



**IN THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUDGE
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2026-02**

IN RE: CIRCUIT AND COUNTY JUDGE ASSIGNMENTS

WHEREAS, Rule 2.215, Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration, provides that the Chief Judge shall assign judges to the courts and divisions and determine the length of each assignment along with designating administrative judges to assist in the supervision of the court; it is therefore

WHEREAS, Administrative Order 2024-04, *In Re: Circuit Judge and County Judge Assignments*, as amended, currently sets forth the judicial assignments of the Second Judicial Circuit of Florida; it is therefore,

ORDERED, the judicial assignments of the Second Judicial Circuit set out below are effective July 1, 2026, rescinding any previous circuit and county judge assignment order:

I. FRANKLIN COUNTY.

- A. Circuit Judge Michael Beato shall be assigned all circuit cases and appeals from final administrative orders of local government code enforcement boards and of reviews and appeals as otherwise expressly provided by law.
- B. County Judge J. Gordon Shuler shall be assigned all county court cases, weekday first appearances, and shall serve as primary backup to the circuit judge.
- C. Magistrates assigned to Franklin County shall hear family cases with pro se parties, except for uncontested family cases, simplified dissolution of marriage cases, juvenile dependency, termination of parental rights trials, juvenile delinquency, and protective injunctions.

II. GADSDEN COUNTY.

- A. Circuit Judge Ronald W. Flury shall be assigned all circuit criminal cases.
- B. Circuit Judge Anthony Miller shall be assigned all circuit civil, family, probate, guardianship, dependency, and appeals from final administrative orders of local government code enforcement boards and of reviews and appeals as otherwise expressly provided by law.
- C. County Judge Kathy L. Garner shall be assigned all county court cases, weekday first appearances, and primary backup to assist with juvenile delinquency cases.
- D. Magistrates assigned to Gadsden County shall hear family cases with pro se parties, except for uncontested family cases, simplified dissolution of marriage cases, juvenile dependency, termination of parental rights trials, juvenile delinquency, and protective injunctions.

III. JEFFERSON COUNTY

- A. Circuit Judge Jason L. Jones shall be assigned all circuit cases and appeals from final administrative orders of local government code enforcement boards and of reviews and appeals as otherwise expressly provided by law.
- B. County Judge Robert R. Plaines shall be assigned all county court cases, weekday first appearances and shall serve as primary backup to the circuit judge.
- C. Magistrates assigned to Jefferson County shall hear family cases with pro se parties, except for uncontested family cases, simplified dissolution of marriage cases, juvenile dependency, termination of parental rights trials, juvenile delinquency, and protective injunctions.

IV. LEON COUNTY

A. CIRCUIT JUDGE ASSIGNMENTS

- 1. **Criminal Division:** Each division shall be assigned 25% of all criminal cases.
 - a. Division A: Circuit Judge Angela C. Dempsey
 - b. Division B: Circuit Judge Jeremiah M. Hawkes
 - c. Division C: Circuit Judge Stephen S. Everett
 - d. Division D: Circuit Judge Jonathan Sjostrom
 - e. Division E: TBD
 - f. Division SW: Circuit Judge Stephen S. Everett
 - g. Circuit Judge Stephen S. Everett shall serve as the administrative judge over Leon County Circuit Court Criminal Division. In addition, he shall be assigned Leon County Grand Jury duties. He may delegate these duties to other judges in the Leon County Circuit Court Criminal Division as necessary. In addition, the administrative judge, with consent of the chief judge, may modify the division's calendaring and scheduling as deemed appropriate for the efficient administration of the division.
- 2. **Civil Division:** Each division shall be assigned 33.33% of all civil cases and prisoner petitions.
 - a. Division S: Circuit Judge David Frank
 - b. Division U: Circuit Judge Joshua M. Hawkes
 - c. Division V: Circuit Judge J. Lee Marsh
 - d. Circuit Judge J. Lee Marsh shall serve as the administrative judge over Leon County Circuit Court Civil Division and may reassign circuit civil cases as necessary to ensure equitable assignment. In addition, shall be assigned all appeals from final administrative orders of local government code enforcement boards and of reviews and appeals as otherwise expressly provided by law.

3. Family Division:

- a. Division G¹: Dependency: Circuit Judge Barbara K. Hobbs
- b. Division H: Delinquency: Circuit Judge Andrew T. Sheeran
- c. Division I: Family: Circuit Judge Francis J. Allman shall be assigned 35% of all family cases.
- d. Division J: Family: Circuit Judge Tiffany Baker-Carper shall be assigned 45% of all family cases.
- e. Division K: Circuit Judge Andrew T. Sheeran shall be assigned all protective injunction cases.
- f. Division L: Family: Circuit Judge Barbara K. Hobbs shall be assigned 20% of all family cases.
- g. Circuit Judge Barbara K. Hobbs shall serve as the administrative judge over the Leon County Circuit Court Family Division. The administrative judge may reassign cases within the Leon County Family Division and adjust the magistrate and hearing officer assignments in consultation with the Chief Judge. In addition, the administrative judge may issue calendars for protective injunctions, emergency filings, or any other matter deemed appropriate for the efficient administration of the division.
- h. Magistrates assigned to Leon County shall hear family cases with pro se parties, except for uncontested family cases, simplified dissolution of marriage cases, juvenile dependency, termination of parental rights trials, juvenile delinquency, and protective injunctions.

4. **Probate Division:** Circuit Judge Jason L. Jones and Circuit Judge Michael Beato shall each be assigned 50% of all probate and guardianship cases, with associated cases to determine incapacity (MH cases), except for Baker Act, Marchman Act and Risk Protection Order cases.

B. COUNTY JUDGE ASSIGNMENTS

1. **County Court Cases:** Each county judge shall be assigned 20% of all county cases.
 - a. Division 1: County Judge LaShawn D. Donald
 - b. Division 2: County Judge Monique Richardson
 - c. Division 3: County Judge Stefanie M. Newlin
 - d. Division 4: County Judge Carlos Ray
 - e. Division 5: County Judge Nina Ashenafi-Richardson
 - f. Leon County Judge Nina Ashenafi-Richardson shall serve as administrative judge for Leon County Court. The administrative judge shall assign all first appearances, except those on weekend and holiday duty, on a rotating basis.

¹ Includes all matters under Chapter 39, including juvenile dependency and termination of parental rights, all Unified Family Court Section cases as defined and identified pursuant to Administrative Order 2013-08, adoption cases (excluding uncontested adoptions filed under Chapter 63),

2. Leon County Judges Monique Richardson and Stefanie M. Newlin shall each be assigned two protective injunction dockets per month.
3. Leon County Judges shall be equally assigned all Baker Act, Marchman Act and Risk Protection petitions on a rotating basis.
4. All Leon County Felony Drug Court cases shall be assigned to Leon County Judge Nina Ashenafi-Richardson.
5. All Veterans Treatment Court cases shall be assigned to Leon County Judge LaShawn D. Donald.
6. Division P: Leon County Misdemeanor Mental Health Docket shall be assigned to Leon County LaShawn D. Donald.

V. LIBERTY COUNTY.

- A. Circuit Judge Ronald W. Flury shall be assigned all circuit criminal and juvenile delinquency cases.
- B. Circuit Judge Anthony Miller shall be assigned all circuit civil, family, probate, guardianship, dependency, and appeals from final administrative orders of local government code enforcement boards and of reviews and appeals as otherwise expressly provided by law.
- C. County Judge Christopher D. Bufano shall be assigned all county court cases, Florida State Hospital hearings, weekday first appearances, and shall serve as primary backup to the circuit judges.
- D. Magistrates assigned to Liberty County shall hear family cases with pro se parties, except for uncontested family cases, simplified dissolution of marriage cases, juvenile dependency, termination of parental rights trials, juvenile delinquency, and protective injunctions.

VI. WAKULLA COUNTY.

- A. Circuit Judge J. Layne Smith shall be assigned all circuit cases for criminal, civil, family, probate, guardianship, and appeals from final administrative orders of local government code enforcement boards and of reviews and appeals as otherwise expressly provided by law.
- B. County Judge Brian Miller shall be assigned all county court cases, weekday first appearances, and serve as primary backup for juvenile delinquency and dependency cases.
- C. Magistrates assigned to Wakulla County shall hear family cases with pro se parties, except for uncontested family cases, simplified dissolution of marriage cases, termination of parental rights trials, juvenile delinquency, and protective injunctions.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION.

- A. Circuit-wide Weekend and Holiday Duty Judge.
 1. The trial court administrator shall prepare a rotation list designating each circuit and county judge to serve as circuit-wide duty judge on weekends and holidays. The circuit-wide weekend and holiday duty judge shall handle all first appearances, shelter petitions, and juvenile delinquency cases for all counties of the Circuit.

2. The circuit-wide weekend and holiday duty judge shall also handle any arrest warrants, search warrants, petitions for injunctions, emergency hearings, or other emergency matters brought to the circuit-wide weekend and holiday duty judge's attention only while the court is convened for the weekend and holiday first appearance hearings.
3. Once weekend and holiday court conclude for the day, Leon County emergency matters shall be addressed by the Leon County Duty Judge. Emergency matters in all other counties shall be addressed in accordance with the provisions of Section VIII, Emergency Hearings.

B. Leon County Duty Judge.

1. In accordance with Administrative Order 2015-04, In Re: Leon County Duty Judge, the Chief Judge shall promulgate a Leon County duty judge assignment document so that a judge shall be available as directed in this administrative order to handle after-hours applications for search warrants and other emergency matters in Leon County, to include Risk Protection Orders.
2. The Leon County duty judge shall not be responsible for emergency matters in counties other than Leon County. Emergencies in Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Liberty, and Wakulla Counties shall be the responsibility of the local county judge or duly assigned circuit judge.
3. The Leon County duty judge shall be available by telephone to address emergency calls at all times during their rotation.

VIII. EMERGENCY HEARINGS.

- A. Emergency hearings are strictly defined as “non-routine matters requiring immediate action by a judge to prevent physical harm, irreparable property damage, or a hardship of such a critical nature that swift intervention of the court is necessary.”
- B. A request for an emergency hearing shall be presented in writing to the judge assigned to the case.
- C. If an assigned judge is unavailable in Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Liberty, and Wakulla Counties, other assigned circuit and county judges in that county shall be contacted to address the emergency. If the circuit and county judges are unavailable, the matter shall be referred to the Chief Judge.
- D. If an assigned judge is unavailable in Leon County, and a duty judge has not been designated to address such an emergency, the request for an emergency hearing shall be referred to the Chief Judge.

IX. BACKUP AND SUPPLEMENTAL ASSIGNMENTS.


- A. Circuit judges are authorized to supplement and aid the county court in the county to which the circuit judge is assigned. Circuit judges are also authorized to supplement and aid any other circuit or county judge in the circuit when they are unavailable, requests assistance, or assigned by the Chief Judge.
- B. County judges are temporarily assigned to supplement circuit court. County judges shall not be assigned to handle contested family law cases or child support cases except in an emergency.

- C. County judges in each of the counties may handle uncontested family matters and simplified dissolution of marriage cases in consultation with the assigned circuit judge.
- D. When necessary for the orderly administration of the Second Judicial Circuit, and for the prompt dispatch of the business of the court, the Chief Judge may assign senior judges to temporary service in any court of the Second Judicial Circuit, with the authority to hear, conduct, try, determine, and dispose of the cases and matters presented to him or her.
- E. Jury Qualification.
 - 1. Circuit judges assigned to Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Liberty, and Wakulla Counties shall be responsible for qualifying the jury venire during their trial weeks.
 - 2. County judges in Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Liberty, and Wakulla Counties shall qualify jurors during their trial weeks.
 - 3. Leon County judges shall qualify Leon County jurors on a rotating basis as determined by the Leon County Administrative Judge.
- E. Children Services Council of Leon County. Circuit Judge Barbara K. Hobbs is appointed to the Children's Services Council of Leon County, pursuant to section 125.901(1)(a), Florida Statutes.

X. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

- A. Courtrooms and hearing rooms shall be assigned by the Office of Court Administration, in consultation with the Chief Judge.
- B. All judges assigned to new divisions shall assume the caseload, opened or reopened, previously assigned to the preceding judge, including all pending and scheduled hearings, proceedings, trial dates, and associated scheduling matters, unless otherwise directed by the Chief Judge.
- C. Judges may agree among themselves to exchange duty weeks or otherwise arrange coverage with other judges in the Second Circuit.

DONE AND ORDERED in chambers in Tallahassee, Leon County, Florida, this 20th day of May 2026.


FRANCIS J. ALLMAN
CHIEF JUDGE