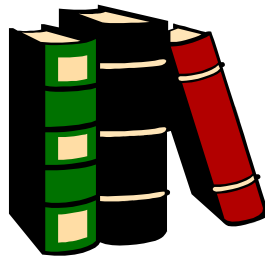


**EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
SEMINOLE COUNTY  
CRIMINAL DIVISION J**



**ADMINISTRATIVE  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
GUIDELINES**

**CIRCUIT JUDGE JESSICA J. RECKSIEDLER**

***\*\*updated on 10/1/2025\*\****

## **HEARINGS**

1. **SCHEDULING:** All parties are required to give a good faith assessment of the time needed for the hearing. If other parties are waiting for their hearing, and your case goes over the time limit, your hearing will be terminated and rescheduled for a subsequent hearing. 15, 30, or 60 minute hearing times are to be retrieved and scheduled online by using JACS. To use JACS, go to [www.flcourts18.org](http://www.flcourts18.org), click on Calendaring and JACS on the left hand side of the page, under the Seminole County column click on “Docket Calendar Attorney Scheduling”. **IF YOU NEED A HEARING FOR MORE THAN ONE HOUR, YOU WILL HAVE TO CONFIRM IT WITH THE JUDICIAL ASSISTANT.**

**Coordinating:** Reasonable attempts need to be made to clear a date with opposing counsel before scheduling on JACS. Several attempts on the same day is insufficient. Do not contact the JA to determine what a reasonable attempt is or how much time is reasonable that must be determined by the attorney.

Once your hearing is set on JACS you will receive a confirmation #. Please print out that confirmation page and attach it to your copy of the Notice of Hearing for your file. Please do not send a copy of the Notice of hearing to the Judge, just file the original Notice in the court file.

**Motions:** If you do not see the subject of your motion that you are trying to set for hearing listed in the drop down box when scheduling a hearing on JACS, please click cancel and logout at the bottom of the main menu and review the “Answers to the FAQ’s.” The JACS will only allow you to select one motion in the drop-down box. If you have more than one motion that you wish to address on that date, then the other motions need to be listed in the box that says, “Additional Motions to be Addressed.” The Court may review the Motion from the court file.

**Courtroom:** Do not select a courtroom in the drop-down box. Leave the box blank as is. The Judge holds hearings in different courtrooms, and this will limit your search. Judge Recksiedler is usually in **Courtroom 5A** but occasionally she is in a different courtroom.

**Select Role of Scheduling Attorney:** If you get a prompt while trying to schedule your hearing that you need to select a role of the scheduling attorney you need to logout of JACS and log back in and attempt to schedule the hearing again. After you select the date for your hearing there will be an option right above where you input your case number for you to select whether your attorney represents the Plaintiff or Defendant.

**Remote Hearings:** **ALL CRIMINAL** Docket soundings and Trial Scheduling Conferences are to be **IN PERSON**. **CRIMINAL** hearings ARE NOT permitted to be remote, unless non-evidentiary and have a motion granted by the court. Should there be extenuating circumstances a party may submit a request to the court to appear remotely a sufficient time before the hearing. If approved by the court prior to the hearing, the

party must **specify the attorney and/or party by name who is appearing by video via Microsoft Teams and the email address of each individual.**

The judge's judicial assistant will email each individual a calendar invitation for the videoconference meeting via teams, which must be accepted in order to attend. She will also provide video instructions for the meeting in the calendar invitation. The parties should sign into the meeting by clicking "JOIN TEAMS MEETING" on the invite. \*\*The Judicial assistant is available by email during the Teams videoconference hearings. Please attempt to email rather than calling her while you are waiting for your hearing. \*\*

The attorney needs to stand by for 1 hour from the time the hearing is set for the Judge to admit them from the video "lobby" of Microsoft Teams for the hearing. ***More than one hearing may be scheduled on the docket for the set time, so your hearing may take time before it is addressed.*** Your hearing may not necessarily be heard according to its place on the judge's docket. Please make sure to click on the camera icon and microphone icon to ensure you are seen and heard by the judge. It is all parties' responsibility to make sure the equipment used is operating appropriately. ***You must wait patiently in the virtual lobby until you are admitted and called in to the hearing by the Judge.***

If you have a court reporter, please place the name and email address on the notice or order setting hearing in the body of the email. Also, you MUST NOTIFY THE COURT of a court reporter prior to starting the hearing to ensure the court reporter is in attendance.

#### **Evidentiary hearing or Trial**

If there is an Evidentiary hearing or Trial to take place the parties MUST Premark all their exhibits for ID in letter format i.e. "Plaintiff's Ex A" or "Defendant's Ex B" and provide them to the Clerk at least an hour before the hearing or trial is scheduled to commence if the premarked exhibits number fifty(50) exhibits or less and at least a day before the hearing or s trial is scheduled to commence if the premarked exhibits number more than fifty(50) exhibits.

2. **CONTINUANCES:** If defense requests a continuance of a trial, a waiver of speedy trial is required by the court to on the record. Therefore, if the defendant has not yet waived speedy trial and the defendant files a written Motion to Continue in the court file, a signed waiver by the defendant must also be included. Otherwise, the defendant is required to testify to the waiver under oath before the court. Once a waiver of speedy trial is completed in writing or on the record, the court will consider the motion.
3. **CANCELING:** Only the party who scheduled the hearing may cancel the hearing. The attorney who scheduled the hearing must go on JACS and click "To cancel a Hearing" under the main menu. Enter your confirmation # and click "Cancel Hearing". You must follow up with the filing of a Notice of Cancellation in the court file. Please send a copy of the Notice

of Cancellation to the Judge. **If a hearing is continued or cancelled, it is the responsibility of the scheduling attorney to advise the judicial assistant that the scheduled hearing is continued or cancelled so that it is removed from the court's calendar. SHOULD A HEARING BE CANCELLED LESS THAN 24 HOURS PRIOR TO THE HEARING, THE PARTIES ARE STILL REQUIRED TO ATTEND THAT HEARING TIME, TO INFORM THE COURT AS TO THE REASON FOR THE LATE CANCELLATION.**

4. **CROSS NOTICING/PIGGY BACKING/CHANGING MOTION(S)**: If you wish to add a motion to a previously set hearing date and do not need more time, you must contact the party who set the hearing and obtain permission to share their time. If you need additional time you may either set a new hearing on JACS for that same date and time, if available, or have the party who set the original hearing cancel theirs and reschedule it for a timeslot with sufficient time for both hearings. Please make sure that Amended Notices and/or Cross Notice of Hearings are e-filed. Please do not send a copy of your Amended Notice or Cross Notice of Hearing to the Judge. Should the opposing party not agree to schedule your motion for the same time, you must find additional time in JACS.

\*\*\*If a matter settles prior to the hearing time scheduled and you have other pending motions **you may not unilaterally change the motion/matter being heard** without first confirming same with opposing counsel. If opposing counsel objects and can verify a conflict or has less than five (5) business days notice, then the hearing must be rescheduled.

5. **NOTICE OF HEARING**: A notice of hearing must specifically state the matter(s) to be heard. A notice of hearing that states "All Pending Motions" is a nullity. Any party scheduling a hearing **MUST** provide notice to the other parties even if defaulted by the court. If a Guardian Ad Litem appointed in the case is not given notice of the hearing, the hearing may be subject to cancellation by the court pending proper notice to the Guardian Ad Litem. **Please do not send a copy of your Notice of Hearing to the Judge, just file the original with the clerk.**

6.

**\*\*\*\*IF THESE DOCUMENTS ARE NOT SUBMITTED THE COURT WILL NOT SIGN THE FINAL JUDGMENT\*\*\***

Thereafter, the attorney preparing the final judgment is to submit the proposed final judgment to opposing counsel for approval as to form and content **prior to** submission to the court. All final judgments are to be accompanied by a cover letter stating, if in fact, that opposing counsel has reviewed and approved the form of the final judgment. If the attorneys cannot agree on the final judgment, then a hearing is to be scheduled.

Uncontested Dissolutions of Marriage, where **ONE party is represented by counsel**, or **both parties are unrepresented** a remote hearing via Microsoft Teams is **MUST be scheduled**. Prior to the hearing all the above documentation in 7a.-7f. is to be e-filed in the court file and a proposed final judgment for the judge to e-sign.

9. **FLORIDA SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS (PRO-SE)** – Please register for the E-Portal so you can electronically receive and file documents. <https://www.myflcourtaccess.com/default.aspx>
10. **MOTION TO WITHDRAW AS COUNSEL:** If the attorney is able to obtain a **signed consent** from their client, then the proposed Order may be –e-filed. If a signed consent is **unable** to be obtained, then the motion **MUST** be set for hearing with at least 5 days notice to the parties. Please make sure the motion and notice of hearing has a certificate of service that indicates they were mailed to client. The proposed Order allowing withdrawal of counsel must reflect the following:
- a) The client's name, address and telephone number, and e-mail address
  - b) Statement that all pleadings are to be furnished to the client
  - c) Statement that the client is responsible for notifying the Clerk, in writing, within (5) days of any changes of address.
11. **MOTION FOR REHEARING/RECONSIDERATION:** Once a Motion for Rehearing/Reconsideration is filed with the Clerk’s office, a copy can be e-mailed to the Judge for review. The Judge will either make a ruling on the motion, without a hearing, and copies will be sent out or the JA will contact your office to let you know to set a hearing on JACS. **Do NOT set a hearing** unless you receive approval first. The hearing is **NOT** the rehearing of the issue but an opportunity for the party to argue their motion before the court.

## **ORDERS**

12. **EMERGENCY HEARING:** **DO NOT** drop-off or fax your emergency motion to the Judge. It will not be reviewed before the hearing. If you feel that your motion is an emergency (*An example of an emergency issue is a person “seriously” endangered*) **and** need the Judge to stop what they are doing to hold a hearing within 24 hours, contact the Judge Recksiedler’s Judicial Assistant at [Vanessa.Lau@flcourts18.org](mailto:Vanessa.Lau@flcourts18.org) and attach your emergency motion for the Court’s review and determination.
13. **PROPOSED ORDERS:** ALL proposed Orders should be submitted through the e-portal (in Word format) along with a separately filed cover letter (in PDF format). For the Order to be electronically signed in ICMS the format of the order **MUST NOT** have the actual date, “Circuit Judge” or “Judicial Assistant” signature line within the order and **MUST** contain the following language on EVERY ORDER:

**ORDERED and ADJUDGED on this DDDD**(for the date the court signed it to be electronically populated)

**JJJJ**(for the Judge's signature to be electronically populated)

**\*\*\*\* You must add all 4 letters in all caps and both fields, DDDD and JJJJ for the order to be signed, or it will be rejected for resubmission once corrected**

If the parties are represented by counsel and/or all parties(including pro se) are listed in the e-portal for eservice the Order does not require and should not contain a certificate of service but rather state, the following

**Copies have been furnished via the Florida Courts E-filing portal to the following:**

**CCCC**( for the service list to electronically populate in the order)

If all parties are not listed in the e-portal for eservice, then the party may add a certificate of Service to state the following

### **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that copies have been furnished by U.S. Mail or via filing with the Florida Courts E-filing Portal to the below listed parties on **MMMM**(for the date the JA signed it to be electronically populated)

**AAAA** (for the Judicial assistant's signature to be electronically populated)

## **SAMPLE PROPOSED ORDER**

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
IN AND FOR SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**State of Florida,  
Plaintiff**

**CASE: 2020-CF-XXXX**

**vs.**

**Name,  
Defendant/,**

**TEST ORDER**

**THIS CAUSE** having come before the Court on February 18, 2016, having considered the exhibits, reviewed the file, and otherwise being fully advised in the premises, finds as follows:

The Petitioner's Motion is hereby GRANTED.

**ORDERED and ADJUDGED on this DDDD**

**JJJJ**

**\*\*If the parties are all in the e-portal state:**

**Copies have been furnished via the Florida Courts E-filing portal to the following:**

**CCCC**

**\*\*If all parties on the service list are in the e-portal a certificate of service is not necessary, if they are not then please provide the following certificate of service:**

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

**I HEREBY CERTIFY** that copies have been furnished by U.S. Mail or via filing with the Florida Courts E-filing Portal to the below listed parties on **MMMM**.

**AAAA**

If the parties agreed upon the order without hearing, the cover letter should confirm that opposing counsel has reviewed the order and has no objection to the form of the order.

In the alternative, you may submit the order without a cover letter and title the order Agreed Order to indicate the order was agreed upon by both parties.

If the matter was heard and the court ruled, the cover letter should confirm that opposing counsel has reviewed the order and has no objection to the form of the order.

If opposing counsel has an objection, he/she may also submit a proposed order for the Judge's review with an accompanying cover letter indicating such, or a hearing should be scheduled. Please highlight the differences in the competing orders so the judge may ascertain them without difficulty. Do **NOT** ask opposing counsel to contact the Judge's office with objections to a proposed order.

If opposing counsel has been forwarded a copy of the proposed order, but has not responded within a reasonable time frame, you may forward the proposed order to the court with a cover letter stating same **ONLY IF** the motion was already heard before the court.

If the motion has not been heard before the court and you have not received a response from opposing counsel as to his/her position, then it **MUST** be set for a hearing.

If the other party is *pro se*, a copy of the proposed order is to be sent simultaneously to the *pro se* party and to the court with a cover letter stating that the *pro se* party must voice any objections in writing to the court within 5 days.

After a hearing is completed and the court has ruled, you **MUST** file the order within one week of the date the hearing took place.

**Jury Selection:** All juries are selected on Monday morning of the trial week. All attorneys and parties are expected to be present for trial at 9:00 a.m. The presiding judge will normally review the docket for last minute adjustments at that time.

Attorneys are expected to conduct voir dire in a professional manner without wasting time. The presiding judge will not tolerate attempts to curry favor with jurors. Questions which do not touch upon a juror's qualifications to serve or the issues in the case will not be allowed. Questions should be designed to solicit an answer that will assist in deciding if the juror should be challenged either peremptorily or for cause and not for reasons of idle curiosity. For instance, spare time activities, reading habits, and bumper sticker preferences are not normally a valid subject of inquiry. Direct questions such as "Do you belong to the N.R.A.?" instead of "Do you have any bumper stickers on your automobile?" get to the issue at hand instead of soliciting an answer which may have nothing to do with the case. Counsel are prohibited from suggesting to a juror that voir dire can be conducted individually at the bench without the express permission of the Court.

Jurors will be excused from the courtroom before exercising the challenges for jury selection begins. The Court will alternate between counsel asking them to accept or challenge jurors. The Plaintiff will be requested to accept or challenge the first juror. The Defendant will be requested to accept or challenge the second juror. This procedure of rotation will be continued until a jury is selected. Back strikes are allowed until the jury is sworn. Most juries are sworn immediately after selection to avoid last minute back strikes and delays.

Responsibility for preparation of jury instructions is upon the party requesting the instruction unless the Court orders otherwise. Jury instructions shall be in 12-point type with Times New Roman font and follow the format of the Standard Jury Instructions in Criminal Cases. All draft jury instructions should be provided to the Court by noon the Friday before trial.

**A. MOTIONS:** Opposed Motions for Continuance, Pre-Trial, and/or Trial must be heard. Any motion for continuance must be made in writing, signed by counsel for the parties, and shall state when the cause will be ready for trial. In ruling upon such motions, the court will weigh the following factors:

- What are the legal grounds?
- When was the case filed?
- When was the motion filed?
- Will the parties be prejudiced?
- Has the case been previously continued and if so, how many times?
  
- Has the discovery been moving forward?
- What is the condition of court's calendar?

**ALL ATTORNEYS, PARTIES, WITNESSES, JURORS, AND OBSERVERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO FOLLOW THE COURTROOM DECORUM POLICY.**

## **COURTROOM DECORUM AND BEHAVIOR**

1. Stand when Court is opened, recessed or adjourned. Stand when addressing, or being addressed by the Court. Stand when addressing a witness or juror. Stand when the jury enters or retires from the courtroom. Stand when making opening statements, closing arguments or examining witnesses. Do not approach either the jury or the witness without the Court's permission. Remain at the lectern unless using exhibits or charts when examining the witness or potential jurors. All feet are to remain on the floor when addressing the court, witnesses, or potential jurors
2. Address all remarks to the Court, not opposing counsel or the opposing party.
3. Maintain composure and proper tone of voice throughout the proceedings. Attorneys should not raise their voice toward court, counsel, witnesses or jurors.
4. Avoid disparaging personal remarks or acrimony toward opposing counsel and remain wholly detached from any ill feeling between the litigants or witnesses.
5. Refer to all persons, including witnesses, other counsel and the parties by their surnames and not by their first or given names unless the permission of the Court is sought in advance.
6. Only one attorney for each party shall examine, or cross examine each witness. The attorney stating objections, if any, during direct examination, shall be the attorney recognized for cross examination.
7. No exhibit, whether marked for identification or not, shall be held in any manner, or placed in any position in the courtroom, that would allow the jury to see the exhibit unless it has been admitted into evidence and permission to publish the exhibit to the jury has been obtained from the Court
8. In making objections counsel should state only the legal grounds for the objection and shall withhold all further comment or argument unless elaboration is requested by the Court. If elaboration is requested, each party will have opportunity to provide argument. The party making the objection shall provide argument first, then the opposing party will have the opportunity to respond and the court will rule.
9. When referencing case law to court and counsel, attorneys are required to provide the full cite of the case for court and counsel.
10. Counsel shall admonish all persons at counsel table that gestures, facial expressions, audible comments, or the like, as manifestations of approval or disapproval during the testimony of witnesses, or at any other time, are absolutely prohibited.
11. Counsel shall refrain from attempting to make re-argument after the Judge has ruled.

- 12.** Counsel shall complete resolution negotiations and advise clients of their settlement options in advance of court hearings.
- 13.** No tobacco use in any form is permitted. No bottles, beverages containers, papers cups or edibles are allowed in the courtroom, except as permitted by the Court. No gum chewing is permitted.
- 14.** Cell phones and pagers should be turned off or in a vibrate mode. Computer should be used with audio off.