

ORANGE COUNTY CIVIL DIVISION 72 Judicial Practices and Procedures

(last modified 5/4/2026)

Honorable Cherish R. Adams, Judge

Pamela Steen-Kurtz, Judicial Assistant

Contact Information

Mailing and Physical Address:

425 North Orange Avenue, Suite 810, Orlando, Florida 32802

E-mail: **72orange@ninthcircuit.org**

Phone: 407-836-2038

Table of Contents

A. Communications with the Judicial Office.....	2
B. Scheduling Procedures	3
C. Remote Appearance.....	6
D. Submission of Orders and Judgments	7
E. Courtesy Copies of Case Law and Other Documents.....	8
F. Emergency and Other Urgent Matters.....	9
G. Exhibits for Evidentiary Proceedings.....	10
H. Pretrial Procedures and Conferences	10
I. Setting Case for Trial.....	11
J. Forms	12
K. Other Division Procedures.....	12

A. Communications with the Judicial Office

- **Method of Communication:**

Division E-mail

All communications to the judicial office must be submitted by e-mail to **72orange@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**).

- **Ex parte Communications:**

All communications with the judicial 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 judicial 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 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:

<i>Pretrial</i>	<i>Trial</i>
May 15	May 25-29
July 10	July 20-24
September 4	September 14-18
October 30	November 9-13

2. The uniform motion calendar is scheduled by using AI Smart Calendar. To access the calendar of available dates, click the link [Division 72 AI SmartBench](#)
 - Priority is given to hearings 15 minutes or less for the morning time slots.
 - Priority is given to hearings 30 minutes or more in the afternoon time slots.

- **Scheduling Hearings:**

Hearings must be requested using the court's online scheduling platform *AI SMARTBENCH*. Go to the Court website, www.ninthcircuit.org. 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 (72). Click the retrieve button and available hearing time for approximately the next 60 days is displayed in fifteen-minute increments. You can set hearings for less than 15 minutes.

Coordinate the date and time with opposing counsel/pro se party and;

Email the Judicial Assistant at 72orange@ninthcircuit.org, with a copy to all counsel/prose 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 a hearing time is confirmed by the Judicial Assistant. Please remember the Court has reserved this time for you and your case and in doing so, other persons requesting this same hearing time are denied. Therefore, if a notice of hearing is not filed after your hearing has been confirmed by the Judicial Assistant, your hearing will be cancelled and removed from the docket.

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 below:

If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator, Human Resources, Orange County Courthouse, 425 N. Orange Avenue, Suite 510, Orlando, Florida, (407) 836-2303, at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.

- **Submission Deadlines:**

Caselaw/Exhibits - The Court prefers all materials are submitted electronically via email or by delivery of a USB.

Submit in advance of hearing/trial (**5 days prior**) all of 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 next day morning delivery it may be 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:**

Continuances are disfavored and will be granted only upon good cause shown. A request for continuance must be submitted at least 5 days prior to the scheduled court date. 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: 72orange@ninthcircuit.org. You must also immediately file and serve a notice of cancellation on opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant.

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/72orange>

- **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 to not 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 72orange@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 5 days in advance and on a USB Flash Drive. The materials submitted to the Court must also be provided to the opposing party 5 days 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 5 days prior to the hearing.

- **Format:**

Courtesy copies must be submitted in PDF/a 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 5 days prior to the scheduled hearing.

- **Deadline for Submissions:**

Courtesy copies must be submitted to the court no later than 5 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 5 days 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. If the court determines that an emergency exists, a hearing will be scheduled unilaterally by the court. All parties shall make themselves available for the emergency hearing, barring exigent circumstances

- **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 (5 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 5 days before the evidentiary proceeding via USB Drive.
All other exhibits must be received in hard copy to chambers 5 days before the evidentiary proceeding.

H. Pretrial Procedures and Conferences

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

Any party may request a case management conference (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 Pretrials are exempt from the above procedures.

I. Setting Case for Trial

- **Non-Jury Trial:**

All hearings and trials are held in Hearing Room 800.01 unless otherwise noted. In Division 72, 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 the Smart Bench 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 we suggest you set out reasons in writing.

- **Jury Trial:**

For a **jury trial** in Division 72, file a Notice for Trial and Judicial Assistant will schedule a Status Conference Hearing. Court will determine at hearing if the case is at issue and if so, set on a Jury Trial Docket. Order of cases will be determined at Pre-Trial Conference, usually 10 days before start of trial period. After status conference the 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 interpreter 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 clerks 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.

- **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, 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.***

- **Ex-Parte Hearings**

******* DO NOT CALL JUDICIAL ASSISTANT TO SCHEDULE. *******

Ex Parte hearings are held in-person Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. Room 800.01 (8th Floor) for uncontested non-evidentiary hearings that are no more than 5 minutes.

Give the opposing side reasonable written notice of hearing. File Notice of Hearing with Clerk and serve a copy on opposing side. If Judge is hearing a contested matter between 9:00 and 9:30 am, you will be brought in as soon as possible. There is a drop box for Division 72 on the 8th Floor for documents for the Courts review and Orders for the Judge to sign.

- **Short Matters**

(ATTORNEYS ONLY ON BOTH SIDES) - These are not scheduled with the Court but *MUST* be coordinated with opposing counsel. The hearings are limited to 10 minutes with no evidence or testimony being taken. **Division 72 conducts short matter hearings every Wednesday at 9:15 am.** Parties may appear virtually by logging into [Virtual Link](#)

Counsel 24 hours prior to hearing shall email proposed Orders as well as the Notice of Hearing to the [Email](#) with “SHORT MATTERS NOH” in subject line.