

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 6.101-1/2020*

IN RE: PROBATE AND GUARDIANSHIP DIVISION
REGIONS, HEARING SITES AND
ASSIGNMENT CRITERIA

The Court is committed to providing judicial services at convenient locations consistent with the efficient and sound administration of justice. The Court has concluded that the foregoing principle dictates probate and guardianship services should be provided at the branch courthouses in addition to the Main Courthouse;

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority conferred by Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215, it is **ORDERED** as follows:

A. DESIGNATED REGIONS

1. This Administrative Order shall not alter or amend subject matter jurisdiction of the Probate & Guardianship Division as previously established by administrative orders.
2. The Probate & Guardianship Division of the Circuit Court, Palm Beach County, Florida, is divided into four separate regions: the Northern Region, Southern Region, Western Region, and Central Region.
3. Unless otherwise indicated in this Administrative Order:
 - a. All cases assigned to the Northern Region will be heard in the North County Courthouse, 3188 PGA Boulevard, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida 33410
 - b. All cases assigned to the Southern Region will be heard in the South County Courthouse, 200 West Atlantic Avenue, Delray Beach, Florida 33444.
 - c. All cases assigned to the Central Region will be heard in the Main Courthouse, 205 North Dixie Highway, West Palm Beach, Florida 33401.
 - d. All cases assigned to the Western Region will be heard in the West County Courthouse, 2950 State Road 15, Belle Glade, FL 33430.

I. NORTHERN REGION

The NORTHERN REGION will serve the following cities as identified by their presently existing zip code numbers:

| | |
|--------------------|--------|
| JUNO BEACH | 33408 |
| JUNO BEACH | 33410* |
| JUPITER | 33458 |
| JUPITER | 33468 |
| JUPITER | 33477 |
| JUPITER | 33478 |
| NORTH PALM BEACH | 33408 |
| PALM BEACH GARDENS | 33410* |
| PALM BEACH GARDENS | 33418 |
| TEQUESTA INLET | 33469 |
| WEST PALM BEACH | 33410* |
| WEST PALM BEACH | 33418 |
| WEST PALM BEACH | 33420 |

* Note: Juno Beach, Palm Beach Gardens and West Palm Beach overlap zip code 33410

II. SOUTHERN REGION

The SOUTHERN REGION will serve the following cities as identified by their presently existing zip code numbers:

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| ATLANTIS | 33462 |
| BOYNTON BEACH | 33424 |
| BOYNTON BEACH | 33425 |
| BOYNTON BEACH | 33426 |
| BOYNTON BEACH | 33435 |
| BOYNTON BEACH | 33436 |
| BOYNTON BEACH | 33437 |
| BRINY BREEZES | 33435 |
| BOCA RATON | 33428 |
| BOCA RATON | 33429 |
| BOCA RATON | 33431 |
| BOCA RATON | 33432 |
| BOCA RATON | 33433 |
| BOCA RATON | 33434 |
| BOCA RATON | 33481 |
| BOCA RATON | 33486 |
| BOCA RATON | 33487 |
| BOCA RATON | 33496 |
| BOCA RATON | 33498 |
| BOCA RATON | 33499 |

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
| DELRAY BEACH | 33444 |
| DELRAY BEACH | 33445 |
| DELRAY BEACH | 33446 |
| DELRAY BEACH | 33447 |
| DELRAY BEACH | 33483 |
| DELRAY BEACH | 33484 |
| GREENACRES CITY | 33463* |
| GREENACRES CITY | 33461* |
| GULFSTREAM | 33483 |
| HIGHLAND BEACH | 33487 |
| HYPOLUXO | 33462 |
| LAKE WORTH | 33454 |
| LAKE WORTH | 33460 |
| LAKE WORTH | 33462 |
| LAKE WORTH | 33463* |
| LAKE WORTH | 33464 |
| LAKE WORTH | 33465 |
| LAKE WORTH | 33466 |
| LAKE WORTH | 33467 |
| LANTANA | 33462 |
| MANALAPAN | 33462 |
| OCEAN RIDGE | 33435 |
| PALM SPRINGS | 33461* |

*Note: Greenacres City and Palm Springs overlap zip code 33461
Greenacres City and Lake Worth overlap zip code 33463

III. WESTERN REGION (for Baker and Marchman Act cases only)

The WESTERN REGION will serve the following cities as identified by their presently existing zip code numbers:

| | |
|--------------|-------|
| BELLE GLADE | 33430 |
| CANAL POINT | 33438 |
| CLEWISTON | 33440 |
| LAKE HARBOR | 33459 |
| PAHOKEE | 33476 |
| PELICAN LAKE | 33491 |
| SOUTH BAY | 33493 |

IV. CENTRAL REGION

The CENTRAL REGION will serve all areas within Palm Beach County not contained within the Northern¹ or Southern Regions and, in Baker Act and Marchman Act cases only, areas not contained within the Western Region.

B. GENERAL PROVISIONS: PROBATE & GUARDIANSHIP MATTERS

1. Regional Assignments: With the exception of Baker Act, Marchman Act, and Tuberculosis cases, all cases assigned to the Probate and Guardianship Division will be assigned to either the Central, Northern, or Southern Region based upon the following criteria:
 - a. New Trust, Probate and Incapacity/Guardianship cases filed by privately retained counsel shall be assigned to the region reflecting the office address of the first attorney to petition the court. If the attorney's address is in Martin, St. Lucie, Okeechobee, Indian River, **Broward, Miami-Dade, or Monroe Counties**, the case shall be assigned to the Northern Region. All other cases where the petitioning attorney has an out-of-county or out-of-state address, shall be assigned to the Central Region.
 - b. Incapacity/Guardianship cases initiated by the Department of Children and Families or by an attorney hired to represent that agency shall be assigned based on the residence address of the alleged incapacitated person.
 - c. Summary Administration and Disposition of Property Without Administration cases initiated by pro se litigants shall be assigned based on the last residential address of the decedent.
 - d. All cases involving the Developmental Disabilities Prevention and Community General Provisions (Ch. 393, Fla. Stat.) and/or the Adult Protective Services Act, (Ch. 415, Fla. Stat.) will be assigned based on the residential address of the patient. If the patient is incarcerated or does not have a known residence, the case will be assigned to the Central Region.
2. Identification and Assignment of Related Cases: The following provisions govern the identification and assignment of related cases. The Clerk shall enter the related case number(s) into the related case field in the Clerk's case management system (Showcase) in newly filed and reopened cases.

1 The following cities as identified by their zip code were previously served by the Northern Region but are now served by the Central Region:

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| RIVIERA BEACH | 33407 |
| RIVIERA BEACH | 33419 |
| PALM BEACH SHORES | 33404 |
| ROYAL PALM BEACH | 33412 |
| WEST PALM BEACH | 33403 |

- a. Estate or Trust proceedings for a deceased ward are deemed related to the Guardianship case and shall remain in the division for the Guardianship proceeding.
- b. If assets of two (2) or more individuals adjudicated incapacitated are significantly interrelated so that one division should hear the guardianship proceedings for all individuals, the cases are deemed related and shall be assigned to the same division. An example of such a situation is incapacitated spouses.
- c. If minor guardianships proceedings are opened for siblings with the same guardian of the property, the cases are deemed related and shall be assigned to the same division.
- d. All Estate and Non-relief Trust matters filed relating to a decedent are deemed related to the Estate or Trust proceeding and shall be assigned to the division where the first case was opened.
- e. All Petitions to Determine Incapacity, Petitions to Appoint an Emergency Temporary Guardian, and Petitions to Appoint a Plenary or Limited Guardian for the same alleged incapacitated person shall be assigned to the same Division. If the cases in the above situations are not filed simultaneously, the cases shall be assigned to the division where the first case was assigned.
- f. It is the responsibility of the attorney of record to notify the Clerk of the Circuit Court in writing that related cases exist.
 - i) If the related cases are filed by different attorneys, it is the responsibility of the attorney filing the later case to notify the Clerk in writing at the time of filing that related cases are pending before the Court.
 - ii) If there are related cases that do not fall into any of the above categories, it is the responsibility of the filing attorney to inform the Court of the related case.

C. GENERAL PROVISIONS: BAKER ACT AND MARCHMAN ACT CASES

1. **Regional Assignments:** Baker Act (Ch. 394, Fla. Stat.) and Marchman Act (Ch. 397, Fla. Stat.) cases will be assigned **to either the Central, Northern, Southern or Western Region based upon the following criteria:**
 - a. Assignment will be made to the region based upon the Respondent's residential address. Except if the petitioner is a licensed services provider (hospital or treatment center) **or the Respondent is currently in a licensed services facility,** the assignment will be made to the region that includes **the licensed services facility's** address.
 - b. If the Petitioner is not a licensed service provider and the Respondent's residential address is unknown, the assignment will be made to the Region that includes the Petitioner's residential address.

- c. If the Respondent's residential address is in Martin, St. Lucie, Okeechobee, or Indian River Counties, the case shall be assigned to the Northern Region. If the Respondent's residential address is in Broward, Miami-Dade, or Monroe Counties, the case shall be assigned to the Southern Region. All other cases where the Respondent has an out-of-county or out-of-state residential address shall be assigned to the Central Region.**
 - d. For Baker Act and Marchman Act assessment and services cases that fall within the Central Region, the Clerk is directed to override cases assigned to the Central Region by zip code and evenly assign those cases to the Northern Region divisions.
2. Location of Emergency and Ex Parte Hearings: Emergency and ex parte hearings (including, but not limited to, Petitions for Involuntary Examination of Assessment) pursuant to the Baker Act or the Marchman Act shall be heard where the Petitioner files the Petition, regardless of whether the case is assigned to that Region. Case assignment will remain as described above.
3. Additional Provisions Regarding Cases Assigned to the Western Region:
 - a. Effective March 15, 2019, the Clerk and Comptroller shall create Division IW for all newly filed Marchman and Baker Act cases assigned to the Western Region. Other matters to be filed in the Probate and Guardianship Division pursuant to Administrative Order 6.102-9/08 (as amended) will not be assigned to Division IW.
 - b. If the judge assigned to Division IW will be out of the office on leave, the judicial assistant will notify the Administrative Magistrate and the West County Courthouse Clerk's office prior to the judge's leave that coverage is needed for ex-parte/walk-in Baker Act cases filed in West County. If the leave is not anticipated, the judicial assistant will notify the Administrative Magistrate and the Clerk's Office as soon as possible. When the judge assigned to Division IW is absent, the following procedures will govern ex-parte/walk-in Baker Act cases filed in West County:
 - i. Ex-parte/walk-in Baker Acts will be heard by the Magistrates in the South County Courthouse.
 - ii. Main Courthouse Magistrates will serve as alternatives if no South County Magistrate is available.
 - iii. The West County Courthouse Clerk's office shall email the petition and other related filings to the South County Courthouse via the CAD-MH_South email and inform the South County Courthouse Mental Health Clerk.
 - iv. The Order on the ex-parte/walk-in Baker Act, handled by the South County Courthouse Magistrate, will be forwarded to the Mental

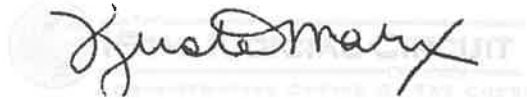
Health Division Signing Judge via the emergency queue in South County.

- v. When the West County Courthouse Judge is on leave and there is a Respondent requiring an Involuntary Placement Hearing, the Baker Act receiving facility in Belle Glade will transport the Respondent to its facility in West Palm Beach for hearing on the regular Baker Act docket.

D: GENERAL PROVISIONS: TUBERCULOSIS CASES AND FIREARMS MOTIONS

1. **Tuberculosis Cases**: All cases concerning Compulsory Treatment and Commitment of Persons Affected with Tuberculosis (§§ 392.55, 392.56, and 392.57, Fla. Stat.) will be assigned to the Central Region but will be heard by the Magistrates that handle placement hearings for Baker Acts in South County and North County
2. **Firearms Motions**: All motions regarding firearms relating to Mental Health cases (except for Risk Protection Orders) assigned to the Central and Western Regions shall be forwarded to the Magistrates in the Main Courthouse via the CAD-MH_Main email for processing.

DONE and SIGNED in Chambers at West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, this
15th day of January 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Krista Marx". The signature is written in a cursive style. To the right of the signature, there is a faint, circular official seal or stamp, partially obscured by the signature.

Krista Marx, Chief Judge

*Supersedes Admin. Order No. 6.101-03/19. Several organizational changes were made to this order which did not affect its substance. The nature of these changes made it impractical to denote all changes in bold and, therefore, only the changes affecting the regional assignment of cases are reflected in bold.