



State of Florida  
**Sixth Judicial Circuit of Florida**  
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**SHAWN CRANE**  
CHIEF JUDGE

**LOUISE SMITH**  
JUDICIAL ASSISTANT

Judicial Practices and Procedures  
(last modified *December 2025*)

Chief Judge Shawn Crane, Judge  
Louise Smith, Judicial Assistant

**Contact Information**

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**A. Communications with the Judicial Office**

• **Method of Communication:**

All communications to the judicial office should be submitted by e-mail to [lsmith@jud6.org](mailto:lsmith@jud6.org). The subject line of any e-mail to the judicial office should contain the case number, case name, and relevant matter (e.g., 2024 DR 001234 SC -Doe v. Doe - 2-Hour Hearing Requested).

- **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:**

Parties may only contact the judicial office in accordance with these practices and procedures. Unsolicited communications from non-parties will not be considered by the court.

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

Filing a notice of an email address through the Portal does not input the email address into the JAWS for purposes of receiving electronically signed orders, judgments, JAWS notifications, or email correspondence from the Court. Parties must register their email address on JAWS for each individual case and for each individual attorney or party entitled to service.

- **Response to Inquiries:**

Under Florida law and Florida rules of court, the chief judge is the chief judicial officer of the circuit, responsible for developing a plan for the efficient and proper administration of the trial courts. The chief judge does not possess any independent investigative powers and cannot participate in matters in a case assigned to another judge. Each judge is an independent constitutional officer of the state and the chief judge is not empowered to get involved with another judge's case.

The judicial assistant strives to substantively respond to all inquiries within one business day.

However, the judicial assistant is not authorized to provide legal advice. If the judicial assistant is unable to substantively respond within one business day, your message will be acknowledged as received with an indication of when to expect a substantive response and alternate contact for immediate assistance.

- **Other Communication Procedures:**

Any e-mail sent to or from the judicial office may be a public record subject to disclosure.

## **B. Scheduling Procedures**

- **Court Schedule**

The Court's 2026 Section J calendar is held in person at the Pinellas County Justice Center in Courtroom 1 at 10:00AM on the following dates:

January 15, 2026	February 19, 2026	March 26, 2026	April 16, 2026
May 21, 2026	June 18, 2026	July 16, 2026	August 20, 2026

September 10, 2026	October 22, 2026	November 19, 2026	December 17, 2026
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- **Scheduling Hearings:**

Hearings may be requested using the court's online scheduling platform JAWS.

If parties are unable to identify a hearing date and time on JAWS, the scheduling party should e-mail the judicial assistant, copying opposing counsel, the JAC, if applicable, and any self-represented litigant, to coordinate scheduling the hearing.

- **Notice of Hearing:**

A notice of hearing must be filed and served immediately after reserving hearing time.

All notices of hearing must contain the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) notification required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.540.

- **Submission Deadlines:**

The court must receive all materials for the hearing no later than 5 business days before the hearing.

- **Cancelling Hearings:**

You must cancel hearings by notifying the judicial assistant immediately. You must also immediately file and serve a notice of cancellation on opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant.

### C. Remote Appearance

- **Remote Appearance Procedure:**

Requests to appear remotely for an appearance must be made by motion.

- **Platform Used:**

The court uses Zoom for remote appearances.

- **Platform Meeting ID#:**

Contact the judicial assistant to obtain the platform meeting ID#.

- **Requirements:**

Requests for remote appearance must be submitted 5 days prior to the hearing.

Any person appearing remotely must be in a private location that is quiet and free from distractions. Under no circumstances will a participant be permitted to appear remotely from a moving vehicle.

#### **D. Submission of Orders and Judgments**

- **Format:**

All proposed orders must be submitted in PDF format and provided to opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant.

- **Submission Method:**

All proposed orders must be submitted to the court by JAWS. Self-represented litigants excused from e-mail service may submit proposed orders to the court by U.S. mail or hand-delivered to the judicial office.

#### **E. Other Division Procedures**

- **ADA Accommodations:**

Information on ADA accommodations can be found on the circuit's website at the following link:

<https://www.iud6.org/GeneralPublic/ADAAssistance.html> Insert Other  
ADA Information.