

Judicial Practices and Procedures

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Honorable Brian DeSanto, General Magistrate
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A. Communications with the Magistrate's Office

- **Method of Communication:** All communications to the magistrate's office must be submitted by e-mail to krista.ebert@flcourts18.org. The subject line must contain the case number, case name, and relevant matter (e.g., 2024-CF-001234-A– State of Florida v. Doe).
- **Ex parte Communications:** All communications with the magistrate's 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 magistrate's office in accordance with these practices and procedures.
- **E-Filing Portal Contact Information:** 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.

- **Response to Inquiries:** The magistrate's assistant is not authorized to provide legal advice. If the magistrate's assistant is out of the office, an email will be provided for emergencies only.

B. Scheduling Procedures

- **Referral to the General Magistrate:** The General Magistrate may preside over all matters related to any motion or petition specifically referred to the Dependency and Truancy General Magistrate, pursuant to Florida Rule of Juvenile Procedure 8.257. Any party may request that a motion or other portions of their case be heard by the General Magistrate, although the General Magistrate may not preside over a shelter hearing under section 39.402, Florida Statutes, an adjudicatory hearing under section 39.507, Florida Statutes, or an adjudicatory hearing under section 39.809, Florida Statutes. To request an Order of Referral, you must contact the Judicial Assistant to the assigned judge. Objections to a referral shall be made according to law and a copy of the Objection to the Order of Referral to the General Magistrate should be sent to the Magistrate's Assistant to request cancellation of a hearing if one has already been scheduled.
- **Scheduling Hearings:** Most hearings before the General Magistrate are scheduled by the presiding judge or by the General Magistrate in open Court. Hearings that were not scheduled in open court must be requested by contacting the magistrate's assistant at krista.ebert@flcourts18.org.
- **Notice of Hearing:** A notice of hearing must be filed and served immediately after reserving hearing time. All notices of hearing must contain the ADA notification required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.540.
- **Cancelling Hearings:** The hearing must be cancelled by contacting the magistrate's's assistant at krista.ebert@flcourts18.org. You must also file and serve a notice of cancellation on opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant.

C. Remote Appearance

- **Remote Appearance Procedure:** Requests to use communication technology for an appearance must be made by motion.

- **Platform Used:** The Court uses Microsoft TEAMS for remote appearances.
- **Platform Meeting ID#:** Contact the magistrate's assistant to obtain the platform meeting ID#.
- **Requirements for Appearance:** (1) Any person appearing remotely must be in a private location that is quiet and free from distractions. Under no circumstances will a participant be permitted to appear remotely from a moving vehicle; (2) Any person appearing remotely must enable the camera when joining the proceeding and shall keep the camera turned on until instructed otherwise by the court; (3) Any person appearing remotely must dress and behave professionally in the same manner as if physically present in the courtroom.

D. Other Division Procedures

- **ADA Accommodations:** If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in a proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator, Court Administration, 301 North Park Avenue, Sanford, FL 32771, telephone number (407) 665-4227 at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.
- **Interpreter Requests:** If an interpreter is needed for a hearing or trial, please contact Court Administration. [SEMINOLE INTERPRETER REQUEST \(SOLICITUD DE INTÉRPRETE PARA SEMINOLE\)](#)
- **Court Record:** All hearings conducted by the Dependency and Truancy General Magistrate are recorded by Digital Court Reporting. The Court does not provide written transcripts of any proceedings. For information regarding Digital Court Reporting, please contact the Seminole Digital Court Reporting Department at 407- 665-6012 or by email at SeminoleDCR@flcourts18.org. To order a copy of the recording, please follow the link below which explains the procedure, and the cost. <https://flcourts18.org/court-programs/seminole-digital-court-recordings/>