



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER # 2024-00-01
(RESCINDING ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER #2023-00-04)

RE: CIVIL CASE MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS, AOSC 20-23 Amendment 10, AOSC 20-23 Amendment 12, AOSC 21-17, and AOSC 23-29 directs chief judges to issue administrative orders applicable to each county within the judicial circuit requiring the presiding judge to:

(1) actively manage civil cases, and (2) strictly comply with Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545 (a), (b), and (e), which respectively require judges to conclude litigation as soon as it is reasonably and justly possible to do so, to take charge of all cases at an early stage and to control the progress of the case thereafter until it is determined, and to apply a firm continuance policy allowing continuances only for good cause shown.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to AOSC 21-17 Amendment 3, the following civil case management and resolution plan is directed.

1. **Case Differentiation:** The presiding judge of civil cases shall review each civil case to determine whether it is complex, streamlined, or general.

Complex Cases are cases designated by court order as complex cases under Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 1.201 and shall proceed as provided in the rule.

Streamlined Civil Cases are non-jury civil cases anticipated to have a trial length of less than two days, and *not likely* to: (a) involve numerous pretrial motions, or (b) pretrial management of a large number of witnesses or a substantial amount documentary evidence.

General Civil Cases include all cases that are not designated by order as complex or streamlined.

2. **Case Management Order:**

A Standing Case Management Order in the form attached as 'Exhibit A' shall be issued by the Clerk in each civil case filed on or after April 1, 2024. The Plaintiff or Petitioner

must serve a copy of the Standing Case Management Order with the Summons and the Complaint/Petition.

Each case management order shall specify the deadline for:

- a. Service of complaints and service under extensions
- b. Adding new parties
- c. Completion of discovery
- d. Resolution of motions and objections to pleadings
- e. Completion of mediation

Trial Dates: Each case management order shall also specify a projected trial date and indicate that an order setting a firm trial date will be issued pursuant to Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 1.440 when the case is at issue.

Other procedures and protocols: Case management orders may include other procedures and protocols outlined in Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 1.200 or otherwise aimed at maximizing the fair and just resolution of civil cases.

Maximum deadlines and timelines established for streamlined and general civil cases shall be consistent with Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 2.250.

- 3. **Rule 2.545 Case Management Compliance.** Judges are to review Rule 2.250 and 2.545 and shall strictly comply with Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545 (a), (b), and (e), which respectively require judges to conclude litigation as soon as it is reasonably and justly possible to do so, to take charge of all cases at an early stage and to control the progress of the case thereafter until it is determined, and to apply a firm continuance policy allowing continuances only for good cause shown.

The procedures and time standards set forth herein do not supplant any existing rule, statute, or law.

This Administrative Order shall take effect April 1, 2024, and shall remain in effect until further order of the Court.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers, at Panama City, Bay County, Florida, this 21st day of March, 2024.



CHRISTOPHER N. PATTERSON
CHIEF JUDGE



A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
BILL KINSAUL CLERK
OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

By Bill Kincaul
Deputy Clerk

EXHIBIT A

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR BAY COUNTY, FLORIDA**

_____,
Plaintiff,

v.

CASE NO.:

_____,
Defendant.

STANDING CIVIL CASE MANAGEMENT ORDER

THIS MATTER is before the court pursuant to Fla. R. Civil Proc. 1.200, Fla. R. Jud. Admin. 2.545, and AOSC 21-17 Amendment 3, and the court having determined that it is necessary to establish certain deadlines and timelines to ensure the prompt processing and just resolution of civil cases, issues the following case management order:

1. Case Differentiation.

Complex Cases: cases designated by court order as complex cases under Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 1.201 shall proceed as provided in the rule.

Streamlined Civil Cases: Non-Jury civil cases anticipated to have a trial length of less than two days, and *not likely* to: (a) involve numerous pretrial motions, or (b) pretrial management of a large number of witnesses or a substantial amount documentary evidence may be designated as streamlined.

General Civil Cases: include all cases that are not designated by order as complex or streamlined.

Civil cases shall be deemed “general civil cases” unless the presiding judge has entered a separate order designating the civil case as complex or streamlined.

2. Timelines and deadlines for streamlined and general civil cases.

a. Service of complaints and service under extensions- Plaintiff shall serve the initial process and initial pleadings on a defendant within 120 days of filing the initial pleadings directed to that defendant as provided by Fla. R. Civ. Proc 1.070. If service of the initial process and pleadings is not made upon a defendant within thirty (30) days after expiration of the initial 120 days, the action may be dismissed without prejudice or the defendant dropped as a party unless a motion and statement of good cause are filed by the plaintiff and the matter is heard by the court prior to the expiration on the thirty (30) days after the initial 120 days. The court may dismiss the action or grant additional service time.

b. Adding new parties- New parties may be added as provided by Fla. R. Civ. Proc. 1.250(c) and Rule 1.210(a), and on such terms as are just.

c. Mediation- Mediation is required in all cases unless waived by the presiding judge. The deadline to complete mediation shall be specified in an order setting trial and pretrial conference. Plaintiff's counsel shall insure that all fees and costs of mediation have been paid before distribution of any settlement proceeds. If the case is to proceed to trial, these expenses shall be satisfied prior to the trial date. The mediator shall provide the Court with a mediation report no later than five (5) days after completion of the mediation. The discovery process is not suspended by the court's order of mediation.

d. Initial disclosures- Without the necessity of any discovery request, no later than forty-five (45) days after service of the summons and complaint on the first-served defendant/respondent in this case (if more than one), the plaintiff(s)/petitioner(s) and first-served defendant/respondent shall serve initial disclosures on each other which shall include: (1) a list of individuals, including

the name, and if known, the address and telephone number, likely to have discoverable information that the disclosing party may use to support its claim or defenses; (2) a copy of, or a description by category and location of, all documents, data compilations and tangible things that are in the possession, custody or control of the party and that the disclosing party may use to support its claims or defenses; (3) a computation of any category of damages claimed by the disclosing party, making available for inspection and copying the documents or other evidentiary material, not privileged or protected from disclosure, on which such computation is based, including materials bearing on the nature and extent of injuries suffered; and (4) if applicable, a copy of any insurance agreement or policy which may be liable to satisfy, indemnify or reimburse any party for any damages awarded in the case. No later than forty-five (45) days after service of the summons and complaint or third-party complaint, any other defendant(s)/respondent(s) or third-party defendant(s) shall serve the same disclosure and documents on any other party. The requirements and scope for this initial disclosure shall be construed to be consistent with the requirements of Rule 26(a)(1), Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

e. Completion of discovery- Counsel shall complete all discovery, including independent medical examinations, by the deadline set in the order setting trial or any other order. The conduct of discovery subsequent to such deadline shall be permitted only on Order of the Court for good cause shown.

f. Resolution of motions and objections to pleadings- All motions and objections to pleadings, including motions-in-limine, shall be filed, scheduled, and heard prior to the pretrial conference. No motion will be heard at or after the pretrial conference absent compelling circumstances and consent of the Court. All motions not heard by the pretrial conference shall be deemed abandoned.

3. Trial Dates: Trials for streamlined, general civil, and complex cases are projected to occur within the timeline established by Rule 2.250. Parties shall promptly file a notice of trial when the case is at issue. Upon filing a notice of trial, the filing party shall email the Court's judicial assistant and provide a copy of the filed notice and shall carbon copy the non-filing party on such correspondence. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of a filed notice of trial, and if the court finds the case is at issue, a separate order setting trial will be issued by the presiding judge establishing a firm trial and pretrial dates along with pretrial and trial instructions.

4. Service on Defendants: The Plaintiff or Petitioner must serve a copy of this Standing Case Management Order with the Summons and the Complaint/Petition on any defendant not served with process prior to the filing of this Order.

5. Cases Previously Scheduled for Trial: If this action is subject to a previously entered Uniform Order Scheduling Trial (Bench or Jury), all dates and deadlines contained in the Uniform Order Scheduling Trial shall supersede any dates and deadlines contained in this Standing Civil Case Management Order.

6. Certification Regarding Standing Order and Administrative Procedures: Within thirty (30) days of entry of this Standing Order for plaintiff/petitioner, and within thirty (30) days of filing an appearance in this case for each defendant/respondent/third-party defendant, counsel, or the party if pro se, shall file a certification that they have read and agree to abide by this Standing Order and the presiding judge's Administrative Procedures, which may be found on the 14th Judicial Circuit's website, www.jud14.flcourts.org. Failure to comply with the Standing Order or Administrative Procedures may result in denial of hearing time, denial of a motion or other requested relief, an award of attorney's fees and/or costs, striking of pleadings, dismissal of claims, a finding of contempt, or other potential sanctions.

7. Rule 2.545, Rule 2.250, and Professional Obligation Compliance: Lawyers and judges have a professional obligation to conclude litigation as soon as it is reasonably and justly possible to do so. Accordingly, the deadlines and timelines established herein and in any subsequent orders, and Rule 2.545 and Rule 2.250 will be strictly enforced.

DONE AND ORDERED in Panama City, Bay County, Florida, on March 25, 2024.

Circuit Judge

Copies to:

All parties of record via e-service.

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 by mail at Post Office Box 1089, Panama City, FL 32402 or by phone at (850) 767-3550 at least seven (7) days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than seven (7) days. If you are hearing or voice impaired, please call 711 or email ADAResult@jud14.flcourts.org.