Judicial Practices and Procedures
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A. Communications with the Judicial Office

- Method of Communication: All communications to the judicial office must be submitted by email to CoCivE3@jud6.org or by phone at 352- 521-4171. The subject line must contain the case number, case name, and relevant matter (e.g., 2024 SC 001234 – Doe v. Doe- 1 hour hearing requested) The judicial assistant cannot provide legal advice or discuss specifics of your case.

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

- E-Filing Portal Contact Information: All attorneys and self-represented litigants must make and receive service by e-mail, which is generally through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, unless excused. Fla. R. Gen. Prac. & Jud. Admin. 2.516.

  All attorneys and self-represented litigants must provide an e-mail address to receive signed orders electronically, unless excused. Fla. R. Gen. Prac. & Jud. Admin 2.516. It is the responsibility of attorneys and self-represented litigants to update their contact information using Form 2.603 any time there is a change in the e-mail account registered for electronic service.

- Other Communication Procedures: Any email sent to or from the judicial office may be subject to public record disclosure.

B. Scheduling Procedures

Scheduling Hearings:

- Attorneys must request hearing times using the court's online scheduling platform:

  https://jaws.pascocountyfl.net/jaws_attorney/login.aspx

- In-person hearings will occur at the Robert D. Sumner Judicial Center, 38053 Live Oak Ave, Dade City, FL 33523

- Hearings set for 15 minutes may be scheduled directly online. For hearings which require additional time, adjacent hearing time slots may be combined to create the amount of time needed, provided you first e-mail/call the judicial assistant to create the time slot prior to scheduling your hearing.

- It is the moving party's responsibility to confirm that all counsel/associated parties are in the JAWS database to ensure all parties receive e-mails regarding the scheduling and cancellation of hearings.

- Pro Se litigants must file their motion/request in writing and file with the Clerk of Court and mail/email a copy to the opposing party. The Judge will review the motion/request upon receipt from the Clerk of the Court.

Notice of Hearing:

- A notice of hearing must be filed and served immediately after approval from the judicial assistant.

- A notice of hearing involving any remote appearance must list the judicial Zoom credentials. This information will be sent via JAWS notification, once approved by the judicial assistant.

- 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 five business days before the hearing.

- Continuance Procedure: Motions for continuance must be filed at least 3 business days prior to the scheduled court date for which the continuance is sought and must state with specificity: (1) the basis of the need for the continuance, including when the basis became known to the movant; (2) whether the motion is opposed; (3) the action and specific dates for the action that will enable the movant to be ready, including, but not limited to, confirming the specific date any required participants are available; and (4) the proposed date by which the case will be ready to proceed and whether that date is agreed by all parties. Except for good cause shown, the motion must be signed by the party requesting continuance, as required by Florida rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(e).

- Canceling 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

- Platform Used: The Court uses ZOOM for all remote appearances.

- Platform Meeting ID: The judicial assistant will provide the ZOOM ID and Passcode via JAWS notification upon approval of hearing time.

Remote Requirements:

- Non-Evidentiary proceedings scheduled for 30 minutes or less may be set via ZOOM.

- All other proceedings are to be scheduled in person. In person hearings will occur at the Robert D. Sumner Judicial Center, 38053 Live Oak Ave, Dade City, FL 33523
- Once the hearing is requested and approved in JAWS, the Judicial Assistant will e-mail a JAWS notification with the ZOOM Meeting ID and Passcode. This information should be included in the notice of hearing.

- Again, it is the moving party's responsibility to confirm that all counsel/associated parties are in the JAWS database to ensure all parties receive e-mails regarding the scheduling or cancellation of hearings.

D. Submission of Orders and Judgments

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

- Submission Method: All proposed orders must be submitted to the court by U.S. Mail or hand-delivered to the judicial office, or via JAWS in PDF format. When using JAWS, it is important to make sure that all associated party e-mails are connected to the case in order for everyone to receive a conformed copy of the order. In the event you do not have a pro se litigant's e-mail, the conformed copy and attachments need to be mailed and a follow up certificate of service should be filed through the e-portal.

- 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.

- Submission Deadline: Proposed orders must be submitted within 10 days of any hearing

E. Courtesy Copies of Case Law and Other Documents

- When Required: Courtesy copies of case law or other specified document(s) must be submitted to the court for any evidentiary proceeding. A copy must be provided to the opposing party for any evidentiary proceeding.

- Deadline for Submissions: Courtesy copies must be delivered to the court no later than 3 days before any evidentiary proceeding.

F. Emergency and Other Urgent Matters

- Requirements: If a party believes there is a factual basis for setting an emergency hearing, a detailed motion setting forth the following must be filed: (1) the issues to be resolved, (2) reasons why an emergency hearing is necessary, and (3) the amount of time needed for each party's presentation.

- Scheduling: If the court determines that an emergency exists, a hearing will be scheduled unilaterally by the court. All parties shall make themselves available for emergency hearing, barring exigent circumstances.

G. Exhibits for Evidentiary Proceedings

- Submission Method: Hand-deliver or mail all exhibits to the clerk of the court.

- Format: Exhibits must be submitted to the clerk of court in approved format. Any videos must be submitted to clerk on a CD or DVD. USB drives will not be accepted. All attorneys and self-represented litigants must bring sufficient copies of each exhibit for the clerk, the court, and each party to review during the hearing or trial. Exhibits must be labeled in the following format: "State 1" or "Defense 1"

- Deadline for Submissions: All exhibits must be received in chambers at least 3 days before the evidentiary proceeding.

- The Court <u>does not</u> accept or print electronic filings for evidence.

H. Pretrial Procedures and Conferences

Case Management Conferences (CMC)

- Any party may request a CMC when a case requires.

- The court strongly encourages the early use of CMC's in more complex cases, multiple-party litigation, or any case that might benefit from court intervention.

- Requirements: Any request for a CMC must articulate the reasons for the necessity of the conference.

- Scheduling: If the court grants the request for a CMC, the moving party must schedule the CMC through the online scheduling platform.

- Additional hearings may be requested by either party

I. Setting Cases for Trial

- Mediation is always required before trial/final hearing.

- Notice Period: The Court does not set date-certain trials. After the case management conference, the court will assign cases to specific days during the trial period and may assign back-up cases. Attorneys, self-represented litigants, parties, and witnesses are expected to be available during the entire trial period.

- Other: See Administrative Order 2025-012 for detailed procedures

J. Other Division Procedures

- ADA accommodation can be found on the circuit's website at the following link: jud6.org

- Interpreter Requests: If an interpreter is needed for hearing or trial, please contact pascointerpreter@jud6.org

- Motions decided on written submissions: Motions that may be ruled on based on written submissions include, but are not limited to: Motions to Strike, Motions to Compel, Motions to Dismiss, Motions to Take Judicial Notice, Motions to Stay, Motions to Reschedule Mortgage Foreclosure sale, Motions for Continuance, and Motions for Disqualification. Motions for Summary Judgment may not be decided via the written submission procedure. Please see administrative order 2020-012 and Administrative Order 2020-011 for sample forms as to correspondence, notice and a proposed order.