

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR PASCO AND PINELLAS COUNTIES, FLORIDA**

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2026-033 PA/PI-CIR

RE: APPOINTMENT OF REFEREE

WHEREAS, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Florida has designated the Chief Judge of the Sixth Judicial Circuit of Florida to appoint a referee for the Court to preside in a disciplinary action brought by The Florida Bar pursuant to the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar,

IT IS ORDERED that the Honorable Benjamin S. Thomas, Circuit Judge, in and for the Sixth Judicial Circuit, State of Florida, having certified to the Chief Judge that he has reviewed the referee training materials approved by the Supreme Court of Florida, is hereby designated and appointed as referee for the Florida Supreme Court, in the matter of:

The Florida Bar vs. Julian Andrew Hayes, Jr.,
Supreme Court Case No. SC2026-1340.

The Honorable Benjamin S. Thomas, as referee, is hereby vested with all and singular the powers and prerogatives conferred by the Constitution, laws of the State of Florida, and the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar, concerning a referee for the Supreme Court of Florida in this matter.

The Honorable Benjamin S. Thomas, as referee shall hear, conduct, try, and determine matters presented and shall submit findings of fact and recommendations to the Supreme Court of the State of Florida as provided in Rule 3-7.6(m) and in accordance with the September 4, 2026 order of Chief Justice Couriel. The referee's report shall be filed in accordance with said order.

Online resources are available for judges serving as referees in proceedings involving disciplinary action against attorneys, and the unlicensed practice of law. The resources offered at <http://www.flcourts.org/resources-and-services/judiciary-education/bar-referees.shtml> provide detailed information on the role of a Bar Referee in each of these proceedings and should be reviewed prior to handling this case.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers at Clearwater, Pinellas County, Florida, this 4th day of September 2026.

Original Signed by Shawn Crane, Chief Judge

cc: The Honorable Benjamin S. Thomas
The Honorable John A. Tomasino, Clerk, Supreme Court of Florida
Steven E. Sellers, Esq., Bar Counsel, The Florida Bar
Patricia Ann Toro Savitz, Esq., Staff Counsel, The Florida Bar
Julian Andrew Hayes, Jr., Esq., Respondent
Jennifer Parker, Trial Courts Administrator
Pinellas County Law Library

Please note: Judge Thomas's address is 545 1st Avenue North, Room 217 St. Petersburg, FL 33701