



CIRCUIT COURT
**NOTICE REGARDING FAMILY COURT HEARINGS IN THE FOURTH JUDICIAL
CIRCUIT, DUVAL COUNTY, FLORIDA**

As we monitor the ongoing developments regarding COVID-19 virus, the seven (7) family court divisions within the Fourth Judicial Circuit, Duval County, Florida are implementing the changes described below until further notice. We appreciate your understanding as we take measures to protect the public safety.

Beginning Monday, March 16, 2020, all hearings will be conducted by telephone or video conference. This includes *ex parte* hearings. The parties should confer and agree on who will initiate the conference call before contacting the judges' chambers. If the parties cannot agree, the moving party will be responsible for having all parties on one line before contacting the court. In cases involving *pro se* parties, the opposing attorney shall have the *pro se* individual on the line (if possible) before calling the court. The parties shall make arrangements to accommodate any court reporters being used for hearings.

If the parties use video conferencing, those hearings shall be conducted using a commercial application such as ZOOM, located at www.ZOOM.us, Skype, FaceTime, etc.

Notices of hearing shall state the manner in which the hearing will be held (i.e. telephone or video conference) and shall provide all details, including clerk's docket number of the matter (for ease of reference), phone numbers or websites necessary to allow lawyers, parties, and witnesses to participate.

Setting cases for trial will be done only through e-mail. The trial set memoranda, along with available trial dates, are posted on each judges' webpage at jud4.org/ex-parte-procedures-and-dates. The parties shall complete all information in the form, including the desired mediator and trial date, and submit it as an e-mail attachment to the judges' judicial assistant. Any disagreements on mediators or trial dates shall be included in the email along with each party's recommendation. Setting cases for hearings may be done by either email or telephone to the Courts Judicial Assistant.

Any submissions or evidence that parties would like the court to consider should be sent as an attachment to an e-mail at least three business days before the hearing. Any requests to provide physical documents or evidence to the court should be put in writing and sent to the judge.

We encourage all parties to confer on their upcoming hearings. Discuss matters that can be resolved without the need for a hearing. Consent orders are to be forwarded to the Court via email.

Individual judges may decide to continue both evidentiary/non-evidentiary hearings and nonjury trials that are not time sensitive. In that event, court staff will contact counsel for the parties and an order continuing the hearing or trial will be entered. Any party who has a valid basis for requesting a continuance of a set matter may file a motion to continue. The motion shall include a statement of the position of opposing parties concerning the request.

This procedure applies not only to the setting of future hearings but also to all cases currently on the calendar.

As future developments warrant, we will promptly announce any changes in court procedures. Please help us by disseminating this information to other groups, voluntary bar associations, and practitioners who appear in the Fourth Judicial Circuit.

Lance M. Day
Administrative Judge, Circuit Family Division