

**EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SEMINOLE COUNTY**

**CIRCUIT CIVIL / FAMILY DIVISION K
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**



JUDGE CHRIS SPRYSENSKI

Please read instructions before contacting the Judicial Assistant

*****Updated August 23, 2021*****

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. GENERAL INFORMATION
- II. SETTING HEARINGS
 - A. Matters Not Requiring a Hearing
 - B. Short Matters
 - C. Matters Requiring Hearings
 - D. Meet and Confer Requirement
 - E. Coordinating
 - F. JACS Instructions
 - G. Notices of Hearing
 - H. Continuances
 - I. Cross-Noticing/Piggybacking/Changing
 - J. Remote Hearings
 - K. Emergency Hearings
 - L. Cancellation of Hearings
- III. FAMILY LAW TOPICS
 - A. Adoptions and Termination of Parental Rights Pending
 - B. Petitions to Relocate
 - C. Temporary Relief for Family Cases
 - D. Motions for Child Pick-Up
 - E. Uncontested Dissolution of Marriage
 - 1. Both Parties Represented by Counsel
 - 2. One Party Represented by Counsel

- 3. Both Parties Unrepresented
 - 4. Collaborative Process Act Cases
 - F. Temporary Relief for Family Cases
 - G. Final Judgments
- IV. MOTIONS TO WITHDRAW AS COUNSEL
- V. MOTIONS FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT (RESIDENTIAL FORECLOSURE)
- VI. MOTIONS TO DISMISS, FOR REHEARING, OR FOR RECONSIDERATION
- VII. EVIDENCE FOR HEARINGS AND TRIAL
 - A. Index
 - B. Notice of Compliance
- VIII. PROPOSED ORDERS
- IX. MOTIONS FOR JUDICIAL DEFAULT
- X. TRIALS
 - A. Family Division
 - B. Civil Division
 - C. Foreclosure
 - D. Motions to Continue

APPENDIX - DIVISION K FORMS

Virtual Hearing Instructions

Evidence Index for Virtual Hearings

Notice of Compliance re: Evidence for Virtual Hearings

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

FLORIDA SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS (PRO-SE). Please register for the [E-filing portal](#) so you can electronically receive and file documents. Neither the Judge nor the judicial assistant are permitted to give legal advice. If you need legal advice you may contact the [Florida Bar Lawyer Referral Service](#) for a referral to an attorney.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE COURT. Ex parte communication (any communication to the Judge without the other party's presence or knowledge) is strictly prohibited. Copy the opposing party or attorney when sending email messages or correspondence to the judicial assistant or Judge.

II. SETTING HEARINGS

A. MATTERS NOT REQUIRING A HEARING

The following matters do not require a hearing.

- Stipulated modifications
- Stipulated orders and motions to enter an agreed order
- Cancellation and rescheduling a foreclosure sale
- Motion to vacate foreclosure judgement because of reinstatement
- Motions to waive mediation requirement in residential foreclosures
- Default judgment of liquidated amounts
- Motion for substitution of counsel (must be signed by client)
- Motion to withdraw (if a consent cannot be obtained, a copy of the proposed order is to be sent simultaneously to the party and to the Court with a cover letter stating that the party / opposing counsel must object in writing to the Court within 10 days)
- Appointment of a special process server
- Motion to dismiss (however, see special Motions section below for procedures)
- Adoptions and termination of parental rights pending (however, see Adoptions section below for special procedures)

For the above matters to be considered by the Court, please submit a cover letter and proposed Order using the procedures set forth under the Proposed Orders section of these procedures.

B. SHORT MATTERS

Short Matter Hearings are 5 minutes or less and are held via Teams beginning at 8:30 a.m. Available dates for short matters are found on the JACS available hearing date calendar. Click on "Display a list of available hearing dates" then "Retrieve" for current availability. To schedule a short matter hearing, please follow the instructions below in order:

- Review the available dates on JACS by selecting "Display a list of available hearing dates" then "Retrieve."
- Coordinate with the opposing counsel/party
- Email the Judicial Assistant (rhiannon.riegel@flcourts18.org) with your case number, matter to be heard, and preferred hearing date. After receiving confirmation from the Judicial Assistant, then
- Prepare and e-file your Notice of Hearing. Include the confirmation number provided by the Judicial Assistant and the Virtual Hearing Instructions contained in these procedures on your Notice of Hearing. Do not email a copy of the Notice to the Judicial Assistant.

C. MATTERS REQUIRING HEARING

All other matters and motions require hearings and are scheduled using the Judicial Automated Calendaring System (JACS) in 15-minute blocks of up to one hour.

IF YOU NEED A HEARING FOR MORE THAN ONE (1) HOUR, YOUR MOTION WILL HAVE TO BE PLACED ON A TRIAL DOCKET. To be placed on a trial docket you need to contact the appropriate trial coordinator at the numbers listed under Section XV below. If you have two motions each needing one (1) hour each, you CANNOT set one motion at 9:00 a.m. and the other motion at 1:30 p.m. even if time is available. They must be set on different days or set on the trial docket for two (2) or more hours.

D. MEET AND CONFER REQUIREMENT¹

A mandatory meet and confer process is hereby established, as set forth below, for all motions to be set for hearing and to occur before scheduling the hearing except for the following motions:

¹ REQUIRED for all hearings occurring on or after September 15, 2021

Injunctive relief without notice

Judgment on the pleadings

Summary judgment

Counsel with full authority to resolve the matter shall confer before scheduling the hearing on the motion to attempt to resolve or otherwise narrow the issues raised in the motion and include a Certificate of Compliance (see below) that the conference has occurred in the Notice of Hearing filed with the court. It shall be the responsibility of counsel who schedules the hearing to arrange the conference.

The term "confer" requires a substantive conversation in person or by telephone or video conference in a good faith effort to resolve the motion without the need to schedule a hearing and does not envision an exchange of ultimatums by fax, e-mail, or letter. Counsel who merely attempt to confer have not conferred. Counsel must respond promptly to inquiries and communications from opposing counsel who notices the hearing and is attempting to schedule the conference.

If counsel who notices the hearing is unable to reach opposing counsel to conduct the conference after three (3) good faith attempts, counsel who notices the hearing must identify in the Certificate of Compliance the dates and times of the efforts made to contact opposing counsel. Counsel shall include in the Notice of Hearing the Certificate of Compliance certifying that the meet and confer occurred (or did not occur and setting out the good faith attempts to schedule the conference) and identifying the date of the conference, the names of the participating attorneys, and the specific results obtained.

Counsel who notices the hearing shall ensure that the court and the court's judicial assistant are aware of any narrowing of the issues or other resolution because of the conference. Failure to comply with the "meet and confer" requirement will result in the Court cancelling the scheduled hearing.

The following are templates to be included with your Notice of Hearing for the Certificate of Compliance:

First Option (Meet and Confer Completed)

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on [DATE OF MEET AND CONFER] a lawyer in my firm with full authority to resolve this matter had a substantive conversation in person, by telephone or by video conference with opposing counsel in a good faith effort to resolve this motion before the motion was noticed for hearing but the parties were unable to reach an agreement.

/s/

Counsel for the party who noticed the matter for hearing.

Second Option (Meet and Confer Not Completed)

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a lawyer in my firm with full authority to resolve this matter attempted in good faith to contact opposing counsel in person, by telephone or by email on:

1. [DATE] _____ at [TIME] _____;
2. [DATE] _____ at [TIME] _____;
3. [DATE] _____ at [TIME] _____.

to discuss resolution of this motion without a hearing and the lawyer in my firm was unable to speak with opposing counsel.

/s/

Counsel for the party who noticed the matter for hearing.

E. COORDINATING

Reasonable attempts need to be made to clear a date with opposing counsel before scheduling on JACS. Making several attempts on the same day is insufficient. Do not contact the judicial assistant to determine what a reasonable attempt is or how much time is reasonable as that must be determined by the attorney. If the opposing party is pro se and a telephone number or email address is listed on any of their pleadings, you must make two attempts to coordinate a hearing on two different days. A message needs to be left on both days requesting them to call your office by the end of that business day to coordinate the hearing. If at the end of the second business day you do not receive a call back, then you may set a hearing unilaterally at least 14 days from the current date. If no phone number or email address are listed in the court file, then a hearing cannot be scheduled sooner than one (1) month.

F. JACS INSTRUCTIONS

FOR ATTORNEYS AND STAFF. To use JACS, go to <http://flcourts18.org>, click on the Resources tab, then JACs Login. It is recommended that you bookmark this site in your browser. Log in and select Division K from the dropdown menu. Click on "Display a list of available hearing dates." Leave the duration and courtroom fields blank and click "Retrieve." This will direct you to a list of available hearing dates and times. Family and Civil matters can both be heard during available hearing times, regardless of whether one or the other is designated. Once you have coordinated a hearing date, click "Schedule an In-Person Hearing," select your Motion (or Other Motion if not listed), leave the duration field at 15, and leave the courtroom field blank. Select the hearing date and follow the prompts to confirm your hearing. The terms Plaintiff and Defendant for civil cases are used interchangeably with the terms Petitioner and Respondent for family cases.

If you need more than 15 minutes of hearing time, please find two or more 15-minute time slots to equal the amount of time needed and follow the steps below to secure up to 4 hearing blocks. The number of 15-minute slots available is displayed in the last column. For example, in the screenshot below, three (3), 15-minute time slots are available on the date indicated, so a 45-minute hearing could be scheduled by reserving all three (3) blocks.

Current Selected Court: **DIVISION K, CHRISTOPHER SPRYSENSKI**

Motion: COMPEL
Duration: 15 minutes

Period from: 8/27/2021

Date	Time	Duration	Courtroom	Open Slots
08/27/2021 (Friday)	9:00 am	15 min		3

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.

FOR PARTIES UNREPRESENTED BY AN ATTORNEY. Only if you are not represented by an attorney, please email the judicial assistant to schedule a hearing once you have coordinated a date. You will be able to view available dates by clicking on [Available Hearing Time](#) (available at Resources – Attorney Resources – JACS Dockets and Calendars) on the <http://flcourts18.org> home page.

CONFIRMATION. Once your hearing is set on JACS you will receive a confirmation number for each 15-minute block. Please include the confirmation numbers on the Notice of Hearing.

G. NOTICES 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. Please include the docket number and date of filing of the Motion to be heard. 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 Judicial Assistant unless specifically requested.

Please include the instructions under the Virtual Hearing Instructions form (see the Table of Contents) as an attachment to ALL Notices of Hearing that will occur remotely.

H. CROSS-NOTICING / “PIGGYBACKING” / CHANGING MOTIONS

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 do 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 date with sufficient time for both hearings. Please make sure that Amended Notices and / or a Cross Notice of Hearing are e-filed.

Should the opposing party not agree to schedule any additional motion for the same time, you must find separate time on JACS.

If a matter settles prior to the hearing time scheduled and there are 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.

I. CONTINUANCES

If a continuance of a hearing is requested, the attorney who scheduled the hearing needs to go to JACS as when they scheduled the hearing, clear a new date with the opposing side. When ready to reschedule on JACS, click “To Re-Schedule a Hearing,” enter your confirmation # and hit “Reschedule.” Click the new coordinated date and the hearing will be rescheduled and you will receive a new confirmation # for your records. An Amended Notice of Hearing needs to be prepared and filed through the e-filing portal. Please do not send a copy of the Amended Notice of hearing to the JA.

J. REMOTE HEARINGS

Short matters and motion hearings are held remotely via video conference. The hearings are “cattle call” style, so your hearing may not start at the exact time it is scheduled. Please make sure to click the camera icon and microphone icon when asked to ensure you are seen and heard by the judge. It is each party’s responsibility to make sure the equipment used is operating appropriately.

REMOTE HEARING / COURTROOM DECORUM AND BEHAVIOR. Although you may be attending a hearing virtually, the Court expects the same level of professionalism and courtesy as if a party were attending a proceeding in person, including the following:

- Address all remarks to the Court, not opposing counsel or the opposing party
- Maintain composure and proper tone of voice throughout the proceedings. Attorneys should not raise their voice toward Court, counsel, witnesses, or jurors

- Avoid disparaging personal remarks or acrimony toward opposing counsel and remain wholly detached from any ill feeling between the litigants or witnesses
- 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
- 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.
- 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
- When referencing case law to Court and counsel, attorneys are required to provide the full cite of the case for court and counsel.

OBJECTIONS TO REMOTE HEARINGS. If a party objects to a hearing being held remotely, that party is responsible for filing an objection, cover letter, and proposed order for the Court’s consideration no later than 5 days before the hearing. Please send a copy of the e-filed objection to the judicial assistant (rhiannon.riegel@flcourts18.org) with “Objection” in the subject line.

K. EMERGENCY HEARINGS

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 child seriously endangered*) and need the Judge to stop what he is doing to hold a hearing within 24 hours, contact Judge Sprysenski’s Judicial Assistant (rhiannon.riegel@flcourts18.org) with “Emergency Motion” in the subject line and attach your emergency motion for the Court’s review.

L. CANCELLATIONS OF HEARING

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 Judicial Assistant. 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 CANCELED 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.

III. FAMILY LAW TOPICS

A. ADOPTIONS AND TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS PENDING

These motions are set for a short matter hearing via Teams (see the short matter/ex parte section above for locating dates and times). If both parties are pro se (unrepresented) then they must complete a Request for Hearing or Other Action Form² on the Circuit Court website, <http://flcourts18.org/selfhelp>.

B. PETITIONS TO RELOCATE

Parties must comply with § 61.13001, Fla. Stat. If a timely objection has been filed and a party is seeking expedited hearing time on their Motion for Temporary Relocation, they must contact the Judicial Assistant. Failure to contact the Judicial Assistant to obtain expedited hearing time will constitute a waiver of the time frames contained in the statute

If **no objection** is filed within the 30 days, the moving party is to submit via the e-filing portal a proposed Order titled “Order Approving Relocation and Modifying Time Sharing” and the Order must repeat the proposed time-sharing schedule.

C. TEMPORARY RELIEF FOR FAMILY CASES

Motions for Temporary Relief are scheduled before and conducted by the General Magistrate’s office. Please send your name, case number and contact phone number to seminole@flcourts18.org. If the case has never been referred to the General Magistrate in the past (*from the time the case was first opened until now regardless if you were the attorney at that time*) and you do not wish to have the General Magistrate hear the Motion for Temporary Relief, then an objection must be filed in writing. Before the hearing can be scheduled before Judge Sprysenski, mediation **MUST** have occurred regarding the temporary issues. Temporary Relief hearings before the Judge will be limited to 60 minutes.

If the case has been referred to the General Magistrate in the past for a previous issue and neither party objected to that hearing within the ten (10) days provided per rule, then no party can ever object in the future to a hearing before the General Magistrate (*regardless if new attorneys have taken the case*).

If a temporary relief hearing is set before the General Magistrate and this is the first hearing that has ever been referred to the General Magistrate and the opposing party

² Effective September 1, 2021

objects within ten (10) days, the objection MUST contain the agreed date and time for mediation or the objection is not a valid objection and the hearing will remain on the General Magistrate's docket (*Administrative Order 05-15S Amended*).

D. MOTION FOR CHILD PICK-UP ORDER

Without notice, a copy of the motion with justification for lack of notice must be provided to the Judge by email to the Judicial Assistant with the proposed Order. The Order must have the heading, case number, and the parties' names completed. If the Judge enters the order ex parte a certified copy can be obtained through the Clerk's office for service and a hearing will be indicated on the Order as to the date and time for the parties to appear in court to present evidence. The Judge may deny the ex parte request but set a hearing and will either notify you with an email and/or an Order denying. A hearing will be set on an expedited basis within 14 days and the moving party will be responsible for preparing the Notice of Hearing. (*An example of an issue for a child pick-up is a child seriously endangered.*)

E. UNCONTESTED DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE

1. Both Parties Represented by Counsel

The attorney(s) can follow the instructions below to submit the proposed Final Judgment via the e-filing portal for the Judge to review and sign in chambers.

Prior to submitting the proposed Final Judgment in an uncontested matter, check the Court's file to ascertain that the following documents are viewable:

- Financial Affidavit for Petitioner
- Financial Affidavit for Respondent
- A copy of Petitioner's Florida Driver's License confirming residency requirements
- If there are assets, a copy of the Marital Settlement Agreement signed by each party.
- If there are any minor children, a Certificate of Completion of a State-Approved Parent Education and Family Stabilization Course for each party.
- If there are any minor children, a copy of a Shared Parenting Plan signed by each party with agreed upon child support guidelines.

2. One Party Represented by Counsel

If ONE party is represented by counsel, and the documentation listed under the above section pertaining to both parties being represented by counsel are viewable in the court file, the parties may waive appearance at a hearing by providing a verified statement from the unrepresented party that the form and content of the proposed Final Judgment are approved. If there is no signed statement from the pro se party, a short matter hearing must be scheduled.

3. Both Parties Unrepresented

If BOTH parties are unrepresented, a short matter remote hearing MUST be scheduled. Prior to the hearing all the documentation listed under the above section pertaining to both parties being represented by counsel must be viewable in the court file. Please follow the instructions for setting a hearing under Section No. II above.

F. COLLABORATIVE DIVORCE

For parties divorcing pursuant to the Collaborative Process Act (§ 61.57, Fla. Stat.), the following items must be viewable in the court file:

- A Collaborative Memorandum of Understanding
- If there are any minor children, a Certificate of Completion of a State-Approved Parent Education and Family Stabilization Course for each party.

Simultaneously with the submission of the proposed Final Judgment, please send via email the signed Collaborative Marital Settlement Agreement and Parenting Plan (if applicable) to the Judicial Assistant. These documents will not be filed but will be reviewed by the Judge prior to the entry of the Final Judgment.

G. FINAL JUDGMENTS OF DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE OR PATERNITY

Please do not reference exhibits in proposed Final Judgments, as exhibits cannot be attached. References to documents such as Marital Settlement Agreements and Shared Parenting Plans should be made in a Final Judgment by referencing the date of filing of the documents and / or Docket Number.

If alimony and/or child support payments will be made, and payments are to be made through the State Disbursement Unit, you must include a separate paragraph regarding payments which are to be made through the Clerk's office like the following:

*The husband/wife, _____, whose address is _____
_____, shall pay child support in the amount of _____ per ____
_____, commencing _____, and on the _____
of each month thereafter, to the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Support Division,
Seminole County Courthouse, Sanford, Florida (mailing address: PO Box 819,
Sanford, FL 32772-0819), together with the statutory service charge of 4% of the*

payment or \$5.25, whichever is less. Payment shall be made in the form of cash, cashier's check, certified check, money order, or other payment form acceptable to the Clerk, and must include the case number, name of the payer and payee for proper identification.

Child Support payments shall continue until the minor child(ren) reach the age of 18 years, marries, dies, becomes emancipated, or otherwise ordered by this court; whichever event shall occur first.

The Clerk of the Circuit Court is instructed to forward any payments received to the husband/wife, _____ whose address is _____

Each party shall inform the other and the Clerk of the Circuit Court immediately of any change of name or address.

If payments of alimony or child support are to be made directly to one party from the other, the Final Judgment must specifically state so.

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 order, then the party may submit the order indicating counsel objects to said order. If opposing counsel has an objection, he/she may also submit a proposed Final Judgment for the Judge's review with an accompanying cover letter indicating such. Please highlight the differences in the competing Final Judgment so the Judge may ascertain them without difficulty. Do not ask opposing counsel to contact the Judge's office with objections to a proposed Final Judgment.

IV. MOTION TO WITHDRAW AS COUNSEL

If the attorney obtains a signed consent from their client, then the proposed Order Granting Motion to Withdraw may be submitted via the e-filing portal. If no signed consent is 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 the client. The proposed Order allowing withdrawal of counsel must reflect the following:

- The client's name, address and telephone number, and e-mail address
- Statement that all pleadings are to be furnished to the client
- Statement that the client is responsible for notifying the Clerk, in writing, within five (5) days of any changes of address.

V. MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT (RESIDENTIAL FORECLOSURE)

Any case where the owner filed a responsive pleading MUST BE mediated before a hearing for a Motion for Summary Judgment. Mediations can be conducted at the Seminole County Courthouse or through a private mediator.

If the Plaintiff feels that mediation is not necessary, or the case has been pre-mediated then a motion to waive mediation needs to be filed explaining the reason(s). Motions to waive mediation can be signed ex parte. Please submit the proposed order with a cover letter via the e-filing portal for entry.

VI. MOTIONS TO DISMISS (FLA. R.CIV. P. 1.140 / FLA. FAM. L. R. P. 12.140), MOTIONS FOR REHEARING (FLA. R. CIV. P. 1.530 / FLA. FAM. L. R. P. 12.530) OR MOTIONS FOR RECONSIDERATION

Once a Motion to Dismiss, Motion for Rehearing, or Motion for Reconsideration is filed, a copy can be emailed to the Judicial Assistant for the Judge to review. The Judge will either make a ruling on the motion, without a hearing, and copies will be sent out or the Judicial Assistant will contact your office to let you know to set a hearing on JACS. Do not set a hearing unless you receive approval first. For Motions for Rehearing and Motions for Reconsideration, any hearing required by the Court is NOT the rehearing of the issue but an opportunity for the party to argue their motion before the court.

VII. EVIDENCE FOR HEARINGS AND TRIAL

If your hearing is evidentiary, you must pre-mark all exhibits for identification with letters (i.e., "Plaintiff's Ex. A" or "Respondent's Ex. B") on the bottom right corner of the exhibit. Two physical (2) copies of all exhibits must be delivered no later than three (3) business days prior to your hearing to the Court's chambers. For example, if you have a hearing scheduled on a Tuesday at noon, the Court must receive exhibits by noon the prior Thursday. Include an index with a list and brief description of each exhibit. Bates Numbering of exhibits is preferred, but not required. Video and audio recordings should be sent on a USB drive or DVD.

Additionally, please email the judicial assistant all pre-marked exhibits in PDF format for documents or JPEG for photos. In the email identify each exhibit by name and marking in the email (i.e., "Plaintiff's Ex A - Insurance Policy" or "Respondent's Ex B - Wife's Financial Affidavit"). In the subject line of the email, please include the case name, case number, date of hearing, time of hearing, motion to be heard, and whose exhibits are attached (i.e., plaintiff / petitioner or defendant / respondent's exhibits). Please include full citations for case law on which you intend to rely. The email will be forwarded to the Court for use during the remote hearing.

A Notice of Compliance should be filed simultaneously with the completion of the above requirements. Failure to file a Notice of Compliance may result in your exhibits not being considered by the Court.

Please see the Appendix to these procedures for the Court's preferred forms for both the evidence index and Notice of Compliance.

VIII. PROPOSED ORDERS

ALL proposed Orders should be submitted through the e-filing portal (in Word format) along with a separately filed cover letter (in PDF format). For the Order to be electronically signed the format of the order MUST NOT have the actual date, MUST NOT have "Circuit Judge" or "Judicial Assistant" signature lines within the order and MUST contain the four-letter codes, each on their own separate line. Copying and pasting the below language is highly recommended.

DONE and ORDERED in Chambers at Sanford, Seminole County, Florida, this DDDD.

JJJJ

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was furnished via U.S. Mail or via the e-filing portal to the parties listed below on MMMM:

CCCC

AAAA

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

IX. MOTIONS FOR JUDICIAL DEFAULT

Motions for judicial default **WILL NOT** be signed without a hearing. **If you are unable to obtain a clerk's default, then a hearing must be set.**

X. TRIALS

A. FAMILY DIVISION

Lawyers and unrepresented parties should contact the Family Trial Coordinator regarding pre-trial conferences, pre-trial requirements, and trials. The Family Trial Coordinator for Division K is Sandy Gorman, whose phone number is (407) 665-4222 and whose email is sandy.gorman@flcourts18.org.

ALL CONTESTED CASES WILL BE REQUIRED TO ATTEND MEDIATION PRIOR TO A TRIAL OCCURRING.

NOTICES FOR TRIAL. A Notice for Trial stating that the cause is at issue must be filed with the Clerk's office and must contain complete, current email addresses for all counsel of record or pro se parties. The notice shall include an estimate of the time required, and whether the trial is on the original action or a subsequent proceeding. The case will then be forwarded to the Family Trial Coordinator for review.

PRETRIAL CONFERENCES. Orders Requiring Mediation, Setting Pre-Trial Conference and Trial Date will be entered by the Court. Pretrial Conferences will be conducted remotely. Parties are to be available for at least one (1) hour from the stated time for a videoconference from the Court. If an attorney has made an appearance and will not be in the office during the necessary time frame, the attorney **MUST** contact the trial coordinator before the pre-trial conference with an alternative the attorney will be available at the time of the pre-trial conference or have counsel who is available for coverage. If the party is unrepresented, they **MUST** contact the trial coordinator before the pre-trial conference with an email or phone number. A time certain trial time will be given during the pretrial conference. If it becomes necessary to place a case on the trial docket as a backup, the parties will be notified of the actual time of trial no less than 24 hours prior to trial time. The court will not address any pending motions at this time.

CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCES. A Case Management Conference will be set if both parties are Pro Se. The Case Management Conference will be conducted by the General Magistrate's Office. The General Magistrate will determine the status of the case, order the parties to attend mediation and ensures the parties meet full compliance with Florida Statutes Chapter 61 prior to trial.

FAMILY TRIALS. All family trials shall be conducted remotely via videoconferencing unless an objection is raised pursuant to Section II.J. of these Procedures. See Section II.J. for other guidelines related remote trials and hearings.

B. CIVIL DIVISION

Lawyers and unrepresented parties should contact the Civil Trial Coordinator regarding case management conferences and orders, pre-trial conferences, pre-trial requirements, and trials. The Civil Trial Coordinator for Division K is Kelley Rowland, whose phone number is (407) 665-4203 and whose email is kelley.rowland@flcourts18.org.

NOTICES FOR TRIAL. A Notice for Trial stating that the cause is at issue must be filed with the Clerk's office and must contain complete, current e-mail addresses to all counsel of record or pro se parties. The notice shall include an estimate of the time required, whether the trial is to be by a jury or not, and whether the trial is on the original action or a subsequent proceeding. The case will then be forwarded to the Civil Trial Coordinator for review.

PRETRIAL CONFERENCES. Pretrial Conferences are automatically set for any case requiring more than one day. If less time is required, a pretrial conference will have to be requested at the time of noticing the case for trial. The court will expect full compliance with the Order Setting Pretrial Conference and Trial Date. Unless specifically excused by the judge, all attorneys/parties are required to attend the pretrial conference remotely via videoconference, even if a time certain for trial has been set. The court may designate counsel to send written notice to opposing counsel or pro se party who did not appear at the pretrial conference. The court will not address any pending motions at this time.

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 8:30 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. Counsels 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 the 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. This procedure 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 14-point type with Arial font and follow the format of the Standard Jury Instructions in Civil Cases. All draft jury instructions should be provided to the Court by noon the Friday before trial.

XI. MOTIONS TO CONTINUE PRE-TRIAL/TRIAL

Opposed Motions for Continuance of Case Management, Pre-Trial, and/or Trial must be heard at Short Matters/Ex Parte. 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 case noticed for trial?
- When was the motion filed?
- Will the parties be prejudiced?
- Has the case been previously continued and if so, how many times?
- Has there been compliance with the temporary support order?
- What is the condition of court's calendar?

APPENDIX
DIVISION K FORMS

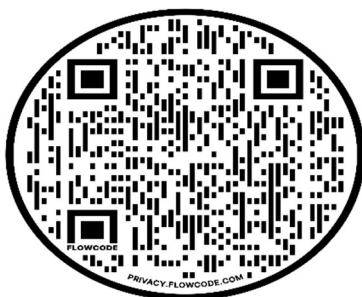
FORM

Judge Sprysenski's Virtual Hearing Instructions

Judge Sprysenski's remote video hearings are held via Microsoft Teams. His virtual courtroom is accessible via the link or QR code below, or by typing <https://fl18.org/i> into Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome web browser³. Please copy and paste this link and QR code on your Notice of Hearing.

JUDGE SPRYSENSKI'S VIRTUAL COURTROOM:

<https://fl18.org/i>



At the designated time that your case is noticed for hearing, you will enter the virtual lobby by clicking the link or scanning the code. Please understand that often, multiple hearings are set for the same time. You will be called to enter the virtual courtroom once the Judge is ready for your hearing. No later than 24 hours before your hearing, please email the judicial assistant (rhiannon.riegel@flcourts18.org) with the names of all attendees as they will appear in Teams for ease of identification.

³ Safari will not work with Microsoft Teams; if you are connecting through Apple products you will need to download the free app. **For emergency purposes only**, if you cannot connect, the backup telephone line is +1 386-310-1754; conference ID: 165 436 093#

FORM

Evidence Index for Virtual Hearings

**CASE NO. (YYYY-DR/CA-#####)
CASE STYLE (i.e., JONES v. SMITH)**

**HEARING DATE (MM-DD-YYYY at XX:XX a.m. / p.m.)
DOCKET NUMBER AND MATTER HEARD (i.e., Docket No. 48
Petitioner's Motion for Temporary Relief)**

Petitioner's / Respondent's / Plaintiff's / Defendant's Exhibits

EXHIBIT IDENTIFIER	EXHIBIT DESCRIPTION	BATES NUMBERS (if using bates numbering)	ENTERED INTO EVIDENCE AS (leave blank for Court)

FORM

Notice of Compliance re: Evidence for Virtual Hearings

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

PARTY A,
Petitioner / Plaintiff,

and

CASE NO.: 2021-DR-123456

PARTY B,
Respondent / Defendant.

_____ /

**NOTICE OF COMPLIANCE WITH DIVISION K EVIDENTIARY
HEARING PROCEDURES**

COMES NOW Party A, and files this Notice of Compliance with Division K Evidentiary Hearing Procedures, and states that on COMPLIANCE DATE (MM-DD-YYYY), which is at least three (3) Court days prior to the hearing in this matter scheduled for HEARING DATE (MM-DD-YYYY) at TIME (XX:XX a.m. / p.m.) two (2) physical copies of the evidence to be relied upon by Party A was delivered to the Court's chambers, and digital copies of the evidence was emailed to the Court's judicial assistant as well as the opposing party.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was furnished via U.S. Mail or via the e-filing portal to the parties listed below on DATE OF SERVICE (MM-DD-YYYY):

PARTIES SERVED

Signature of Counsel for Party or
Party if unrepresented