

The Honorable John Carassas
County Court Judge
County Civil Section 42/ Small Claims Section 48
Judicial Assistant: Amber ademiduk@jud6.org
INSTRUCTIONS and JUDICIAL PRACTICE PREFERENCES
324 S. Fort Harrison Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33756
Phone: (727)464-3910

HELP FOR PARTIES WITHOUT ATTORNEYS:

The judicial assistant cannot answer your legal questions nor discuss your case with you. Under Florida law, she could be prosecuted for a first-degree misdemeanor, unlicensed practice of law, if she were to provide legal advice or guidance. Please, do not ask the JA to answer legal questions.

*The Judge can only discuss your case with you in the courtroom, in the presence of all the parties involved in the case. Please, do not call or email the judge's office and expect to have a conversation with the judge or attempt to relay a message to the judge through the Judicial Assistant. **If you'd like to bring a matter to the Court's attention, you must put it in writing and file it with the Clerk of Court, and provide copies to the opposing party.***

HELPFUL LEGAL RESOURCES FOR PARTIES WITHOUT ATTORNEYS:

Pinellas Clerk of Court Self-Help Program:

<https://www.mypinellasclerk.org/Self-Help>

Clearwater: (727)464-5150 or St. Petersburg (727)582-7941

Gulfcoast Legal Services: Clearwater (727)443-0657 or St. Petersburg (727)821-0726

Bay Area Legal Services: 1-800-625-2257

TO SCHEDULE HEARINGS:

ATTORNEYS:

Please, schedule all hearings in JAWS, "Section 42 – Judge Carassas" Calendar.

The website is: https://jawspinellas.jud6.org/jaws_attorney/login.aspx

Hearings of 30 minutes or less may be scheduled directly online. All hearings scheduled via JAWS are heard via Zoom. The Zoom information is provided to you in JAWS. For Motions for Summary Judgment and Claims of Exemption where the defendant is pro se, please schedule your hearing on Judge Carassas' **"UMC"** **Calendar**. For all other motions, please schedule your hearing on the **"Motions"** **Calendar**. For hearings which require additional time, please e-mail the JA.

The scheduling attorney must add ALL associated parties in the JAWS database when scheduling hearings to ensure ALL parties receive emails regarding the scheduling and cancellation of hearings. All hearing dates and times are to be coordinated among the parties prior to scheduling the hearing in JAWS. Any scheduling conflicts should be resolved among the parties. Please do not include the JA in e-mail threads concerning scheduling hearings.

Once a hearing time is approved in JAWS, please send the JA a courtesy copy of the Notice of Hearing via Email.

Side note: Your motion must appear in the clerk of court's docket prior to scheduling your hearing and the case must be "open."

PARTIES WITHOUT ATTORNEYS:

1. Put your request in writing and provide it to the Clerk of Court.
2. Send a copy to the opposing party.
3. Contact the JA via phone at 727-464-3910 or Email at ademiduk@jud6.org only after 1 and 2 have been completed, be prepared to provide the case number and the name of the motion you would like to schedule.

IN-PERSON HEARINGS:

All Hearings that exceed 60 minutes will be heard in person.

All Jury and Non-Jury Trials will be heard in person.

All Final Hearings on Eviction and Unlawful Detainer Cases will be heard in person.

Old Historic Courthouse

324 S. Ft. Harrison Avenue, Courtroom 2

Clearwater, FL 33756

CROSS NOTICES:

If you wish to set a motion companion to or in opposition to a motion already scheduled and confirmed by the judicial assistant, opposing counsel must first agree. Only after agreement with opposing counsel may the cross-noticing party contact the judge's office to request permission to add a motion to the calendar in a time slot reserved by the attorney who initially reserved hearing time.

CANCELLATION OF HEARINGS:

Hearings that you schedule in JAWS can also be canceled up to 48 hours prior to the hearing. If the hearing is less than 48 hours away, please contact the JA to cancel your hearing and be ready to provide a Notice of Cancellation and a succinct explanation for the cancellation.

COURTESY COPIES AND HEARING MATERIALS:

It is not necessary to send courtesy copies of pleadings to the judge if they have already been E-filed. Please, E-file your hearing materials at a minimum of 72 hours prior to your scheduled hearing. We strive to be paperless, please do not send hard-copy hearing materials to the judge's office, unless you have an in-person hearing scheduled. If you have an in-person hearing scheduled, please send your hard-copy hearing materials at a minimum of **one week prior** to your scheduled hearing.

SCHEDULING A TRIAL:

You must E-file and serve a notice that the action is at issue and ready to be set for trial. Once your notice appears in the clerk's docket, please Email the JA for trial dates.

The following is a link to **Administrative Order 2025-013 PA/PI-CIR**

ORDER SETTING NON-JURY TRIAL and PRETRIAL CONFERENCE:

<https://www.jud6.org/LegalCommunity/LegalPractice/AOSAndRules/aos/aos2025/2025.htm>

EVICTON HEARINGS:

Eviction cases are reviewed by the judge upon submission of the proposed Final Judgment via the JAWS Portal for cases represented by Counsel. If a hearing is required, the judge will reject your proposed order and prompt you to contact the JA. For cases not represented by an attorney, please submit your Final Judgment to the Judge's office with copies and self-addressed stamped envelopes for review. If a hearing is necessary, your proposed order will be returned to you with instruction to schedule a hearing.

SEND ALL MAIL DIRECTLY TO:

Judge John Carassas
324 S. Ft. Harrison Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33756

SMALL CLAIM PRETRIALS:

A Stipulation Invoking the Rules of Civil Procedure or a Waiver of Pretrial Conference must be E-filed and your proposed order submitted via the JAWS portal at a minimum of **72 hours PRIOR** to the Small-Claim pretrial hearing date to ensure that the stipulation or waiver will be docketed prior to the hearing

REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCES ON SMALL CLAIM PRETRIALS:

All requests for continuances must be in the form of a written motion to the Court and E-filed with clerk at a minimum of **72 hours PRIOR** to the Pretrial Hearing and upload your proposed order via the JAWS portal. For litigants not represented by an attorney, your request must be submitted to the clerk in writing. A copy must be sent to the opposing party. Do not contact the Court until you have submitted your request to the Clerk of Court.

JUDICIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS IN SMALL-CLAIMS COURT PRETRIALS:

1. Log into Zoom via computer on a reliable, stable connection. Do not use a phone, tablet, or other device that will limit your ability to prepare or to Zoom chat documents.
2. Be prepared to complete PDF forms on your computer during pretrials, particularly the court Stipulation to Stay Entry of Judgment.
3. Be prepared to Zoom chat documents during pretrials.
4. Be prepared to provide a list of your case numbers by docket time.
5. File your returns of service with the Clerk of Court at least three days before pretrial.

You may download the Pinellas County Stipulation to Stay Entry of Judgment form used at pretrial here:

<https://tinyurl.com/SMALLCLAIMSSTIP>

SUBMITTING PROPOSED ORDERS:**ATTORNEYS:**

Please, submit all proposed orders and correspondence to Judge Carassas via the JAWS portal **in PDF format ONLY** to: “**County Civil – Section 42.**” It is important to make sure all associated parties’ emails are connected to the case for everyone to receive a conformed copy of the order. In the event you do not have a pro-se litigant’s email address, the conformed copy and attachments must be mailed to the Defendant.

JAWS Link: https://jawspinellas.jud6.org/jaws_attorney/login.aspx

Side note: *Your motion/stipulation/waiver, etc. MUST appear in the Clerk of Court’s docketing system PRIOR to uploading your proposed order to JAWS. Please, do not Email proposed orders to the JA.*

PARTIES WITHOUT ATTORNEYS:

Please, submit all proposed orders and correspondence directly to Judge Carassas’ office. It is important to make sure copies and self-addressed stamped envelopes are included with your proposed order.

JUDGE CARASSAS' ZOOM INFORMATION:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98252559100?pwd=ZGVGNVFTWDlnYlduM0wyMWtwUkFrdz09>

Dial by your location

+1 786 635 1003 US (Miami)

Meeting ID: 982 5255 9100

Passcode: 045411

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/aC7Cj8lnx>