBER 31, 2020

Amended to remove dates in the body of order and correct Hamilton county court recusals

WHEREAS, Florida Rule of 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 ⁴	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>
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

	Judge Paul Bryan ²	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 Feagle, then Judge Olin, then Judge Bryan</i>
	Judge Mark E. Feagle ³	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 Melissa G. Olin	Domestic relations and DOR cases in which petitioner’s last name begins with the letters A-G; 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 Leandra G. Johnson ⁴	Domestic relations and DOR cases in which petitioner’s last name begins with the letters P-Z; probate and guardianship <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Douglas, then Judge Feagle, then Judge Bryan</i>
		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 Fina, then Judge Blue</i>
Criminal	Judge David W. Fina	All felony cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Jennifer Johnson, then Judge Blue</i>
Family	Judge David W. Fina	Risk Protection Orders
	Acting Circuit Judge Jennifer J. Johnson	Domestic relations; DOR cases; injunctions for protection; juvenile delinquency; dependency; truancy; Marchman and Baker Acts; and probate and guardianship <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Fina, then Judge Blue</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 Acting Circuit Judge Sonny Scaff	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> 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	All civil and felony cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Browning, then Judge Parker</i>
Family	Judge Melissa G. Olin Acting Circuit Judge E. Bailey Browning ⁵	Domestic relations; DOR cases; and injunctions for protection <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Browning, then Judge Parker</i> 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	All civil cases <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Williams, then Judge Feagle</i>
Criminal	Judge Mark E. Feagle ³	Division A: All cases in which defendant's last name begins with the letters A-K <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Fina, then Judge Williams</i>
	Judge David W. Fina	Division B: All cases in which defendant's last name begins with the letters L-Z <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Feagle, then 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	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 Feagle</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; injunctions for protection; Marchman and Baker Acts; Risk Protection Orders; and probate and guardianship <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Blue, then Judge Jackson</i>
	Acting Circuit Judge Bill Blue	Juvenile delinquency; truancy; and dependency <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 and Carter law firm; or Andrew J. Decker, IV 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 Foye Walker; law firm of McRae and McNeill; law firm of Rhett Bullard; or law firm of Robinson, Kennon, and Kendron represent a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for his recusals as outlined above.</p> <p>³ Cases that would be assigned to Judge Mark Feagle pursuant to the above, and in which the law firm of Marlin Feagle or Columbia County Judge Elect Sara Jane Carter represents a party, shall automatically be assigned by the clerk to the judge responsible for his recusals as outlined above.</p>		

⁴ Cases that would be assigned to Judge Leandra Johnson pursuant to the above, involving Columbia Bank, 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 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.

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 Notice of 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 Rule of 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 Judicial Circuit that will provide prompt disposition of cases and efficiently administer the courts.

COUNTY COURT

Columbia County	Judge Tom Coleman ¹	First appearance; misdemeanor; traffic; county civil; and small claims <i>**Disqualifications, recusals, and appeals to Judge Bryan</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; Appeals to Judge Fina</i>
Hamilton County	Judge Sonny Scaff	First appearance; misdemeanor; traffic; county civil; and small claims <i>**Disqualifications and recusals, to Judge Douglas, then to Judge Browning; Appeals to Judge Douglas</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; Appeals to Judge Fina</i>
Madison County	Judge E. Bailey Browning ²	First appearance; misdemeanor; traffic; county civil; and small claims <i>**Disqualifications and recusals to Judge Scaff, then Judge Olin; Appeals to 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; Appeals to Judge Fina</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; Appeals to Judge Parker</i>
<p>Standing orders of recusal:</p> <p>¹ Cases that would be assigned to Judge Tom Coleman pursuant to the above, and in which the law firm of Douglas & Carter, Seifert Law Firm, Brad McRae, Esq., or Law Office of Lisa Schlitzkus represent 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 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.</p>		

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 12th day of August 2020.



MARK E. FEAGLE, Chief Judge

Original: Columbia County Clerk of Court