

ORANGE COUNTY CIVIL DIVISION 79

Judicial Practices and Procedures

last modified 5/6/26

Martha C. Adams, Judge

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Contact Information

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| A. Communications with the Judicial Office..... | 2 |
| B. Scheduling Procedures | 3 |
| C. Remote Appearance..... | 7 |
| D. Submission of Orders and Judgments | 8 |
| E. Courtesy Copies of Case Law and Other Documents..... | 9 |
| F. Emergency and Other Urgent Matters..... | 10 |
| G. Exhibits for Evidentiary Proceedings..... | 10 |
| H. Pretrial Procedures and Conferences | 11 |
| I. Setting Case for Trial..... | 12 |
| J. Forms | 13 |
| K. Other Division Procedures..... | 13 |

A. Communications with the Judicial Office

- **Method of Communication:**

Division E-mail

The preferred method of communication is e-mail. All emails should be sent to 79orange@ninthcircuit.org, the dedicated division e-mail account. The subject line of any e-mail to the judicial office must contain the case number, case name, and relevant matter (e.g., 2024-SC-001234-O, Doe v. Doe – 2-Hour Hearing Requested).

Telephone

Phone calls are welcomed, but priority is given to email communications. To call Division 79, call 407-836-6346. WE DO NOT ACCEPT TEXT MESSAGES. Please allow one business day to receive a return phone call and include in your voicemail your case number, phone number and reason for call.

Self-represented litigants and attorneys excused from e-mail service may communicate with the judicial office by telephone call to [\(407\) 836-6346](tel:4078366346). The judicial office does not accept text messages.

- **Ex parte Communications:**

The Court is prohibited from having ex-parte communications with either side. ALL communication must be done in writing, filed with the Clerk of Court and sent to the opposing counsel or party. The Court WILL NOT consider any ex-parte communication of any type.

- **Unsolicited Communications:**

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

Any correspondence/motion/pleading for the Judge to review shall be:

1. In Writing;
2. Filed with the Clerk of the Court prior to sending it to the Judge; and
3. Sent to the opposing party or attorney of record.

- **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 judicial assistant is not authorized to provide legal advice.

The judicial assistant strives to substantively respond to all inquiries within one business day. If the judicial assistant is unable to substantively respond within one business day, your message will be acknowledged as being received with an indication of when to expect a substantive response and alternate contact for immediate assistance.

When the judicial assistant is out of the office, your message will be acknowledged as received with an indication of when to expect a substantive response and an alternate contact for immediate assistance.

- **Other Communication Procedures:**

Any e-mail sent to or from the judicial office may be a public record subject to disclosure.

B. Scheduling Procedures

- **Court Schedule:**

1. Jury Trials are scheduled four times a year for a one-week trial period. The trial periods for 2026 are as follows:

Pretrial

May 4

June 29

August 24

October 19

December 14

Trial

May 16-20

July 6-10

August 31 – September 4

October 26-30

December 21-23

2. The uniform motion calendar is scheduled by using AI Smart Calendar. To access the calendar of available dates, [Division 79 calendar](#)
 - Priority is given to hearings of 15 minutes or less for the morning time slots.
 - Priority is given to hearings of 30 minutes or more in the afternoon time slots.
3. Court is held Monday through Friday from 9:00 am till 5:00 pm, with a break from noon-1:30 for lunch.
 - Time is blocked off each week for the Judge to hold emergency hearings, draft orders and conduct case management.
 - Throughout the year other time is blocked off as a result of the Judges involvement with statewide committee work and educational programming.

Scheduling Hearings:

Hearings must be requested using the court's online scheduling platform. Click here: [Division 79 calendar](#) or go to the Court website, [Ninth Judicial Circuit](#) Click the "Attorney" link. Near the bottom of the Information column click the "Hearing Schedules" link. This takes you to *AI SmartBench*. Select the calendar for the division (79). Click the retrieve button and the available hearing times for approximately the next 60 days is displayed in fifteen minute increments.

Coordinate the date and time with opposing counsel/pro se party and Email the Judicial Assistant at 79orange@ninthcircuit.org, with a copy to all counsel/pro se

litigants, for the hearing to be added to the docket. Please keep in mind that despite sending the email, your hearing time is not confirmed until you receive a reply email from the Judicial Assistant confirming the hearing.

If parties are unable to identify a hearing date and time on *AI Smartbench*, the scheduling party should e-mail the judicial assistant, copying opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant, to coordinate scheduling the hearing.

Cooperation of Counsel: If counsel/pro se litigant does not cooperate in scheduling a hearing, the requesting party may unilaterally set a hearing giving at least **14 days** written notice (plus 5 days if mailed) to the opposing counsel/litigant who failed to cooperate. Notice of Hearing must state that opposing counsel/litigant refused to coordinate a hearing time.

Counsel of record must comply with the 9th Circuit “Meet and Confer” Rule as well as the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure regarding Meet and Conferral.

- **Notice of Hearing:**

A notice of hearing must be filed and served immediately after reserving hearing time.

A notice of hearing involving any remote appearance **must** list the judge’s *Webex* credentials.

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:**

Caselaw/Exhibits - Emails, especially day of hearing/trial, are strongly discouraged. Mail or hand deliver in advance of hearing/trial (**3 days prior**) a jump drive containing all the materials you intend to rely on at the Hearing/Trial. Keep in mind all Fed Ex/UPS deliveries addressed to the Judge are received by the Courthouse Mail Room and are delayed in delivery to the Judge. If you FedEx/UPS for morning delivery it may be another two days before the Judge receives it.

- **Order of Proceedings:**

Matters will be heard in the order in which they appear on the docket.

- **Continuance Procedure:**

Motions for continuance are disfavored and will be granted only upon good cause shown. Successive continuances are highly disfavored. Lack of due diligence is not grounds for granting a continuance. Except for good cause shown, the motion must be signed by the party requesting the continuance, as required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(e).

Motions for continuance must be submitted at least 2 days prior to the scheduled court date for which the continuance is sought, barring exigent circumstances. Except for good cause shown, the motion must be signed by the party requesting the continuance, as required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(e).

Motions for continuance 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 the continuance, as required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(e).

- **Cancelling Hearings:**

It is the responsibility of the attorney to notify the Judicial Assistant of all hearings that are cancelled. The Clerk of Court does not send copies of Notices filed to the Judge or Judicial Assistant. Notice of cancellations can be emailed to: *79orange@ninthcircuit.org*. You must also immediately file and serve a notice of cancellation on opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant.

Hearings/Trials cannot be cancelled unilaterally. You must email the Judicial Assistant, provide the reason for the cancellation and the Judicial Assistant will advise if the matter can be cancelled. Timely file with Clerk's Office and email to Judicial Assistant a notice of cancellation. If you settle a case, file dismissal with Clerk's Office, email copy to Judicial Assistant and advise Judicial Assistant to take case off hearing/trial docket.

c. Remote Appearance

- **Remote Appearance Procedure:**

The court maintains a hybrid virtual courtroom, allowing parties to appear either in person or remotely, as provided by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.530. Requests to use communication technology for an appearance must be made by motion.

Any objection to the use of communication technology must be filed no later than 72 hours prior to the hearing.

- **Platform Used:**

The court uses Webex for remote appearances.

- **Platform Meeting ID#:**

<https://ninthcircuit.webex.com/meet/79orange> OR [Division 79 Webex](#)

You may also call: 1-904-900-2303, access code: 2332 046 3309

- **Requirements:**

Requests for remote appearance must be submitted seven days prior to the hearing.

Certain hearings are eligible for remote appearance. These include Short Matter Hearings, Ex-Parte Hearings and non-evidentiary hearings.

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.

Any person appearing remotely must dress and behave professionally in the same manner as if physically present in the courtroom.

Any person appearing remotely must enable the person's camera when joining the proceeding and keep the camera turned on until instructed otherwise by the court.

Any person appearing remotely must mute the person's microphone when joining the proceeding and keep the microphone turned off until instructed otherwise by the court.

If a witness appears remotely, the party calling the witness must ensure the witness has a functioning camera and microphone and has tested the internet connection before the hearing. The oath will be administered in accordance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.530.

- **Technology Needs:**

All participants in a remote hearing must have a working web camera and be in a quiet area not to disrupt court.

Technology specifications may be found at [COURT TECHNOLOGY](#)

Witnesses located outside of the state will need to ensure they are logged in at the Court start time for the Eastern Standard Time Zone.

D. Submission of Orders and Judgments

- **Format:**

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

All proposed orders must be printed on 8.5 x 11-inch paper and provided to opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant.

All proposed orders must be accompanied by a cover letter either (1) certifying that all parties agree to the order or (2) containing a statement identifying any disagreement of the parties as to the proposed order.

- **Submission Method:**

All proposed orders must be submitted to the court by e-mail to 79orange@ninthcircuit.org.

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.

- **Deadline for Submissions:**

All materials for the Court to consider **MUST** be submitted 48 hours in advance and on a USB Flash Drive. The materials submitted to the Court must also be provided to the opposing party 48 hours prior to the Hearing.

E. Courtesy Copies of Case Law and Other Documents

- **When Required:**

Courtesy copies of Caselaw and proposed Orders must be submitted to the court for any hearing or trial.

The court requires the submission of courtesy copies at least 48 hours prior to the hearing.

- **Format:**

Courtesy copies must be submitted in PDF format via USB Drive

Submission Method:

Courtesy copies must be submitted to the court by U.S. mail or hand-delivered to the judicial office.

Courtesy copies must be submitted to the court by USB Jump Drive no later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled hearing.

Deadline for Submissions:

Courtesy copies must be submitted to the court no later than 2 days before any hearing or trial.

- **Other Courtesy Copies Procedures:**

If the opposing side is not registered to receive email service, copies shall be mailed 10 business days prior to the hearing with a Certificate of Mailing filed with the Clerk 48 hours prior to the hearing.

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.

The motion must be delivered to the Court before a hearing will be set. The Court will review the motion and, if it is determined an emergency exists, the Judicial Assistant will attempt to contact counsel/litigants to set the hearing. In light of the short setting, opposing counsel/litigant may attend the hearing virtually if their schedule will not allow them to appear in person.

- **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:**

Mail or hand deliver in advance of hearing/trial (3 days prior) a hard copy of all materials you intend to rely on at the Hearing/Trial.

- **Format:**

Exhibits must be labeled in the following format:

Petitioner/Plaintiff 1 or Respondent/Defendant 1.

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.

- **Deadline for Submissions:**

Electronic exhibits must be submitted 3 days before the evidentiary proceeding via USB Drive.

All other exhibits must be received in hard copy to chambers 3 days before the evidentiary proceeding.

H. Pretrial Procedures and Conferences

- **Case Management Conference (CMC):**

Any party may request a CMC when a case requires.

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

Unless excused by the court in advance, all CMCs are mandatory for attorneys and self-represented litigants. Parties represented by counsel are not required to appear at a CMC.

- **Status Conference:**

Any party may request a status conference when a case requires.

- **Requirements:**

In any request for a CMC or status conference the reasons for the necessity of the conference must be articulated.

The Attorney of Record must attend pre-trial conference, CMC and Status Conferences. Coverage counsel that appears at any of the above is subject to the Court making them lead trial counsel.

- **Scheduling:**

The Court, upon review of the Motion, will determine the need for a Case Management Hearing and will set the Hearing as quickly as possible on the Court's docket.

- **Other Procedures Relating to Pretrial Procedures and Conferences**

Small Claims PTC are exempt from the above procedures.

I. Setting Case for Trial

- **Non-Jury Trial:**

All hearings and trials are held in Hearing Room 370 unless otherwise noted. In Division 79, for a **non-jury trial**, file a Notice for Trial (i.e. that the case is at issue) with the estimated time needed by all sides and Court will schedule a Status Conference Hearing, issue a Case Management Order/ Uniform Order Requiring Pre-Trial Matters to be completed or coordinate with parties to set trial date. You can also review docket for available times, clear with opposing counsel/pro se litigant and then contact Judicial Assistant with your request for a date, time and length of trial. Court will ultimately decide trial date and how much time will be allocated for trial. If you need more than an hour it is suggested, you set out reasons in writing to the Judge.

- **Jury Trial:**

For a **jury trial** in Division 79, file a Notice for Trial and Judicial Assistant will schedule a Status Conference Hearing. Court will determine at hearing if case is at issue and if so, set on a Jury Trial Docket. Order of cases will be determined at Pre-Trial Conference, usually 7 days before start of trial period. After status conference court will issue a **Uniform Order Setting Case for Jury Trial and Pre-Trial Conference**.

Mediation, all hearings, and discovery must be completed before the Pre-Trial Conference.

J. Forms

- **Access:**

Division forms are available for download at [Division Forms](#)

Florida Supreme Court approved forms are available at [Supreme Court Forms](#)

DIY Florida forms are available at [Florida Specific Forms](#)

- **Usage:**

Standard forms must be used for all relevant filings.

K. Other Division Procedures

- **ADA Accommodations:**

Under the ADA, Court Administration will provide sign language interpreters in civil matters. Contact Court Administration no later than 2 working days in advance to arrange accommodation for hearing or voice impairment. See Administrative Order 2008-01-02.

- **Interpreter Requests:**

Unlike criminal cases, **County Civil does not provide language interpreters for litigants. You must make your own arrangements.**

- **Court Reporter:**

If you want a record of hearing/trial, **you must make arrangements** for a **Court Reporter**. Parties, Witnesses and/or Attorneys shall not record the proceeding except through a court reporting service present in the hearing room/courtroom.

- **Filing of Pleadings:**

E-File or Mail to Clerk's Office. Please understand if you e-file, it takes roughly 72 hours for that filing to appear in the clerk's system for the Judge to see. If you go to the Clerk's Office, Room 310, to file a document/pleading in a case set for hearing within

48 hours, please tell the Clerk at the counter. He or she will make sure it makes it into the Court file/Odyssey.

- **Attorney Fees:**

If you are seeking attorney fees you must, before filing a Motion to Compel pursuant to Rule 1.380, Florida Rules of Civil Procedure, or a **Motion for a Protective Order**, as provided in Rule 1.280(c), Florida Rules of Civil Procedure, **confer with counsel** for the opposing party in a **good-faith effort** to resolve by agreement the issues raised, and **shall file** with the court at the time of filing of the motion a statement certifying that he/she has conferred with opposing counsel and that counsel have been unable to resolve the dispute.

As provided in Section (a) (4) of Rule 1.380, if the motion is granted, the court shall award expenses which may include attorney's fees. Review the 2007 Handbook on Discovery Practice, which is available on the Ninth Judicial Circuit website, [Circuit Website](#)

- **Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI):**

- **If any attorney for a party, or a pro se party has used Artificial Intelligence (“AI”)** in the preparation of any complaint, answer, motion, brief, or other paper filed with the Court, and assigned to Judge Adams, they **MUST**, in a clear and plain factual statement, disclose that AI has been used in any way in the filing, and **CERTIFY**, that each and every citation to the law or the record in the paper, has been verified as accurate. Failure to comply may result in the filing being struck by the court.

L. Have A Question About Your Case?

Please understand that the County Civil Judges and Judicial Assistants work very hard to handle the thousands of cases before them. With so many law firms and pro se litigants, the Judicial Assistants spend hours each day talking to individuals when most of their questions could be answered by using the internet to review the Court file or by simply filing an appropriate Motion.

When the Court signs an Order it is delivered to the Clerk for filing. Copies are mailed to the parties. If you want to know if an Order has been entered check with the Clerk or wait for a mailed copy. Court does not maintain copies of signed Orders.

- **My Clerk.com:**

As of March 2009, County Civil utilizes the **Odyssey electronic case management system**. Odyssey is maintained by the Clerk of Court. Odyssey electronically displays court filings, including financial information. Non-court personnel can access the Odyssey docket listing by going to www.myorangeclerk.com. On the left side is the icon for "MyClerk". Click the icon, answer access question, click Civil Case Records link, search by case and type in your case number (remember "o" as in Orlando, is the typical court location). Click the case and you can see the list of pleadings and orders filed with the Clerk. You cannot open a particular document (unless you go to Room 310 and use a computer in the Viewing Room); you essentially are looking at a docket index. It is the same one that the Judicial Assistant is looking at if you were to call with a question. Please use "MyClerk" instead of calling the Judicial Assistant.

- **Electronic Filing:**

County Civil is part of the electronic filing system used in Circuit Civil. You can electronically file County Civil pleadings. **Note:** The Judicial Assistants print mailing envelopes using the Odyssey system. If you know a name/address that is erroneously listed in Odyssey, contact the Clerk's Office to modify. If an address has changed, file a Notice of Change of Address with the Clerk's Office. The Clerk has complete authority over what goes into Odyssey. **Court Files** - Technically County Civil is "fileless". In other words, the Judges do not need

files as they can access Odyssey. If you file something today, the Clerk's policy is to have it displayed in Odyssey in 72 business hours. The reality is that it may be much longer.

- **E-MAIL Address Required:**

Effective October 1, 2022, **ALL** litigants are required to provide the Clerk of Courts with a valid email address for service of Orders and Pleadings. If a party does not have a valid email address they must fill out an Affidavit attesting to the fact they do not have email. These forms are available in Room 350, in the Civil Clerks Office.

- **Review File:**

If you want to review a file in person or see the pleadings listed in Odyssey, go to **Viewing Room** located in Room 150. Using available computers, type in password "public" and navigate to file. No charge to view; \$1 per page to print out.

- **Confirm Upcoming Hearing:**

Want to confirm a scheduled hearing in the division? Go to www.ninthcicurit.org Click the "Attorney" link on right side and click the "Dockets" link toward the bottom of the Information column. Select the division and it will display scheduled hearings/trials for approximately the next two weeks.

Contact Information:

Judge Martha C. Adams

Hearing Room: 370 425 N. Orange Ave. Orlando, FL 32801

Laurie McGee Phone Number: 407-836-6346

425 N. Orange Ave. Orlando, FL 32801

Email Address: 79orange@ninthcircuit.org

Clerk of the Court Phone Number: 407-836-2000

425 N. Orange Ave. Ste. 310

PO Box 4994, Orlando, FL 32801

Website: www.myorangeclerk.com

File Viewing Room: Room 310