

News Bulletin of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit

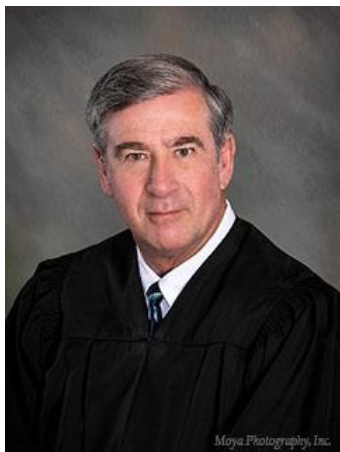
# CIRCUIT COURIER

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2021 | VOL. 21 - 4



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Chief Judge  
Glenn Kelley

## **Chief Judge Kelley Appointed to Workgroup**

Per AOSC21-56, on November 9, 2021, Chief Judge Kelley was appointed by Chief Justice Canady to serve on the Workgroup on Trial Court Technology Strategies. This Workgroup is part of the Judicial Management Council and is tasked with developing strategies to ensure that effective case management tools are available in trial courts across the state. The Council is an advisory body that assists the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court. Chief Judge Kelley's term on the Workgroup ends June 30, 2023.

## **Michael Bonan Hired as General Counsel**

Michael Bonan was hired as General Counsel for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit. In this role, Mr. Bonan serves as legal counsel to the Chief Judge and Trial Court Administrator on a wide range of administrative and court related matters. His responsibilities include supervision of the Trial Law Clerks, reviewing and updating the Circuit's Administrative Orders, addressing public records requests, and managing the Certified Process Server, Vehicle Immobilization, and Court Appointed Attorney programs.



Michael Bonan,  
General Counsel

Many of you may remember Mr. Bonan as he was previously employed with the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit as a Supervising Senior Trial Court Law Clerk. His most recent position was as an Associate Attorney with Kitroser & Associates in Jensen Beach; prior to that, he served as an Associate Attorney with Ross Earle Bonan and Ensor, P.A., and as an Injunction for Protection Attorney with SafeSpace, both in Stuart. He also served as an Adjunct Professor with Indian River State College in Ft. Pierce in the College's School of Business.

Mr. Bonan holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Miami School of Business Administration; he received his Juris Doctor from the University's School of Law where he also served as an Executive Board Member of the *Business Law Review*.

He began his new role on November 1st. His office is located on the Fifth Floor, Judge Daniel T.K. Hurley Courthouse.

## Investiture of the Hon. John J. Parnofiello

The investiture of the Hon. John J. Parnofiello as County Court Judge for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit took place on Friday, November 12 at the Judge Daniel T.K. Hurley Courthouse in West Palm Beach.

Judge Parnofiello is a native of Palm Beach County. He attended the University of Florida for both his bachelor's degree and his Juris Doctor. He returned to South Florida to begin his legal career as an assistant state attorney. There, he rose through the ranks, becoming Chief of the Organized Crime Unit.



**Pictured from left to right:** Deputy Jennifer Sandman, Hon. John J. Parnofiello, Judicial Assistant Danielle Hungria

"[Judge Parnofiello] always exemplified professionalism, knowledge, confidence, and common sense. He has a thirst for legal knowledge that is both impressive and inspiring," Michael Kugler, a member of the Palm Beach County Bar Association's Judicial Relations Committee, said of Judge Parnofiello.

Judge Parnofiello fills the vacancy created by the elevation of the Hon. Paige Gillman to the Fifteenth Circuit Court. He is assisted by Judicial Assistant Danielle Hungria.

## Swearing In Ceremony for Brianna Donn Lohmann



Brianna Donn Lohmann being sworn in by Donia Adams Roberts; a portrait of her grandfather, Judge Don T. Adams can be seen in the background

Brianna Donn Lohmann, granddaughter of the late Hon. Don T. Adams, was sworn into the Florida Bar on Tuesday, November 23, 2021 at the West County Courthouse. Judge Adams served at this courthouse for 16 years before his death.

"We were grateful to be able to have a truly special ceremony welcoming Brianna into membership in the Florida Bar and remembering Judge Adams, our father and grandfather... [who] serv[ed] the Glades communities as 'the law west of 20 mile bend' for many years. Thank you from our family," said Donia Adams Roberts. Ms. Roberts is the daughter of Judge Adams and serves as a Civil Traffic Hearing Officer for the Circuit.



## **The Hon. G. Joseph Curley, Jr. Awarded Jurist of the Year**



The Hon. G. Joseph Curley, Jr. was awarded the Jurist of the Year award from the Palm Beach County Justice Association. Join us in congratulating Judge Curley for this recognition of his judicial temperament, integrity, and knowledge of the law.

Judge Curley was appointed by former Governor Scott in December 2017 and took the bench in February 2018. Immediately prior to his appointment, he was employed by Gunster, Yoakley & Stewart and worked there for thirty-two years. He currently presides in the Circuit Civil Division and is assisted by Judicial Assistant Lucille Kilgallon.

The Hon. G. Joseph Curley, Jr. (middle) is shown here with his wife, Kathy (left), and his mother, Jewel (right).

## **Family Court Manager Accepted to Premier Program**

Tara Kranz, the Family Court Manager for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, recently completed the National Center for State Courts Certified Court Executive coursework. The program coursework bolsters one's understanding of all aspects of court operations and helps develop leadership skills. Some of the courses prompted Ms. Kranz to develop a differentiated case management division in the Family Division with Judge Kroll, which is still operating today with Judge Francis.

Ms. Kranz was also selected by the National Center for State Courts as a fellow in the Institute for Court Management Fellows Program. This is a premier certification program for court executives and will require a rigorous amount of work. Congratulations to Tara Kranz on her accomplishments.



Tara Kranz,  
Family Court Manager

## Riviera Beach Drug Court Celebrates its 30th Anniversary

The Riviera Civil Drug Court has been instrumental in assisting thousands of citizens in need of treatment modalities for drug and alcohol abuse outside of the criminal justice system. Our Judges and Magistrates recognize how critical this assistance is for the community. To that end, numerous Judges and a number of Magistrates have volunteered to serve in the judicial role each Saturday that the Civil Drug Court is in session. Felicia Scott serves as the Civil Drug Court Manager.



The Hon. Edward Rodgers



Left to right: The Hon. Cymonie Rowe, Circuit Judge; Verdenia Baker, County Administrator; Felicia Scott, Civil Drug Court Program Manager; the Hon. Catherine Brunson, Senior Judge; the Hon. Bradley Harper, County Court Judge

A distinguished member of the Fifteenth Circuit bench, the late Hon. Edwards Rodgers, was the primary driver behind the development and implementation of the Civil Drug Court in Riviera Beach. Soon after, the City of Delray Beach and City of West Palm Beach copied the model and started their drug courts. It is a testament to the Team's hard work and enduring commitment that only Riviera Beach's Civil Drug Court survives 30 years later. When he began the court, Judge Rodgers was concerned about the incarceration of individuals who were being jailed simply because of consequences arising from their substance abuse. In 1992, because of his work with the Civil Drug Court, Judge Rodgers received the prestigious Jefferson Award in the category of "The Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Award for Outstanding Public Service Benefitting the Local Community."

At the recent celebration recognizing the Drug Court Team's 30 years of service to the community, the Hon. Catherine Brunson was awarded the Edward Rodgers Humanitarian Award. Judge Brunson, who retired in 2018, and who now serves as a Senior Judge, oversaw the court on many Saturdays. While on the bench, Judge Brunson also actively recruited judges and magistrates to preside over the court.

## Bill Brooks' Food Drive



Bins of donated food at the  
Judge Daniel T.K. Hurley Courthouse



Volunteers collecting non-perishable food

The Fifteenth Judicial Circuit continued its tradition of participating in the Bill Brooks' Food Drive this holiday season. This year's event, organized by WPTV News Channel 5, in collaboration with Seacoast Bank, was aimed at helping less fortunate citizens who were affected by COVID-19. Donation boxes for non-perishable food were available at all Palm Beach County courthouses.

## Ethical Governance Day

On Wednesday, December 1, West Boca Raton High School hosted Ethical Governance Day. Dedicated public servants from a variety of agencies and the court shared information about the incredible work they do and how they serve the community. Over fifty students from classes on civics, psychology, and government attended the event. The program was spearheaded by the Hon. Samantha Schosberg Feuer, school board member Erica Whitfield, and the West Boca Raton High School student body president.



The Hon. Samantha Schosberg Feuer  
(center) addresses students



## Digital Court Reporter and Transcriber Day

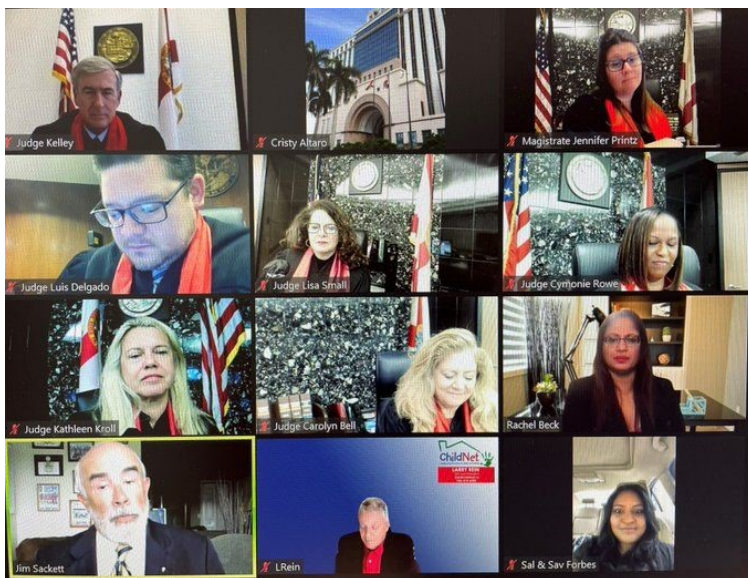
The American Association of Electronic Reporters and Transcribers, the national association that represents digital court reporters and legal transcribers, announced October 6, 2021, as “Digital Court Reporter and Legal Transcriber Day”.

Certified Digital Court Reporters (DCRs) are assigned to court proceedings to ensure that an accurate and verbatim record is recorded. While recording, DCRs observe the court proceeding remotely and listen through headphones to guarantee quality recording and to make notations related to the speakers. Often DCRs are required to monitor and record multiple proceedings at the same time. Judicial proceedings are reported at the public expense in accordance with Florida Rules of Judicial Administration 2.070.



Digital Court Reporter Pamela Pitts

## National Adoption Day Celebrated



On November 19, 2021, the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit participated in National Adoption Day. Chief Judge Glenn Kelley opened the ceremony. Nine families adopted thirteen children, ages 2 to 16 years. Approximately 120 attendees were present at the event which was held on ZOOM. Thank you to Judges Kroll, Bell, Delgado, Small, and Rowe as well as Magistrate Printz and all of the families, court staff, and court partners who made this a forever day for these children.

## Mediation Corner Highlights

### Circuit Celebrates Mediation Week

Chief Justice Canady proclaimed the week of October 17, 2021, Mediation Week, marking the importance of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) as an effective substitute to litigation. This annual weeklong focus on ADR highlights how individuals, administrative agencies, and businesses can use mediation to develop efficient and customized solutions to conflicts.



Fifteenth Judicial Circuit Alternative Dispute Resolution Team

There are over 5,500 mediators who have been certified by the Florida Dispute Resolution Center. In order to be certified, the mediators must meet specific standards as set by the Florida Supreme Court. Certifications can be obtained in county, family, circuit, dependency, and appellate mediation. Information on requirements and training is available at: [Flcourts.org](http://Flcourts.org)

The Fifteenth Judicial Circuit employs seven mediators and also depends on volunteer mediators to assist with small claims pre-trial hearings and contract mediators to assist with family, dependency and county court mediations. The Circuit's ADR staff (pictured above) are located on the sixth floor of the Main Courthouse, in Belle Glade, in South County, and in North County.



Recently, the entrance into the mediation suite in the Main Courthouse was relocated. Litigants and mediators may now enter on the north end of the mediation suite.

Entrance to Mediation at the Main Courthouse



## New County Mediation Coordinator

On December 1, Mr. Benjamin Johnson transferred from his role as a Family Mediator to the ADR's County Mediation Coordinator. In this new role, his primary responsibility is to oversee all of the Circuit's County pre-trial hearings and ensure that all nine county civil divisions have volunteer mediators ready and able to mediate any dispute ranging from evictions to dog bites. Although the number of volunteers has been reduced by 50% due to concerns related to the Pandemic, Mr. Johnson has been able to locate and train additional mediators. Moreover, somehow, he has been able to motivate a few former mediators to return and assist the Circuit.



Benjamin Johnson,  
Mediation Coordinator

Mr. Johnson has a degree in Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation from Abilene Christian University. He previously volunteered as a County Court Mediator for Palm Beach County and mediated conflict in the U.S. Army, where he was elected to serve as the Suicide Prevention Officer for Delta Company 1-124 Infantry Regiment.

## Promotion



Rosa Virginia Diaz,  
Administrative Assistant III for  
Alternative Dispute Resolution  
Department

Rosa Virginia Diaz has been promoted to Administrative Assistant III for the Alternative Dispute Resolution Department. She has been employed by the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit since 2005. In 2019, she was certified by the Supreme Court of Florida as a County Mediator.

Ms. Diaz has held several positions during her time with the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, including Information Desk Specialist, Court Administration Receptionist, and Americans with Disabilities Act Assistant.

In her new role, Ms. Diaz facilitates the staff and contract mediation schedules for family, dependency, and county civil divisions. She also coordinates with Human Resources in processing applicants requesting to be listed on the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit's List of Arbitrators and List of Parent Coordinators. Her ability to serve the Hispanic community during the mediation process is something that Ms. Diaz greatly enjoys. Congratulations to Rosa Virginia Diaz on her promotion.

## **Circuit Civil Case Managers**



**Pictured from left to right:** Robin Shevock, Devon Mugridge, Mirna Hernandez Winn, Daniela Montalvan, Reyaz Ali, Roseanna Skidmore, and Carlo Del Castillo

The Circuit's Civil Case Managers have carried out a tremendous amount of work in their quest to assist the judiciary comply with the Supreme Court's mandated differentiated case management ("DCM") plan for all civil cases. The dedicated Team has reviewed circuit civil and county civil cases to identify those cases that do not have a DCM plan or are not yet scheduled for trial.

Thousands of cases have been screened and continue to be screened to ensure compliance. Once screened and identified as in need of review by a judge, the cases are sent to the divisional judges. Via directions from the divisional judge, the team drafts the appropriate proposed order.

The Circuit truly appreciates the hours and effort that the Team, led by Devon Mugridge, Circuit Court Operations Manager, has dedicated to this endeavor.

## Reading and Robes

On November 12, the Palm Beach County Bar Association Judicial Relations Committee sponsored an event at the Mandel Public Library as part of the Reading and Robes Program. Judges from the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit read books to over thirty elementary students. This national program is also supported by the Lawyers for Literacy and Law Related Education Committees of the Palm Beach County Bar Association.

Through the generosity members of the Palm Beach County Bar Association and the National Judicial Council, signed copies of *Turning Pages: My Life Story*, a children's book written by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, were given to all of the students and their teachers.

"It is vital that students at a young age interact with judges in their community so they have a positive experience with members of the judiciary and learn about their career paths and their role in the justice system," Judge Schosberg Feuer said.



Foreground, Hon. G. Joseph Curley, Jr. reading to students; Background, Magistrate Maxine Williams reading to students



The Hon. Samantha Schosberg Feuer



Judicial participants left to right: Hon. G. Joseph Curley, Jr., Magistrate Maxine Williams, Hon. Charles Burton, Hon. Lisa Small, Hon. Samantha Schosberg Feuer, Hon. Ashley Zuckerman, Senior Judge Nancy Perez



## **Hon. Mark Eissey to Retire**

The Hon. Mark Eissey has submitted his retirement letter to Governor Ron DeSantis. His last official day with the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit is January 31, 2022.

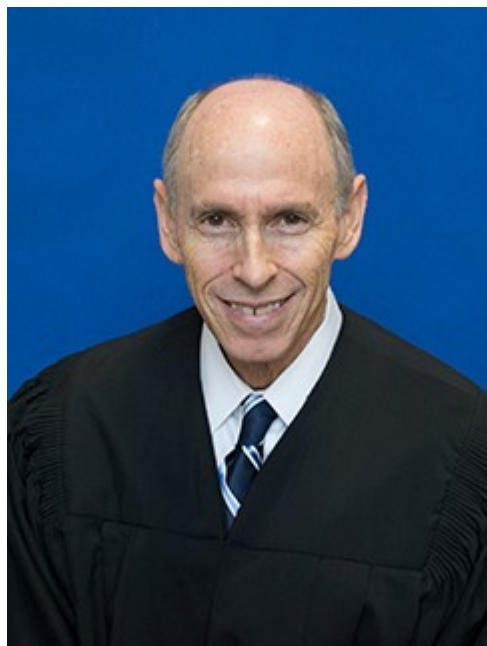
Judge Eissey served as a prosecutor with the State Attorney's Office in Palm Beach County for seventeen years. On January 4, 2005, he was appointed to the County Court bench by then Governor Jeb Bush. For many years, Judge Eissey was assisted by Judicial Assistant Donna Holden.

The Judges and court staff will miss Judge Eissey and his humor. The Circuit appreciates all of his years of service on the bench, his dedication to his role as a Judge, and his passion for presiding over jury trials.



Hon. Mark Eissey

## **Hon. Leonard Hanser to Retire**



Hon. Leonard Hanser

Judge Leonard Hanser has announced his retirement, effective February 28, 2022.

Judge Hanser first began his tenure with the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit as a Magistrate. He was appointed to that position by former Judge Jack Cook and served for sixteen years. In December 2009, former Governor Charlie Crist appointed him to the County bench to fill the vacancy created by the elevation of Judge Joe Marx to the Circuit bench.

Judge Hanser has served on the County Criminal and County Civil benches, all the while assisted by Judicial Assistant William Rivera. The Circuit has appreciated Judge Hanser's diligence and dedication as a Judge and wish him a long and happy retirement.

## Hon. Joseph Marx to Retire

The Hon. Joseph Marx submitted his retirement letter of the Governor on October 27, 2021. His last official day with the Circuit is January 31, 2022. Judge Joe Marx is a very highly respected jurist in the Circuit. Over his career on the bench, he consistently received high marks from the Bar and, due to his diligent case management, often had one of the lowest pending caseloads.

Judge Marx graduated from the University of Florida with his B.A. and Juris Doctorate. He was in private practice before joining the State Attorney's Office where he served for over 12 years as an Assistant State Attorney, as the Chief of Organized Crime, and as the Chief of the Vice Unit. In 2003 he was appointed to the County bench and served in both the civil and criminal divisions before being appointed to the Circuit bench in 2009. While on the Circuit bench, among other highlights, he served as Administrative Judge of the Circuit Civil Division and later as the Administrative Judge of the Circuit Criminal Division. He presided over the specialized Mental Health Division and served as a mentor judge. In 2019 he received the Jurist of the Year from the North County section of the Palm Beach Bar Association.



Hon. Joseph Marx

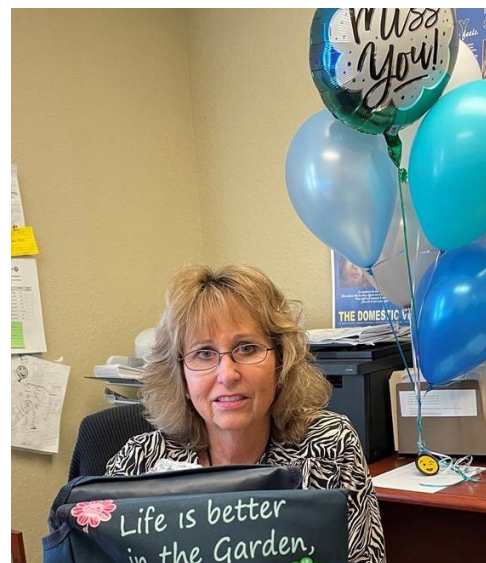
The Circuit wishes him a long and happy retirement.



—THE—  
**15<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**  
—OF FLORIDA—

## Jill Sconyers Retires

After twenty years of service, Jill (“Debra”) Sconyers retired from the Family and Domestic Violence Court Divisions on November 1, 2021. Ms. Sconyers’ service to the Circuit and the Western community of Palm Beach County was appreciated and valued. She first worked as a domestic violence case manager in Belle Glade for several years before being asked to incorporate family case management into her role in 2012. Among other responsibilities, Ms. Sconyers assisted with Unified Family Court screening, mediation scheduling, and compliance monitoring of Family and Domestic Violence cases. The Circuit thanks Ms. Sconyers for her years of service and we wish her well in her retirement.



Jill Sconyers

## Rolando Tatum Retires

Rolando Tatum, Digital Court Reporter (DCR) and Lead Worker, recently retired from the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit. Mr. Tatum started with the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit in 1993, beginning as a court interpreter. He was promoted to Lead Digital Court Reporter in 2013. In this role, he helped train and supervise DCRs. He also served as the Grand Jury DCR for many years.

Mr. Tatum plans to enjoy his retirement by spending more time with his family, including his six grandchildren. We thank him for his twenty-eight years of service and wish him all the best in his retirement.



Chief Judge Glenn Kelley (left) and  
Rolando Tatum (right)



## **The Circuit Remembers the Hon. Diana Lewis**

Retired Circuit Court Judge Diana Lewis passed away on October 20, 2021. She received her B.A. from the University of Notre Dame, her M.Ed. from Florida Atlantic University, and her J.D. from the University of Notre Dame Law School. She was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1982. She worked as a Clerk of the 4th District Court of Appeals, and as a litigator defending medical malpractice and product liability lawsuits with firms such as Walton, Lantaff, Schroeder, & Carson; Metzger & Sonneborn; Jones & Foster; Gay, Ramsey, & Lewis; and Carlton Fields. Judge Lewis was elected to the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit Court in 2002 and served until 2015. The Circuit sends its condolences to the Lewis family.



Hon. Diana Lewis

## **The Circuit Remembers Joseph Crisco**



Joseph Crisco

Former Law Library Manager Joseph Crisco passed away on October 22, 2021. Mr. Crisco earned his Master's Degree from Barry University. He previously served as a Law Library Associate, and a paralegal for Doane & Doane Law Firm before becoming the Law Library Manager for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit.

Mr. Crisco was a hardworking and dedicated person. We will miss his positive attitude and sense of humor.

## Book Club

Book Club will be returning this year. If you would like to participate, email Elizabeth Fairall, Law Library Manager, at [EFairall@pbcgov.org](mailto:EFairall@pbcgov.org). Book Club is open to all current employees of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit. We will be meeting online through Zoom at least once per quarter. Our first meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 18.



## New Employees

Welcome to our new employees who began their duties in  
October - December 2021:

- **Rose Louis**, Juvenile Court Case Manager, October 4
- **Kristina Rosado**, County Judicial Assistant to Judge April Bristow, October 12
- **Thomas Boning**, OPS Court Program Specialist, Legal, October 18
- **Alisa Gibbs**, Magistrate Assistant to Magistrate Maxine Williams, November 1
- **Michael Bonan**, General Counsel, November 1
- **Roseanna Skidmore**, OPS Court Program Specialist II, Civil, December 6
- **Lauren King**, OPS Court Program Specialist II, Family, December 28

Also, congratulations to the court employees who started a new  
position in the Circuit:

- **Renee Ward**, Family/ Domestic Violence Case Manager, November 22
- **Katherine Mullinax**, Supervising Trial Court Staff Attorney, November 22
- **Benjamin Johnson**, Mediation Services Coordinator, December 1
- **Karen Keogh**, Administrative Technician III, Drug Court, December 6

## Administrative Orders

The following AOs were updated or created October - December 2021:

- 3.601 - 10/4 - Small Claims Summons
- 3.602 - 10/4 - Residential Eviction Summons
- 11.104 - 10/4 - Seniority Listing of Judges
- 5.910 - 10/4 - Alternative Consequences Program for Juvenile Offenders
- 5.508 - 10/5 - North County Assignment of Stalking Violence Injunctions
- 5.507 - 10/5 - South County Assignment of Repeat Violence and Stalking Violence Injunctions
- 5.501 - 10/5 - Domestic, Repeat, Dating and Sexual Violence Injunctions
- 5.101 - 10/5 - Assignment of Unified Family Court Cases
- 2.201 - 10/19 - Courthouse Security and Screening
- 2.601 - 10/19 - Selection and Payment of Court Appointed Experts
- 12.504 - 10/22 - County Canvassing Board
- 11.101 - 11/2 - Assignment of Judges
- 11.109 - 11/9 - Duty Judge Roster
- 12.515 - 11/12 - COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols and Operational Measures
- 2.402 - 12/7 - Jury Panels

For updates to the latest Administrative Orders (AOs) for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, please visit our website at: <https://www.15thcircuit.com/administrative-orders>



THE  
15<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
OF FLORIDA





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