

THE NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT

2010 USER GUIDE / YEAR IN REVIEW 2009





Dear Citizens of Orange & Osceola counties:

I am pleased to submit to you the Ninth Judicial Circuit's Year in Review/Reference Guide for 2010. This document is designed to help you navigate our court system and to familiarize you with the programs and services offered here in the Ninth Circuit. I hope you will take a few minutes to read and learn about the operations of our court and I hope you will continue to utilize this document as a reference throughout the year.

This past year was another difficult year for the Judicial Branch. Limited staff and resources in the operation of the court continue to pose tremendous challenges for us in the Ninth Circuit. It is only through the hard work and determination of our judges and staff that we have been able to overcome many obstacles.

There is no doubt that Florida is facing unprecedented financial hardship. In the courts, we have, and will continue to do our part to cut spending. Unfortunately, reduced spending doesn't equate to a reduction in workload.

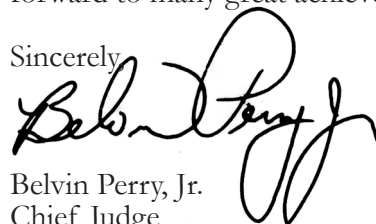
Since 2006, our overall caseload per Orange County Judge has increased over 10%. For Osceola County Judges it's over 17% and in the Circuit Court, each judge is managing more than a 44% increase in cases from just 4 years ago. This backlog is primarily due to the mortgage foreclosure crisis. In fact, we have seen a 164% increase in foreclosure filings since 2007.

The foreclosure crisis not only affects our courts, but also has implications for homeowners, lending institutions, neighborhoods and the economy through lost tax revenue. While we haven't received authorization for new judgeships in over 3 years, we are taking advantage of temporary funds to hire 3 senior judges and 6 staff members to address the foreclosure backlog directly. This will provide some relief for our civil dockets and hopefully move these homes through the system and back onto the tax rolls, where they will benefit everyone.

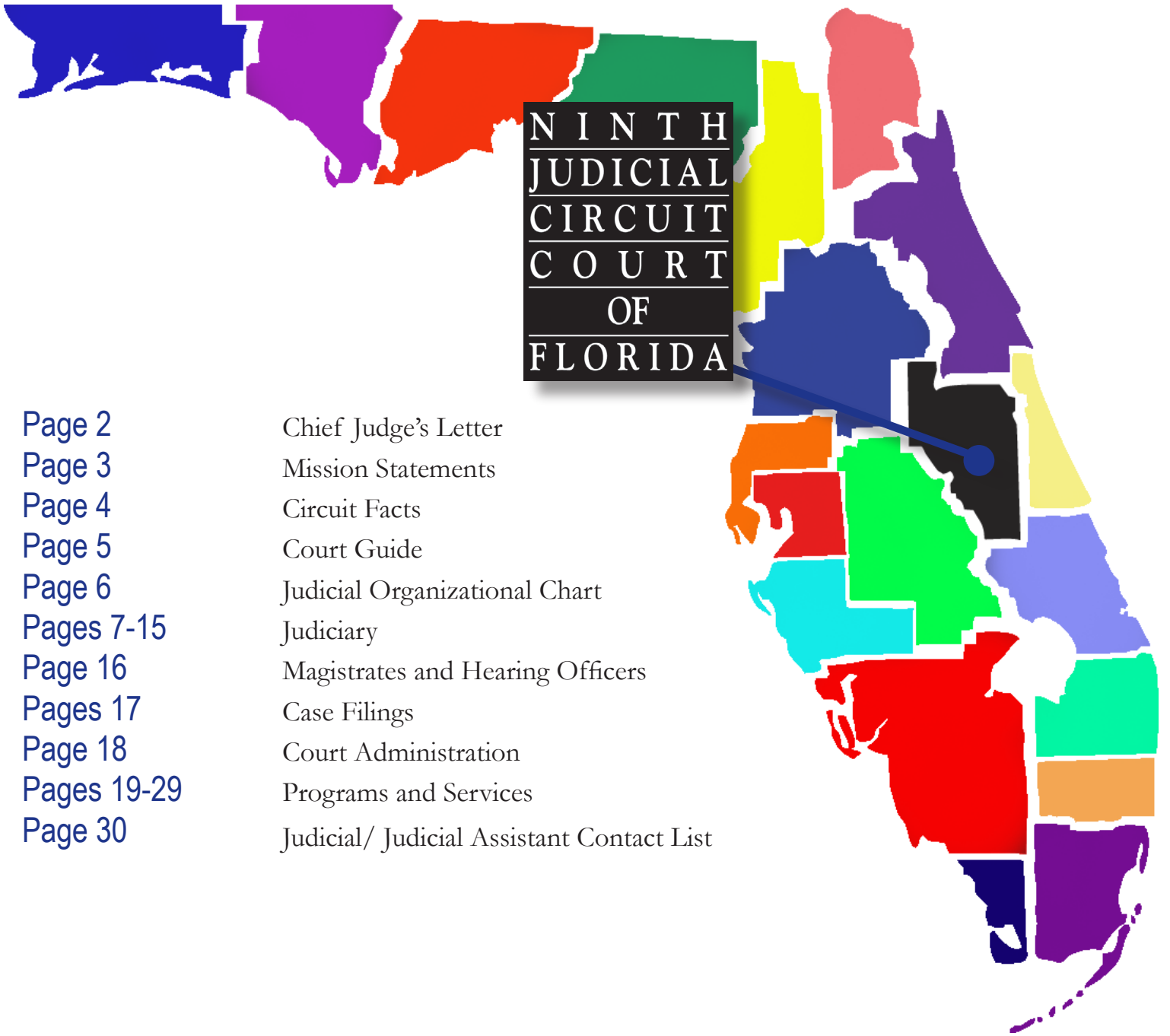
I wish to thank the Judges of our circuit who have worked hard to persevere during these difficult times. They have been innovative in their thinking and successful in maintaining good case disposition rates. Our staff has also done well to pick up extra slack by consolidating workloads and taking on more responsibility, and I thank them as well.

As we continue forward, we will make every effort to deal with the challenges of these difficult financial times. Our goal is, and will continue to be, to dispense quality justice in a timely manner to all that we serve here in Central Florida. It is a great honor and privilege to serve as your Chief Judge and I look forward to many great achievements in the years to come.

Sincerely,



Belvin Perry, Jr.
Chief Judge



NINTH
JUDICIAL
CIRCUIT
COURT
OF
FLORIDA

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Mission Statements

The mission statement of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court is to fairly and impartially administer justice and resolve disputes brought before the court.

The mission statement of Court Administration is to efficiently and effectively provide comprehensive administrative support to all the judges of the circuit, to manage programs and to act as a liaison between the Court and the people it serves.



Orange County Courthouse, Then



Orange County Courthouse, Now

Central Florida is home to the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court, which serves Orange and Osceola counties as the state trial court with jurisdiction over criminal and civil cases. The court’s jurisdiction covers over 2,000 square miles of Central Florida and 1.3 million residents. In addition, it is the top tourist destination in the world, hosting nearly 40 million visitors a year. Orlando International Airport is Florida’s busiest airport and the 22nd busiest airport in the world, ranked by number of passengers in 2008. Tourists from around the globe come to enjoy the region’s 99 attractions, 176 golf courses, 115,000 hotel rooms and 5,300 restaurants.

In business, Metro Orlando is considered the “Number One City for Entrepreneurs” by Entrepreneur Magazine and Bizjournal ranks Orlando as the number one city to grow a small business. The region is home to our nation’s seventh largest research park, third largest university, and one of only two “medical cities” in our country. Additionally, 150 international companies representing 20 countries have branch offices here in Metro Orlando.

Communities within the Ninth Circuit hold a rich diversity of culture and language. Hispanics represent more than 25 percent of residents in Orange County and more than 40 percent of residents in Osceola County. African Americans make up 21 percent of Orange County’s population and nearly 11 percent of Osceola County’s population. Within the court, demand for Creole, Russian and Vietnamese language interpreters continues to grow as a result of the area’s expanding Haitian, Eastern European and Asian population growth.

The Ninth Judicial Circuit is the third largest of Florida’s 20 judicial circuits in regards to caseload. The circuit falls under the jurisdiction of the Fifth District Court of Appeal in Daytona Beach, one of five district courts of appeal. The Florida Supreme Court located in Tallahassee is the state’s highest court.

As a court of general jurisdiction, the Ninth Circuit consists of both county and circuit courts, presiding over criminal, civil, traffic and juvenile proceedings. The court consists of 65 judges, 5 magistrates and 4 hearing officers. Annually, each circuit submits a request for new judgeships to the Florida Supreme Court. Under the Florida Constitution, the high court analyzes the requests and certifies its findings and recommendations. Since 1995, the Ninth Judicial Circuit has requested 57 judges to meet the mounting workload. During that period, the Florida Supreme Court recommended 47 judgeships for the Ninth Circuit while the Legislature funded 20 new positions.

Even with the economic decline, the overall caseload in the Ninth Circuit in 2010 continued to rise, primarily as a result of increased home foreclosures. As our state and nation continue to work toward economic recovery, caseloads are expected to increase further. For this reason, a properly funded state court system is essential to our economy and the fair, impartial and timely administration of justice that all citizens of Florida deserve.



Osceola County Courthouse, Then



Osceola County Courthouse, Now

Orange County Courthouse



The 23-story Orange County Courthouse is located in downtown Orlando. The courthouse has 48 courtrooms and 24 hearing rooms and a special purpose courtroom with state of the art technology on the 23rd floor. Circuit and County Judges preside over criminal, civil, domestic and traffic cases. The court complex includes offices of the

State Attorney and Public Defender in buildings on either side of the main courthouse. Also, the Clerk of the Court, Court Administration and a branch of the Orange County Sheriff's Office are located in the main building.

Osceola County Courthouse

The Osceola County Courthouse is located in downtown Kissimmee. The courthouse has twelve courtrooms. Circuit and County Judges preside over criminal, civil, domestic, juvenile and traffic cases. In addition, the building contains the Clerk of the Court, State Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, Court Administration and the Osceola County Sheriff's Judicial Services Division.



Thomas S. Kirk Juvenile Justice Center

The Thomas S. Kirk Juvenile Justice Center (Juvenile Court) is a one-story building located at 2000 E. Michigan Street in Orlando, south of the main courthouse. Judges here preside over



Orange County delinquency and dependency cases, in which the petitioner is generally the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The Clerk of Court, State Attorney, Court Administration, Department of Juvenile Justice and Orange County Public Schools have offices in the building. The court is conveniently located near the state-run Orange Regional Juvenile Detention

Center, Orange County's Great Oaks Village (which provides care for dependent children) and the Public Defender's Juvenile Division office.

Orange County Jail Booking and Release Center

Three courtrooms are housed at the Orange County Jail Booking and Release Center to expedite processing of initial appearance, arraignment and violation of probation hearings. The 300,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility opened in 2006 and includes offices of the Public Defender, State Attorney, Clerk of Court as well as judicial chambers.



Branch Courthouses

Orange County Judges travel to the three satellite courtrooms in Ocoee, Apopka and Winter Park to hear traffic cases and misdemeanor arraignments. In addition, hearing officers travel to the satellite courts to hear traffic infraction cases. The Ocoee and Apopka Branch Services buildings were built at the same time and are identical.



The **Ocoee Branch Courthouse** is located at 475 North Story Road in Ocoee and was dedicated in 1975. Traffic hearing officers hold infraction hearings on Mondays, and judges hear court matters on Wednesdays. The building

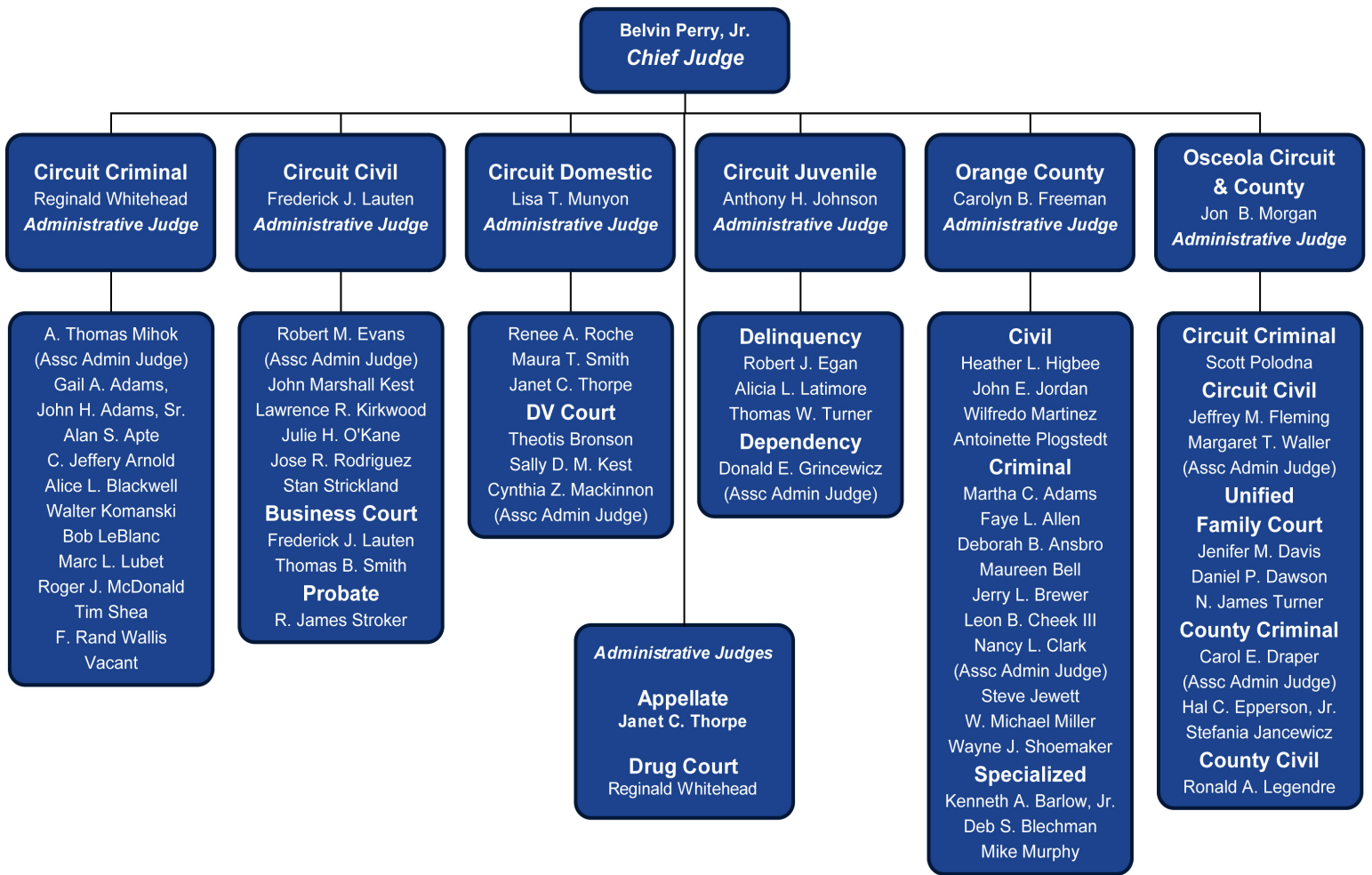
houses offices for the judge and hearing officer, an arraignment courtroom, the Sheriff's Substation and Marine Unit, Orange County Health Department and Vital Statistics, Youth and Family Services and the State of Florida Driver License renewal. The Clerk of the Court office processes all county court matters, including traffic, misdemeanor and civil cases involving disputes less than \$15,000, passports, landlord/tenant evictions, and marriage licenses.

The **Apopka Branch Courthouse** is located at 1111 North Rock Springs Road in Apopka and was also dedicated in 1975. Traffic hearing officers hold infraction hearings on the fourth Tuesday of every month, and judges hear court matters on Thursdays. The building houses offices for the judge and hearing officer, an arraignment courtroom, the Sheriff's substation, Orange County Health Department and Vital Statistics, Youth and Family Services, and Veteran's Assistance. The Clerk of the Court processes all county court matters, including traffic, misdemeanor and civil cases involving disputes less than \$15,000, passports, landlord/tenant evictions, and marriage licenses.



The **Winter Park Branch Courthouse** is located at 450 North Lakemont Avenue in Winter Park. The Clerk of the Court moved there in 1991 and the courts began operation in 1992. Prior to that, Winter Park court cases were heard at the Winter Park City Hall,

and the Clerk of the Court was housed across the street. Traffic hearing officers hold infraction hearings on Tuesdays, and a judge hears court matters on Fridays. The building houses offices for the judge and hearing officer and an arraignment courtroom. The State of Florida renews driver licenses at this location. The Clerk of the Court processes all county court matters, including traffic, misdemeanor and civil cases involving disputes less than \$15,000, passports, landlord/tenant evictions and marriage licenses.



Administrative Judges Serving in 2009

Honorable Reginald K. Whitehead - Circuit Civil Division
 Honorable Renee A. Roche - Associate Civil Division
 Honorable Lisa T. Munyon - Criminal Division
 Honorable A. Thomas Mihok - Associate Criminal Division
 Honorable Anthony H. Johnson - Juvenile Division
 Honorable Alice Blackwell - Family Court Division
 Honorable Theotis Bronson - Associate Family Court Division
 Honorable R. James Stroker - Osceola County
 Honorable Carol Engel Draper - Associate Osceola County
 Honorable Lisa T. Munyon - Drug Court
 Honorable Janet C. Thorpe - Appellate Division
 Honorable Carolyn B. Freeman - Orange County
 Honorable Jerry L. Brewer - Orange County Associate

Administrative Judges Serving in 2010

Honorable Frederick J. Lauten - Circuit Civil Division
 Honorable Robert M. Evans - Associate Civil Division
 Honorable Reginald K. Whitehead - Criminal Division
 Honorable A. Thomas Mihok - Associate Criminal Division
 Honorable Anthony H. Johnson - Juvenile Division
 Honorable Donald E. Grincewicz - Associate Juvenile Division
 Honorable Lisa T. Munyon - Family Court Division
 Honorable Cynthia Z. Mackinnon - Associate Family Court Division
 Honorable Jon B. Morgan - Osceola Circuit and County
 Honorable Carol E. Draper - Associate Osceola County
 Honorable Reginald K. Whitehead - Drug Court
 Honorable Janet C. Thorpe - Appellate Division
 Honorable Carolyn B. Freeman - Orange County
 Honorable Nancy L. Clark - Associate Orange County

Judiciary



Gail A. Adams

Circuit Judge: 2001-present
Judge of Compensation
Claims: 1992-2001
JD: Stetson University
BA: University of
Central Florida
Major: Finance and
Economics



John H. Adams, Sr.

Circuit Judge: 1991-present
County Judge: 1985-1991
JD: University of Michigan
BA: Webster College
Major: Mathematics



Martha C. Adams

Orange County Judge:
2007-present
JD: Nova Southeastern
University
BA: Rollins College
Major: Politics



Faye L. Allen

Orange County Judge:
2005-present
JD: Florida State University
BA: Florida A&M University
Major: Criminology



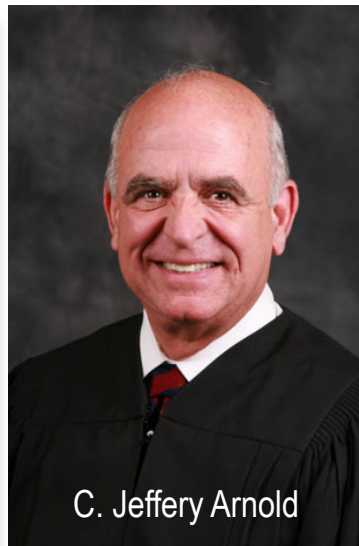
Deborah B. Ansbro

Orange County Judge:
2006-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of Central
Florida
Major: History



Alan S. Apte

Circuit Judge: 2003-present
JD: Nova University
BA: University of Miami
Major: Chemistry



C. Jeffery Arnold

Circuit Judge: 2007-present
Orange County Judge:
1994-2007
JD: Florida State University
BA: College of William
and Mary
Major: Pre-Law



Kenneth A. Barlow, Jr.

Orange County Judge:
2009-present
JD: Cumberland School
of Law
BA: English: University of
the South



Judiciary



Maureen Bell

Orange County Judge:
2007-present
JD: University of Florida
MS: Biscayne College (St.
Thomas University)
BA: University of Florida
Major: Special Education



Alice L. Blackwell

Circuit Judge: 1991-present
JD: University of
South Carolina
BA: Furman University
Major: Political Science



Deb S. Blechman

Orange County Judge:
1995-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of
Central Florida
Major: Political Science/
Pre-Law



Jerry L. Brewer

Orange County Judge:
1995-present
JD: Cumberland School
of Law
BA: University of
Central Florida
Major: Political Science



Theotis Bronson

Circuit Judge: 1993-present
County Judge: 1986-1993
JD: University of Florida
BA: Rollins College
AA: Seminole
Community College
Major: Psychology



Leon B. Cheek III

Orange County Judge:
1998-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of Florida
Major: Political Science



Nancy L. Clark

Orange County Judge:
2000-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of Florida
Major: Political Science



Jenifer M. Davis

Circuit Judge: 2007-present
JD: University of Florida
MA: University of Florida
BA: University of Florida
Major: Criminal Justice



Judiciary



Daniel P. Dawson

Circuit Judge: 1991-present
JD: Stetson University
BA: University of Florida
Major: Business Administration



Carol Engel Draper

Osceola County Judge:
1993-present
JD: Stetson University
BA: Ithaca College
Major: Music Education



Robert J. Egan

Circuit Judge: 2008-present
JD: University of Florida
College of Law
BA: Mercer University
Major: Political Science



Hal C. Epperson, Jr.

Osceola County Judge:
2007-present
J.D: Stetson University
B.A: Stetson University
Major: Political Science



Robert M. Evans

Circuit Judge: 1995-present
JD: Florida State University
BA: Ball State University
Major: Political Science



Jeffrey M. Fleming

Circuit Judge 2005-present
County Judge: 2002-2005
JD: Florida State University
BA: University of
Central Florida
Major: Political Science



Carolyn B. Freeman

Orange County Judge:
1991-present
JD: Florida State University
BA: Rollins College
Major: Business



Donald E. Grincewicz

Circuit Judge: 1995-present
County Judge: 1994-1995
JD: Detroit College of Law
BA: Wayne State University
Major: Political Science



Judiciary



Heather L. Higbee

Orange County Judge:
2007-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: Duke University
Major: English



Stefania Jancewicz

Osceola County Judge:
2006-present
JD: Stetson University
BA: Flagler College
Major: Secondary Education/
English



Steve Jewett

Orange County Judge:
2007-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of Florida
Major: Political Science



Anthony H. Johnson

Circuit Judge 1997-present
Senior Judge: 1991-1996
County Judge: 1985-1990
JD: Stetson University
BA: American University
Major: Administration of
Justice



John E. Jordan

County Judge: 2005-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of
South Florida
Major: Political Science



John Marshall Kest

Circuit Judge: 2003-present
JD: Florida State University
BA: Rollins College
Major: Biology



Sally D. M. Kest

Circuit Judge: 2007-present
JD: Florida State University
BA: Florida State University
Major: Government



Lawrence R. Kirkwood

Circuit Judge: 1981-present
JD: University of Florida
MA: University of
Nevada-Reno
BA: Florida Southern College
Major: History/Government



Judiciary



Walter Komanski

Circuit Judge: 1985-present
County Judge: 1981-1985
JD: John Marshall
Law School
BA: University of
Central Florida
Major: Communications/
Political Science



Alicia L. Latimore

Circuit Judge: 2006-present
JD: University of Florida
BS: Duke University
Major: Psychology



Frederick J. Lauten

Circuit Judge: 1999-present
County Judge: 1993-1999
JD: Villanova University
MBA: Rollins College
BA: Rollins College
Major: History



Bob LeBlanc

Circuit Judge: 2007-present
JD: University of Miami
BA: Bradford College
Major: Political Philosophy



Marc L. Lubet

Circuit Judge: 2007-present
JD: University of Mississippi
BS: University of Florida
Major: Journalism



Cynthia Z. Mackinnon

Circuit Judge: 1994-present
JD: University of Florida
MA: Emory University
BA: Emory University
Major: English



Wilfredo Martinez

Orange County Judge:
1998-present
JD: New York University
BA: Yale University
Major: Spanish Literature



Roger J. McDonald

Circuit Judge: 1997-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: Florida State University
Major: Finance



Judiciary



A. Thomas Mihok

Circuit Judge: 1995-present
JD: Stetson University
BA: United States
Naval Academy
Major: Math, Science &
Engineering



W. Michael Miller

Orange County Judge:
1991-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: Furman University
Major: Political Science



Jon B. Morgan

Circuit Judge: 2005-present
County Judge: 1998-2005
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of Florida
Major: Political Science



Lisa T. Munyon

Circuit Judge: 2003-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of Florida
Major: Finance



Mike Murphy

Orange County Judge:
2005-present
JD: University of Florida
BS: University of Florida
Major: Management



Julie H. O'Kane

Circuit Judge: 2003-present
JD: Stetson University
BA: Florida Atlantic
University
Major: Marketing



Belvin Perry, Jr.

Chief Judge
Circuit Judge: 1989-present
JD: Texas Southern
University
MA: Tuskegee University
BA: Tuskegee University
Major: History



Antoinette Plogstedt

Orange County Judge:
2001-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of Tampa
Major: Marketing



Judiciary



Scott Polodna

Circuit Judge: 2006-present
JD: University of Florida
BS: University of Florida
Major: Psychology



Renee A. Roche

Circuit Judge: 1997-present
County Judge: 1995-1997
JD: University of Florida
BA: Auburn University
Major: History



Jose R. Rodriguez

Circuit Judge: 1994-present
County Judge: 1987-1994
JD: Florida State University
BA: University of
Central Florida
AA: Miami-Dade
Community College
Major: Communications



Tim Shea

Circuit Judge: 2007-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of
Central Florida
AA: Valencia
Community College
Major: Political Science



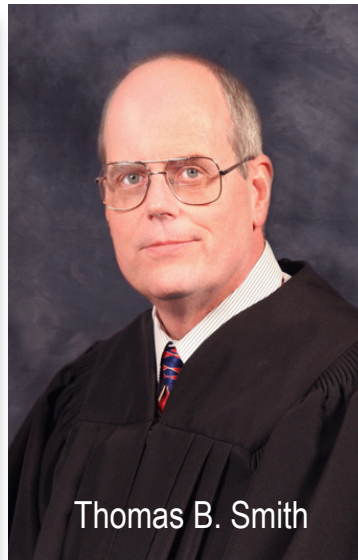
Wayne J. Shoemaker

Orange County Judge:
1999-present
JD: South Texas
College of Law
BA: University of
Central Florida
Major: Criminal Justice



Maura T. Smith

Circuit Judge: 1996-present
JD: Florida State University
BA: Tufts University
Major: Economics



Thomas B. Smith

Circuit Judge: 2002-present
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of
South Florida
Major: History



Stan Strickland

Circuit Judge: 1998-present
County Judge: 1995-1998
Judge of Compensation
Claims: 1993-1995
JD: Mercer University
MA: Florida State University
BA: Florida State University



Judiciary



R. James Stroker

Circuit Judge: 1983-present
County Judge: 1977-1983
Municipal Court Judge:
1974-1976
JD: Cornell University
BA: Cornell University
Major: Industrial Relations



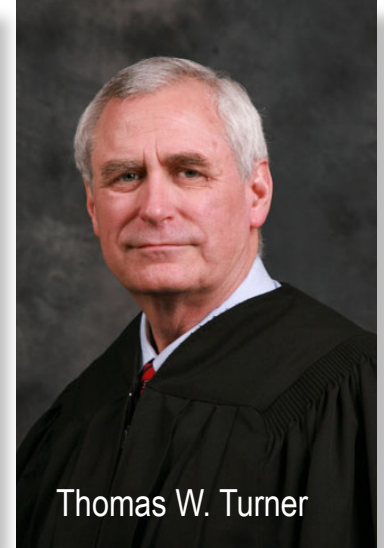
Janet C. Thorpe

Circuit Judge: 2000-present
JD: Emory University
BA: Union College
Major: American History/
Political Science



N. James Turner

Circuit Judge: 2009-present
JD: University of Miami
School of Law
BA: Bentley College
Major: Accounting



Thomas W. Turner

Circuit Judge: 2003-present
JD: Wayne State University
BA: Ball State University
Major: Political Science



Margaret T. Waller

Circuit Judge: 1998-present
County Judge: 1994-1998
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of Florida
Major: English



F. Rand Wallis

Circuit Judge: 2008-present
JD: Stetson University
College of Law
BA: Furman University
Major: Political Science



Reginald Whitehead

Circuit Judge: 1995-present
County Judge: 1994-1995
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of Mississippi
Major: Political Science



Senior Judiciary

Retired judges may apply for senior judge status. Senior judges are placed on an approved list by the Florida Supreme Court, which allows them to return to the bench to hear cases. Retired judges who return to the practice of law are not permitted to serve as senior judges.



Ted Coleman

Senior Judge:
2003-present
Circuit Judge: 1983-2002
County Judge: 1973-1979
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of Florida
AA: Brevard
Community College
Major: Advertising



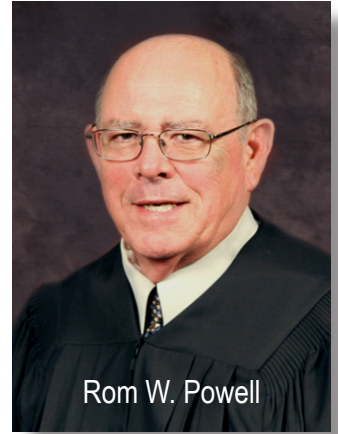
Richard F. Conrad

Senior Judge:
2007-present
Circuit Judge: 1988-2006
County Judge: 1986-1988
JD: Stetson University
BA: St. Louis University
Major: Zoology & Chemistry



Thomas R. Kirkland

Senior Judge:
2007-present
County Judge: 1977-2006
JD: Stetson University
BS: University of Florida
Major: Industrial
Management



Rom W. Powell

Senior Judge:
1997-present
Circuit Judge: 1979-1997
L.L.B.: Stetson University
BA: Dartmouth College
Major: English Literature



Charles N. Prather

Senior Judge:
2002-present
Circuit Judge: 1990-2001
County Judge: 1983-1989
JD: Stetson University
BA: Stetson University
Major: Economics



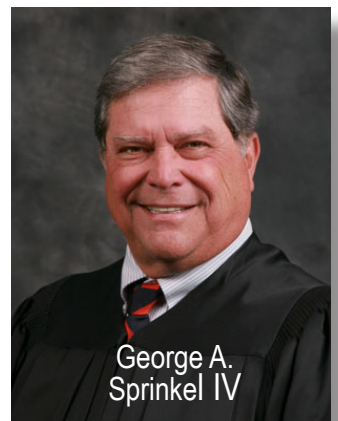
Dorothy J. Russell

Senior Judge:
2003-present
Circuit Judge: 1990-2003
County Judge: 1983-1990
JD: Stetson University
MA: Rollins College
BA: State University of
New York at Buffalo
AA: Olympic College



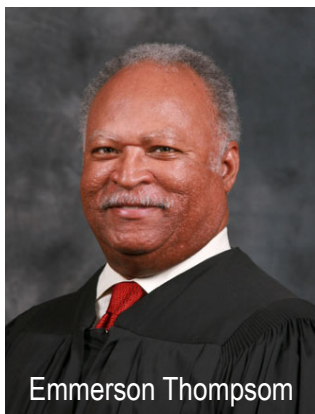
**Janis Mary
Halker Simpson**

Senior Judge:
2005-present
County Judge: 1979- 2005
JD: University of Florida
MA: Rollins College
MA: Loyola University
BA: University of Florida
Major: Sociology



**George A.
Sprinkel IV**

Senior Judge:
2009-present
County Judge: 1977-1990
JD: University of Florida
BA: University of Florida
Major: Political Science



Emmerson Thompsom

Senior Judge:
2008-present
Appellate Judge:
1993-2008
Circuit Judge: 1980-1993
County Judge: 1976-1980
JD: Florida State
University
BA: University of Florida
Major: Political Science



Ronald A. Legendre

Osceola County Judge:
1981-2010
JD: Florida State University
BA: Loyola of New Orleans
Major: History

Magistrates & Hearing Officers

Magistrates



Howard Friedman



James E. Glatt, Jr.



Maria Hinds



Linh Ison

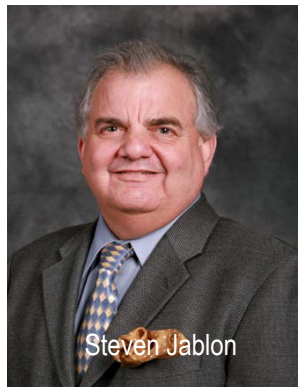


Odessia Joyner

Hearing Officers



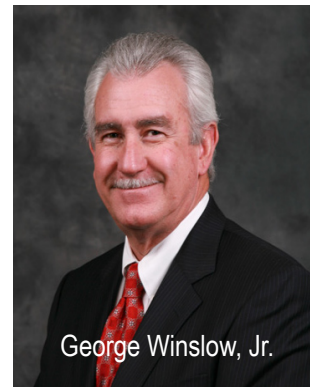
Christine Groves



Steven Jablon



Norberto Katz

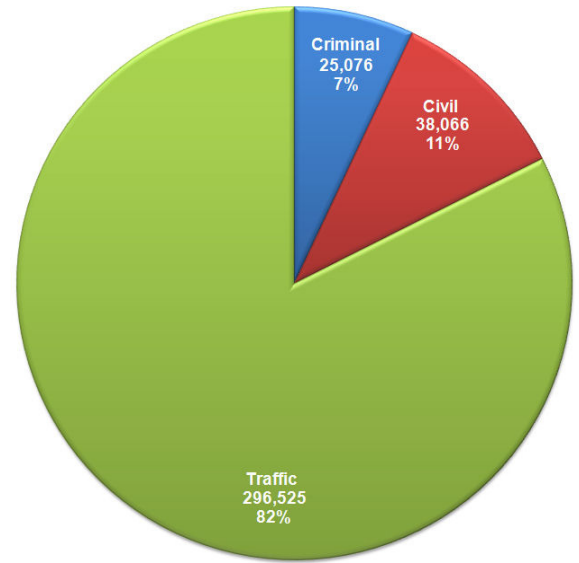


George Winslow, Jr.

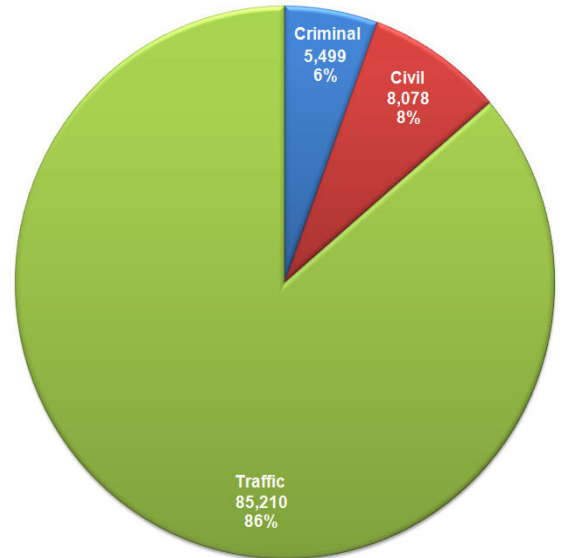


Overview of Case Filings in the 9th Circuit

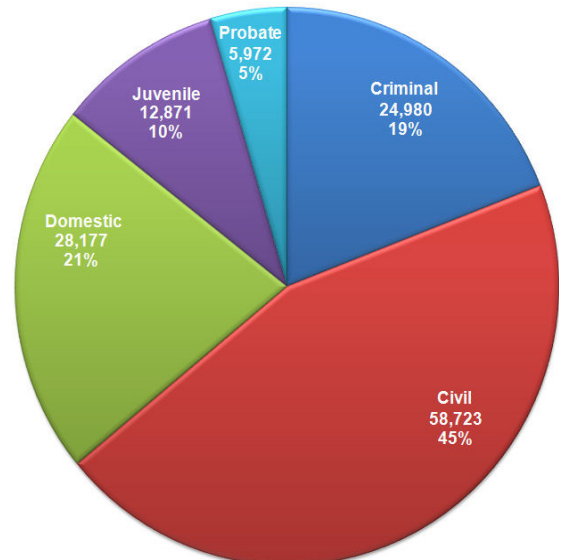
County Case Filings - Orange County 2009



County Case Filings - Osceola County 2009



Total Circuit Case Filings - 2009



Court Administration

A Court Administrator in each of the 20 judicial circuits is tasked with assisting the Chief Judge to carry out the court’s administrative duties. The Court Administrator is selected by a majority vote of the circuit and county judges and reports directly to the Chief Judge. Matt Benefiel, Court Administrator for the Ninth Judicial Circuit, and his staff assist the judiciary in the following areas: budget administration, fiscal administration, public information, jury management, court reporting, case management, legal research, court technology, dispute resolution, and court interpreting. Court Administration develops and manages programs and services for the circuit, disseminates information about the court system to the media and general public and assists the judiciary with all aspects of court management.

Ninth Judicial Circuit Court Administration Telephone Directory

Administrative Offices (Orange County) 407-836-2050
Administrative Offices (Osceola County) 407-742-2400

ORANGE COUNTY

Audio/Visual Services 407-836-0522
 Business Court 407-836-2366
 Child Support Hearing Officers 407-836-2287
 Court Interpreting Services 407-836-2399
 Court Reporter Services 407-836-2270
 Court Resource Center 407-836-0474
 Dispute Resolution Services (Mediation) 407-836-2004
 Drug Court 407-836-0419
 Family Court Case Management 407-836-6054
 Family Ties Program 407-836-0426
 Human Resources/Fiscal Services 407-836-2261
 Information Booth 407-836-0472
 Juvenile Court Services 407-836-7590
 Jury Services 407-836-2206
 Magistrates 407-836-2024
 Neighborhood Restorative Justice 407-836-9553
 Parenting Coordination 407-836-2116
 Sanctioned To Read 407-836-9313
 Technology Services 407-836-6010
 Teen Court 407-836-9517
 Traffic Infraction Hearing Officers 407-836-2334

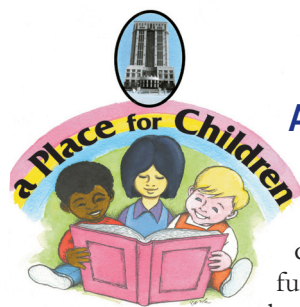
OSCEOLA COUNTY

Audio/Visual Services 407-742-2530
 Children’s Visitation Center 407-742-2467
 Court Interpreters 407-742-2400
 Court Reporting Services 407-742-2482
 Dispute Resolution Services (Mediation) 407-742-2451
 Drug Court 407-742-2431
 Family Court Services 407-742-2538
 Jury Services 407-742-2421
 Magistrate 407-742-2428
 Technology Services 407-742-2488
 Teen Court 407-742-2465
 Traffic Infraction Hearing Officer 407-742-2400

NinthCircuit.org



Programs & Services



A Place for Children --

A Place for Children is a licensed on-site childcare facility for families with official court business, which allows children the chance to relax and have fun as an alternative to spending time in long court sessions and being exposed to

adult situations. The program is operated by the Children's Home Society of Florida, a non-profit agency focusing on child welfare issues for more than 100 years. A Place for Children, which began in 1998, is funded by the City of Orlando, Court Administration, Central Florida Association of Women Lawyers, The Galloway Foundation, The Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation, The Florida Bar Association Foundation, and private contributions. More than 25,000 children have been served by this licensed drop-in center since its inauguration. The program, which cares for children ages 1-14, also serves as a resource for high-risk families in need of social services by offering information and referrals for community programs. Last year more than one-quarter of the center's users accepted referrals for community services. In 2002, the center began providing free childcare for people summoned for jury duty. Reservations are required for jurors' children. All others are taken on a first-come, first-served basis. The professionally staffed center is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, on the 2nd floor of the Orange County Courthouse. For more information about the center or to contribute toys, children's DVD's or monetary donations, please call **407-836-2108, Ext. 3**.

Alternative Sanctions Program (Osceola) --

The Alternative Sanctions Program is funded by Osceola County through the 65 Fund under the direct supervision of the Family Court Programs Manager. Since its commencement in June of 2006, this program's mission has been to provide alternative sanctions to incarceration for juvenile offenders in Osceola County such as:

- Community Service – Juveniles are court ordered to complete community service and they may receive assistance in finding a community service project location in order to comply with their sanction. This service is provided only on an as needed basis.
- Electronic Monitoring – This sanction is used to monitor juvenile offenders at their residence and ensure curfew compliance and consists of an ankle-worn transmitter and a Home Monitoring Unit (HMU). This sanction was provided to 28 juveniles last year.
- "Sanctioned to Read" is an individualized and prescriptive reading program with the specific goal of helping juvenile offenders build strong academic skills while they develop the desire and confidence to succeed. Juvenile offenders are sanctioned to attend 40 hours of tutoring during after school hours. In 2009 this program provided service to 32 juveniles.
- Urinalysis Screening – Juveniles are court ordered to submit to drug and/or alcohol drug screening and may receive assistance in completing their sanctions through the Alternative Sanctions Coordinator, who provided 253 urinalysis drug screenings in 2009.
- "Y.E.S." is designed for first time petit theft offenders. They are required to complete a Home Study Kit (available in English and Spanish) and attend a 2-hour workshop. 57 juveniles completed this sanction in 2009.

The Alternative Sanctions Coordinator also supervises and provides case management to the participants of the Juvenile Drug Court Program. For more information, call **407-742-2518**.

An Afternoon in the Courthouse Seminar (Orange) --

This seminar's focus is to provide helpful hints for area attorneys as they practice before the judges of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court. It provides insight into local judicial practices and procedures and is designed to teach new attorneys the "nuts and bolts" of how to successfully navigate the courts. The seminar, presented by the Young Lawyers Section of the Orange County Bar Association, is open to attorneys, law clerks and legal assistants, and is offered twice a year. Teams of judges from various divisions teach the seminars. During the past five years, more than 1,750 attorneys, paralegals and law students have participated in these seminars. For more information, call the Orange County Bar Association at **407-422-4551**.



A/V SERVICES

Audio/Visual Services --

The Ninth Judicial Circuit's Audio Visual (A/V) Department is recognized as a world leader in courthouse and courtroom technology. The A/V Department provides comprehensive support for the Orange and Osceola County Courthouses, the Thomas S. Kirk Juvenile Justice Center, the three branch courthouses, and the three courtrooms located at the Orange County Jail. A/V staff have designed and installed cutting edge technology that centralizes service delivery and support. From a single location or from any computer on the network, A/V staff provides for and supports video arraignments and initial appearances, video conferencing, digital court reporting, centralized interpreting, media production, evidence presentation systems and Internet broadcast. In addition to covering more than 70 court venues, the A/V staff also maintains and supports the Roger A. Barker Memorial Courtroom, one of the most technologically advanced courtrooms in the world. An audio/video pedestal is located at both the courthouse and jail facilities to accommodate the media for courtroom, initial appearance and arraignment procedures. An engineer is available at all times to assist with signal connection and troubleshooting. A request form for remote video testimony as well as a listing of all A/V services can be found at www.NinthCircuit.org. For assistance in Orange County, call **407-836-0522**. In Osceola County, call **407-742-2530**.

Child Support Hearing Officers --

Child Support Hearing Officers assist the judges assigned to the domestic relations division by hearing cases which help reduce the large caseload assigned to each judge. The hearing officers are responsible for hearing and resolving all Department of Revenue related child support cases. These cases are filed by the Department of



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Revenue and include voluntary paternity actions, establishment of support, public assistance reimbursement, medical/health insurance obligations and the enforcement and modification of existing support orders. The hearing officers also hear and resolve establishment, enforcement and modification of out of state support requests (UIFSA actions). With a successful hearing officer program, the citizens of the State of Florida are assured that state tax dollars and assets are used effectively and efficiently to have the parents of minor children provide for the support and well-being of their children, call **407-836-2287**.

Children's Visitation Center (Osceola) --

The center opened in Osceola County in February 1999 thanks to a collaborative effort between local government, the school system, law enforcement and the courts. It is a court-operated, visitation/monitored exchange center which allows children to spend time with their non-custodial parent in Domestic Violence Injunctions, divorce, paternity, criminal and dependency cases in a pleasant, and safe atmosphere while ensuring their safety. The center also provides monitored exchange and day visit services to allow parents to safely exchange children for the purpose of visitation. Since the program began, 1,095 families and 1,950 children have been served. Participation in this program requires a court order. For information, call **407-742-2467**.

Civil Traffic Infractions Hearing Officer Program --

The purpose of the Civil Traffic Infractions Hearing Officer Program is to divert less serious civil traffic infractions away from the more formal traffic court. The Traffic Hearing Officers are members of The Florida Bar and are subject to The Florida Bar Code of Professional Responsibility and to relevant portions of the Code of Judicial Conduct. They have the power to accept pleas from defendants, hear and rule upon motions, decide whether a defendant has committed a civil traffic infraction and adjudicate or withhold adjudication in the same manner as a county court judge. They cannot, however, conduct contempt proceedings, hear any case involving an accident with injuries or suspend a defendant's driver's

Civil Traffic Hearing Officers



license. The Civil Traffic Infractions Hearing Officer Program is an essential part of the court system. In Orange County, please call **407-836-2334**. In Osceola County, please call **407-742-2400**.

Community Relations/Public Information --

The judges of the Ninth Circuit are committed to educating the public on the workings of the court and the role and responsibilities the court has within the community. For this reason, the court has developed a comprehensive public information program that inspires public trust and confidence and allows for greater transparency within

our third branch of government. Successful community outreach programs and services include: Inside the Courts, Judicial Ride-Along, Speakers Bureau, Town Halls and various court publications. The court's award winning website offers a wealth of information and educational resources for both legal professionals and self represented litigants. The court has moved further into the technological realm in creating jury videos, initial appearance and arraignment videos, and public service announcements on court programs and services. Many of these videos are produced in different languages and can be viewed on the court's website, NinthCircuit.org, or on Orange TV, Government Access. Most recently, the Ninth Circuit signed on and can now be followed on Twitter for updates on court events and information. In addition, the judges and court staff are always ready to visit schools, community groups, and professional organizations to speak about the operations of our courts and the important role the court serves in today's society.



Complex Business Litigation Court --

Established in 2003, the Complex Business Litigation Court is the first court in Florida devoted entirely to complex business litigation cases. It serves as a subdivision of the Circuit Civil Division in Orange County, and was created to hear more complicated cases that require a higher degree of case management. By limiting its focus to complex business litigation, the court provides a streamlined process for efficiently and



effectively resolving complicated corporate and commercial disputes in a fairly short amount of time, thereby greatly reducing the costs involved in lengthy litigation. The court also places great emphasis on alternative dispute resolution and pre-trial settlement, which significantly reduces the cost of court operations. Cases involving contracts, Article 9 and antitrust suits, intellectual property, franchise disputes and/or unfair competition disputes are among the cases suitable for adjudication in this subdivision, provided that

the amount in controversy is greater than \$75,000.00. For more information in Orange County, please call **407-836-2366**.

Court Interpreting Services --

The Ninth Judicial Circuit faces the ever growing challenge of meeting the needs of Central Florida's increasing ethnic and linguistic diversity. In response to this challenge, the court operates a Court Interpreter Program composed of a number of certified staff Spanish interpreters, a program manager and a program specialist. By law, interpreters are required in criminal cases for all defendants and witnesses who



do not speak or understand English. The program allows a non-English speaking person to participate meaningfully in the judicial process. Court interpreters are assigned to cover all circuit and county criminal matters, traffic, initial appearances, domestic violence injunctions and juvenile court. They are not for public hire. Interpreting service for various languages other than Spanish is provided by recruiting contractual interpreters

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and offering orientation and skill-building workshops to ensure quality in service. These on call contractual interpreters are utilized by the court when necessary. In an effort to meet the high demand with the existing resources, the Ninth Judicial Circuit has created and implemented a first of its kind remote interpreting system that allows interpreting services to be conducted remotely between the Orange and Osceola County Courthouses, the branch courthouses, the Juvenile Justice Center and the Orange County Jail Booking and Release Center. The system has allowed for maximization of the number of cases covered by each interpreter and considerable savings on the interpreter State budget. In 2008-2009 interpreters in the circuit handled almost 27,000 cases in 29 languages ranging from Albanian to Vietnamese. Spanish was the most frequently used language, followed by Creole, Portuguese, American Sign Language, Vietnamese and Russian. To learn more, call **407-836-2399** for Orange and Osceola Counties.

Court Reporting Services -- The Office of Court Reporting Services is responsible for the official record of all criminal court proceedings in the Ninth Judicial Circuit, plus other proceedings per statute and local administrative order. There are four separate departments of Court Reporting Services:

Osceola Court Reporting
Official Court Reporting
Digital Court Reporting, Orange County Division
Digital Court Reporting, Juvenile Division

The Office of Technology Services in Orange County and the Office of Information Systems in Osceola County is responsible for maintenance and support of all court reporting technology.

All transcripts/duplicate media requests are produced in-house. In 2009, all four departments combined produced 140,441 pages of transcript and 1,809 CD copies of proceedings. The department has one manager, 35 court reporters in Orange County and 9 court reporters in Osceola County.



The Osceola Court Reporting Department covers all Osceola County circuit criminal courts, juvenile delinquency and dependency, misdemeanor and traffic courts, domestic violence court, initial appearances and arraignments, probate, guardianship, and other courts as assigned. The circuit criminal trials are covered by stenographic court reporters, and all other proceedings are covered digitally at a central monitoring station. This department has a staff of nine reporters who produced 16,922 pages of transcript and 521 CD copies of proceedings in 2009. For more information, call **407-742-2482**.

The Official Court Reporting Department (Orange County) covers all Orange County circuit criminal trials and other courts as assigned. Staff also digitally covers circuit hearings. This department has a staff of fourteen reporters who produced 76,730 pages of transcript in 2009. For more information, call **407-836-2280**.

The Digital Court Reporting Department (Orange County) covers all Orange County circuit criminal hearings. Staff also covers circuit criminal trials as assigned. In addition, the department covers misdemeanor and traffic courts, domestic violence court, drug court, initial appearances and arraignments, probate, guardianship, mental health and Baker Act hearings, three satellite courts, and other courts as assigned. All criminal courts are covered from the reporter's individual workstation. All other courts are covered at the location of the proceedings. This department has a staff of seventeen who produced 31,982 pages of transcript, plus 1,025 CD copies of proceedings in 2009. For more information, call **407-836-2270**.

The Digital Court Reporting Department, (Juvenile Division) covers all juvenile court proceedings, both dependency and delinquency, from the reporter's individual workstation. This department has a staff of four who produced 14,807 pages of transcript, plus 263 CD copies of proceedings in 2009. For more information, call **407-836-7503**.

Court Resource Center -- The Court Resource Center was created to provide a comfortable environment for court visitors to work, perform legal research and obtain information. The Ninth Judicial Circuit Court and the Orange County Bar Association support the center, which offers telephones, computers with Internet access, a printer, copier, fax machine, and court brochures. Each year the center supports the needs of nearly 20,000 visitors. The center, which is staffed by Court Administration, is open to all visitors of the Orange County Courthouse. It is located on the 3rd floor (Room 365). Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Many of the center's services are also available online through the court's website, NinthCircuit.org. For more information on the Court Resource Center, call **407-836-0474**.



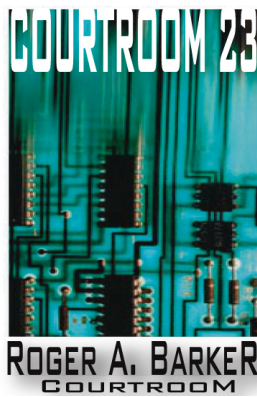
Courthouse Law Academy -- Educating the leaders of tomorrow, the Courthouse Law Academy is an active, hands-on opportunity for students to experience a real courtroom and the dynamics of our judicial process. Hosted by a judge, this mock trial program puts young people in charge of the courtroom where they learn the dynamics of a real trial by taking on roles of prosecutor, defense attorney, clerk, juror and judge to try such cases as the "Cookie Caper" or "Popcorn on the Mind." The Courthouse Law Academy is a sometimes zany, but always fun way to learn about our court system and its important role in the community. Additionally, the program emphasizes the importance of the individual and encourages young people to always do their best. The Courthouse Law Academy is available to all school groups and youth organizations, and programs are tailored for various age groups. The programs and scenarios are free and tailored to specifically fit an organization's needs. Reservations are required and group sizes are limited. For more information or to schedule this fun and educational program in Orange County, call **407-836-0521**.



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Courtroom 23 (The Roger A. Barker Courtroom) --

The Roger A. Barker Courtroom, located on the 23rd floor of the Orange County Courthouse, is a high-tech courtroom that seamlessly integrates the latest in technology, and is one of the most advanced and integrated courtrooms in the world. The project began in March 1997, when staff from the Ninth Circuit traveled to Courtroom 21, in Williamsburg, VA, to tour the preeminent high-tech courtroom. Two years later, after much planning, discussion and hard work, the Ninth Judicial Circuit formally opened its own technologically advanced courtroom – Courtroom 23. The courtroom contains the following key elements: fiber-optic cabling; evidence presentation system; voice-activated video conferencing; Internet and remote broadcast; digital and real-time court reporting; video annotation; videoconferencing; touch screen integration; wireless technology; and flat and plasma screen displays. With annual upgrades, the courtroom continues to mature and stay on the technological edge. Courtroom 23 is open for tours and orientation. If interested, please call **407-836-2380**.



Services, call **407-836-2004**. For information concerning mediation in Osceola County, call **407-742-2451**.

County Mediation: Involves all county civil cases, including small claims, and landlord/tenant actions. In 2009, 25,454 small claims and county civil cases were referred to mediation in Orange and Osceola counties. More than 72% of those cases mediated reached an agreement.

Family Mediation: Consists of mediation in family cases, including divorces, paternity, visitation, parental rights, temporary matters, child support and issues that arise in cases that may have already been before a judge. In 2009, 3,626 family cases were referred to mediation in Orange and Osceola counties. Approximately 68% of those cases mediated reached full or partial agreement.

Juvenile Dependency Mediation: Involves cases with accusations of child abuse, neglect or abandonment. The parent, attorney or guardian ad litem who is assigned to advocate for the child's best interests and the Department of Children and Family Services discuss case plans for reunification or termination of parental rights. In 2009, 111 cases were referred to mediation in Orange and Osceola counties.

Arbitration: A process of dispute resolution in which a neutral third party renders a decision after a hearing at which both parties have an opportunity to be heard. Arbitration may be court ordered (non-binding) or voluntary (binding or non-binding depending on the agreement).

Small Claims Arbitration: A voluntary program for unrepresented parties in small claims cases as an alternative to judicial action. They may choose to go before a panel of three arbitrators to have the case heard. The process is binding on all parties.

Circuit Civil Arbitration: The Ninth Circuit maintains a list of attorneys who are trained and who are willing to serve as arbitrators in court ordered non-binding arbitration in the Ninth Circuit.

Parenting Coordination: This program is administered by Dispute Resolution Services. The goal of the Parenting Coordination Program is to successfully reduce the stress of children in separated/divorcing families by strengthening co-parenting. Parenting Coordinators are certified family mediators who have a background in law and/or mental health. The Parenting Coordinator meets with both parents and children to clarify the parenting issues involved. Their responsibilities include fostering communication and problem-solving skills between parents, teaching appropriate parental interaction in front of the children, refining child contact schedules, mediating parenting disputes, and increasing parenting knowledge (child development, child divorce issues). In 2009, Parenting Coordination conducted approximately 1,400 sessions with high conflict parents. For more information, call **407-836-2116**.

Domestic Violence Court -- The new Domestic Violence Court has dramatically changed the way family violence and other family related cases are heard and processed. In 2009, there were 4,908 domestic violence injunctions filed with the court. Streamlining the way in which these cases are processed ensures more accountability within the overall system, addresses a variety

Dependency Case Coordination Program --

This position, under Court Administration, provides administrative, operational and clerical assistance to the juvenile dependency judges. The Department of Children and Families files a petition to intervene or remove a child from parental custody in instances where there are allegations that a child has been abused, abandoned or neglected. The department may remove the child until the concerns are resolved. When the case begins, the dependency case coordinator assists indigent parents to obtain court appointed counsel and helps expedite the process for the appointment of a guardian ad litem to represent the best interest of the child. Additionally, the case coordinator acts as a liaison among the parties to promote communication and efficiency, and provides any assistance necessary to resolve problems and avoid unnecessary delays. For more information about this program, call **407-836-9560** in Orange County. In Osceola County, a Court Program Specialist for the Unified Family Court handles case processing in order to expedite case progress through the courts. Please call **407-742-2531** for more information.

Dispute Resolution Services --

Mediation is a way to help two parties resolve a dispute through discussions. The mediator meets with both sides to encourage and facilitate resolution. Mediation programs provide litigants with an efficient and satisfying alternative to the traditional process. By reaching a settlement, parties avoid the uncertainty of a trial. Mediation is an important part of conflict resolution in a wide range of disputes in the court system. The circuit



has several programs in place utilizing professional volunteer and contract mediators. In an effort to resolve cases before trial, judges may refer a variety of cases to mediation including county civil, juvenile dependency, domestic relations and some restitution. For information concerning Orange County's Dispute Resolution

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of safety issues, enhances enforcement efforts, and provides judges with the comprehensive information they need to make consistent and informed decisions. Three courtrooms on the 16th floor of the Orange County Courthouse are dedicated to family cases where domestic violence has been reported. Security officials direct petitioners and respondents to separate and secure reception areas. All cases are heard individually. In addition, cases are scheduled in blocks of time throughout the day so parties do not have to spend hours at the courthouse. For more information in Orange County, call **407-836-0579**. In Osceola County, domestic violence cases are handled by the Unified Family Court Judges. Please call **407-742-2531** for more information.

Drug Courts -- The Ninth Judicial Circuit recognizes the effectiveness of drug court for adult and juvenile offenders and operates them in both counties.

Adult Drug Court: The Ninth Circuit Court Orange/Osceola Drug Court Program Office (OCDCPO) was started in 2000. This is a diversionary program created for nonviolent felony drug offenders who have admitted guilt. It provides for identification, evaluation, case management and the placement of substance abusing offenders into treatment services. The drug court judge reviews progress reports and holds biweekly status hearings for participants. Participants who do not comply with the rules appear before the judge for appropriate action (sanctions). In fiscal year 2008-2009 in Orange County, 464 referrals were made to OCDCPO, of which 312 referrals were referred to the treatment provider for treatment services; 168 were admitted to treatment; 133 were court ordered; 27 were unsuccessful; and 59 graduated from the program during this reporting period.

Adult Drug Court: The Ninth Circuit Court Orange/Osceola Drug Court Program Office (OCDCPO) was started in 2000. This is a diversionary program created for nonviolent felony drug offenders who have admitted guilt. It provides for identification, evaluation, case management and the placement of substance abusing offenders into treatment services. The drug court judge reviews progress reports and holds biweekly status hearings for participants. Participants who do not comply with the rules appear before the judge for appropriate action (sanctions). In fiscal year 2008-2009 in Orange County, 464 referrals were made to OCDCPO, of which 312 referrals were referred to the treatment provider for treatment services; 168 were admitted to treatment; 133 were court ordered; 27 were unsuccessful; and 59 graduated from the program during this reporting period. In 2009 in Osceola County, 119 defendants were accepted into the Felony Adult Drug Court Programs. During this period 135 clients were discharged from the program with 91 successfully graduating, this is a successful completion rate of 88%. For information about the Osceola County Adult Drug Court Program, call **407-742-2431**. In Orange County, call **407-836-0501**.

Delinquency Drug Court: When the illegal behavior of juveniles is exacerbated by substance abuse, select delinquency cases are referred to a special docket handled by a designated judge. The juvenile drug court judge maintains close oversight of each case. This program is part of a court initiative that established interagency cooperation

focused on developing a judicial-led treatment program. The four-phase outpatient model includes an aftercare component. Case management personnel make regular school and home visits, and require random urinalysis testing on all participants. The Juvenile Delinquency Drug Court Program was recognized and honored as a "Mentor Court" by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs Drug Courts Program Office. In Orange County, for fiscal year 2008-2009, 71 juveniles were admitted, and 49 were discharged of which, 28 were successful graduates for a 57% successful completion rate. The Drug Court Program Office is currently applying for a SAMHSA grant for expansion of Juvenile Drug Court which will increase the population of the Delinquency Drug Court Program. Osceola County began a Juvenile Drug Court Program in October 2003 thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice. The Juvenile Drug Court in Osceola County is now being overseen by the Juvenile Alternative Sanctions Coordinator. It is currently being funded under the 65 Fund and is under direct supervision of the Family Court Services. In Osceola County, for the year of 2008-2009, 25 juveniles were discharged of which 19 were successful graduates for a 76% successful completion rate. For Delinquency Drug Court in Orange County, call **407-836-9500**. In Osceola County, call **407-742-2518**.

Juvenile Reentry Drug Court: The reentry drug court program identifies youths who will be (or have been) committed to a Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) commitment facility and assists their placement in this program as a condition of release. The juveniles are closely monitored by treatment, DJJ staff and staff from a conditional release program. All parties must attend biweekly hearings before the designated judge to assess their progress. Participants are required to submit to weekly random urinalysis. The Reentry Drug Court was established through a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Court Program Office. The Drug Court Program Office is currently applying for a SAMHSA grant for expansion of Juvenile Drug Court. The grant will offer increased opportunities for the Juvenile Reentry Drug Court population. For more information in Orange County, call **407-836-9500**.

Family/Dependency Drug Court: The Dependency Drug Court program was launched in Orange and Osceola counties with the goal of reunifying families. Dependency Drug Court serves as a single approach to address the problem of drug use by one or both of a child's parents through monitoring progress and compliance. The drug court program coordinator and treatment staff monitor the participant's progress in treatment. Participants submit to random urinalyses, at times, as often as 5 times a week. The participant attends biweekly hearings before the designated judge to assess their progress. In fiscal year 2008-2009, 53 parents were screened for the program and 35 parents were referred to treatment. More than 55 children have been impacted upon while their parents went through the program. In Orange County, call **407-836-9500**. In Osceola County call **407-742-2431**.

Osceola County Misdemeanor Drug Court: This program started in 2007 as a new post plea diversionary program for non-violent misdemeanor drug offenders. In 2009 a pre-trial program was added. It provides evaluation, case management, and treatment for offenders. The client's progress is reviewed on a biweekly basis by the Judge and team members. Clients who are compliant may receive an adjudication withheld upon successful completion



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of the program. In 2009 in Osceola County, 6 defendants were accepted into Osceola's Misdemeanor Adult Drug Court Programs. During this period 12 clients were discharged from the program with 8 successfully graduating – a successful completion rate of 50%. For more information, call 407-742-2431.

Facilities Support Services -- The Office of Court Administration works closely with the various agencies responsible for courthouse facilities by assisting and advising them on issues regarding building repair, growth, and needed improvements. This includes all support services from copiers, telecommunications and video equipment to air conditioning, elevators and custodial needs. Court Administration implemented an emergency notification call-in system in 2004. The goal of this system was to provide current information to all judges, judicial assistants and employees during emergencies. Both Orange and Osceola counties used the system successfully during three major hurricanes in 2004. Facilities Support Services also handles the training of staff in emergency evacuation procedures. For assistance in Orange, call 407-836-2244. In Osceola, call 407-742-2418.



Family Court Case Management -- Family Court Case Management manages cases for parties who have filed for a divorce or name change and have chosen not to hire an attorney. The department offers information on mandatory parenting classes and acts as a liaison between social service agencies and the court. Case management duties include reviewing court files and overseeing cases to a final hearing, referring cases to mediation, scheduling final hearings, and preparing and processing Income Deduction Orders. In Orange County, Family Court Services began operating in February 1995. The intake unit in Osceola County opened in May 1996. In 2009, there were 5,395 divorce filings in Orange County. 3,550 (66%) of those filings were pro se (self represented) cases and were case managed by Family Court Services. In 2009 filings by pro se litigants were up 4% from the previous year. In Osceola County, there were a total of 1,713 pro se filings in 2009 which represents 65% of the total domestic cases. The unit reviewed a total of 8,069 files composed of new, re-opened, and closed cases. In addition, the unit monitored compliance with court orders and referred 705 cases to mediation. It also assisted 7,961 litigants on a walk-in basis and answered 2,522 phone calls to inform them about the process and status of their open case. To learn more about the unit in Osceola County, call 407-742-2474. In Orange County, call 407-836-6054.



Family Court Programs Division -- In Osceola County, this division oversees various programs/units, such as: Court Case Management Unit, Unified Family Court Unit, Teen Court Program, Juvenile Drug Court Program, Alternative Sanctions Program, Guardianship, Visitation Center, Injunction Processing Unit, Dispute Resolution Services and Guardianship Case Management. These programs, with the exception of Dispute Resolution Services, are housed on the third floor of the courthouse, and are serviced by

a common reception area which is handled by a receptionist who provided assistance to 19,345 litigants on a walk-in basis in 2009. For more information, contact 407-742-2412.

Family Ties -- The concept for the Family Ties Program grew out of a concern for the safety of children in families embroiled in custody disputes. Family Ties is a court-operated, visitation/monitored exchange program that provides parent-child contact in a friendly environment with assurance for the child's safety. Family Ties opened in September 1997. Since its inception, the program has 10,664 completed visits and 4,505 completed exchanges. More than 1,561 families have been through the program and 2,396 children have received services. Family Ties allows children to spend time with their non-custodial parent in a pleasant, safe atmosphere. The program also provides monitored exchange services for families that need assistance moving children safely from one parent to the other. Participation in Family Ties requires a court order. For information, call 407-836-0426. In Osceola County, this service is being provided by the Children Visitation Center. Please call 407-742-2467 for more information.



Fiscal Services -- This department is responsible for all fiscal activities for the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court, including budgeting, revenue analysis, purchasing and travel. This involves evaluating revenues and monitoring expenditures from diverse funding sources, including Orange and Osceola counties and the State of Florida. In Orange County, call 407-836-2234. In Osceola County, call 407-742-2411.

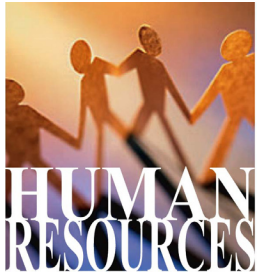


Guardianship Monitor Program -- The Guardianship Monitor Program was established in Orange County to ensure that all court-appointed guardians comply with Florida law by meeting filing deadlines and providing the appropriate level of personal and/or financial care to their wards. The court currently employs one full-time Court Monitor for this purpose. The Court Monitor investigates allegations of abuse, neglect and/or exploitation of all wards or the misappropriation of wards' assets and provides a written report to the court. The Court Monitor also makes certain guardians, including professional guardians are qualified to serve by conducting criminal history and credit checks. If a member of the community suspects that a disabled or incapacitated person may be or has been mistreated or fear that that person's assets may be or have been misappropriated, he or she may make a report by calling the newly established Guardianship Action-Line at 407-836-0503. The individual need not provide his or her name nor identify him or herself in any way. All that is needed is enough information to locate the person in need of protection. In 2009 the Court Monitor completed 39 in-depth investigations involving abuse, neglect and/or exploitation and alerted the Court of more than a 120 guardian applicants with questionable credit or criminal histories. The in-depth investigations resulted in the recoveries of misappropriated funds in excess of \$200,000, the arrests of two guardians, arrangements for restitution by two additional guardians

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and the locating of (and bringing into compliance) in excess of 20 guardians. In Osceola County, guardianship cases are reviewed by the case manager/Court Monitor who provides a written report to the court after extensive research. The case manager reviewed and prepared 290 case manager status reports in 2007-2008. To learn more about the unit in Osceola County, call **407-742-2412**. For information in Orange County, please call **407-836-6058**.

Human Resources Department -- This department is responsible for personnel administration, including employment, classification and pay, employee benefits, employee relations, employee records, and training and development. In addition, the HR Department supervises the court's volunteer program. Human Resources is responsible for the Circuit's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and for the intake and investigation of discrimination complaints filed under the Circuit's Civil Rights Complaint Procedure. For Human Resources in Orange County, call **407-836-2261**. In Osceola County, call **407-742-2418**. Applications for employment are available at www.ninthcircuit.org.



Injunction Processing Unit (Osceola) -- The Injunction Processing Unit, formerly known as the Victim Assistance Program, provides assistance to all victims of crime--including but not limited to, victims of domestic violence--as they proceed through the criminal justice system, particularly with the injunction for protection process. It is funded by the Osceola Clerk of the Court and managed by Court Administration. It is a walk-in service; no appointment, referrals or legal representation is required. Regular business hours are Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Over the past year, the Injunction Processing Unit was able to serve 6,745 litigants seeking information about protection orders and/or returning for additional services. The Unit assisted 1,475 litigants file petitions for order for protection and 218 of those litigants were assisted after business hours, weekends and/or holidays. In addition, the Unit provided over 14,888 referrals and information regarding additional community resources. To learn more, call **407-742-2464**.

Inside the Courts -- Celebrating its 12th year, Inside the Courts has become a premier program of judicial outreach for the Ninth Circuit and now the State of Florida. The 4-part educational series taught by a team of judges is uniquely designed to allow citizens to learn about the court and interact with the judges in an informal setting. Topics presented include criminal and civil courts, probate and mental health, domestic, juvenile, traffic, and collections court, as well as mediation and court interpreting. Presentations are designed to be dynamic, with audience participation, as well as plenty of opportunity for audience questions. In 2009, 228 citizens registered for the program and 98 received certificates of completion from the court for attending 3 or more sessions. The program was featured in the winter 2009 issue of Full Court Press, the official newsletter of the Florida State Courts as a model program for court-community



relationship building. As a result, the concept is being adopted by other circuits statewide. Inside the Courts is free to the general public and held annually. Sessions are produced for broadcast and air regularly on Orange County's government channel, Orange TV. For more information or to register for the next program, call **407-836-0517**.

Internships -- The Ninth Judicial Circuit in Osceola County provides internships to college students attending our local community colleges and universities. We offer opportunities for students to get a true hands-on experience in their area of interest, including our Injunction Processing Unit, Children's Visitation Center, and Family Court. The program coordinators involved in our internship program take a genuine interest in providing our interns with a meaningful learning experience and are committed to the success of each student. For information, call **407-742-2418**.

Judicial Ride-Along Program -- The Ninth Judicial Circuit offers local and state elected officials the opportunity to experience first hand, the work of the judiciary and the important role our courts play within the community. Tailored to needs of the visiting official, the program allows the visitor to sit along-side a judge during court proceedings to observe the judicial process directly and to better understand the complexity and variety of cases that come before the court. The concept provides community leaders with insight into the operations of the courts and opens lines of dialogue between leaders and the court on matters of mutual concern. The Judicial Ride-Along Program was recently featured as a program for court-community relationship building in the winter 2009 issue of Full Court Press, the official newsletter of the Florida State Courts. For more information, call **407-836-2047**.



Jury Services -- The Jury Management Program of the Ninth Judicial Circuit was initiated in October of 1990, in response to an administrative order of the Florida Supreme Court to efficiently manage the time and fiscal resources dedicated to the management of jurors. Through automation and effective management, jurors are utilized more fully, resulting in less inconvenience to citizens because fewer people are now summoned for jury service. Prospective jurors called to service can submit an acceptable excuse or request a postponement by sending an email via the court's Internet website. Within the state of Florida, prospective jurors are randomly summoned from a database provided by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. This method of jury selection offers a consistent and representative pool of prospective jurors from those with state issued driver licenses or identification cards. Jurors are required to serve one day or the length of one trial. They are compensated at the rate of \$15 per day for the first three days if they are not paid by their employers, are unemployed or self-employed. Payment increases to \$30 per day for the fourth and any subsequent days. Prospective jurors report to the jury assembly room before they are assigned



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to a case. In Orange County, jurors can take advantage of free bus passage on any existing Lynx Bus route for transportation to and from jury service. In order to prepare for jury service, Orange TV airs a video daily, produced by Court Administration, with juror information.

In addition, an orientation video is shown every morning at both the Orange and Osceola County Courthouses. The NinthCircuit.org website allows prospective jurors to check after 5 p.m. for the next day's reporting instructions.

In Orange County, pagers are available to alert prospective jurors who need to leave the courthouse for a few minutes. Storage lockers allow jurors to lock their personal effects while at lunch. There are also vending machines, pay phones, board games and reading materials to create a more comfortable environment. The jury assembly room also has cable TV and wireless internet access. The Cyber Café allows visitors the chance to browse the Internet or play computer games on any one of twenty-two computers. Books and magazines are donated for jurors to read/take home as they choose. In Orange County, free childcare is offered for jurors' children through A Place for Children. Reservations for this service are required.

In Osceola County, the spacious jury assembly area is also equipped with amenities including vending machines, courtesy phones, and complimentary coffee and tea service, microwave and refrigerator. A twelve computer Cyber Café allows jurors to browse the Internet or play computer games. The Cyber Café also contains a fax machine and laptop connections, as well as wireless capability for juror use. Reading materials, televisions, board games, and "quiet rooms" make the jurors' experiences more enjoyable. Storage lockers are available free of charge to secure personal items while at lunch or in a courtroom. A smoking area is also provided. For additional information about Jury Services in Orange County, call **407-836-2206**. In Osceola County, call **407-742-2423**.

Law Student Internships -- Each year, the court matches a limited number of law school students with judges for a judicial internship for one semester or summer. Those selected work closely with the judges, observe court proceedings and perform legal research and writing for their assigned judge or group of judges. The internships are volunteer positions (unpaid). Students in their second or third year of law school are preferred, and the interns are required to commit to a minimum of ten hours per week. Interns are subject to a criminal background check. If you are interested in a law student internship, please email a cover letter which includes your approximate start and end dates and approximate hours per week available to work to ctadds1@ocnjcc.org. Also, attach a résumé, short writing sample, and a transcript of your law school grades. For further information, contact **407-836-0411**.



Magistrates -- The magistrate program was created to assist the court system whereby magistrates preside over matters involving civil disputes, domestic relations, juvenile dependency and truancy, and mental health issues. The Ninth Judicial Circuit has six magistrates. One

magistrate presides over circuit civil and domestic relations matters in Orange County; four magistrates preside over domestic relations and mental health matters - three are assigned to Orange County and one to Osceola County; and one magistrate presides over juvenile and truancy matters in Orange County. The magistrates are attorneys who are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Chief Judge. They preside over several thousand cases each year. For more information please contact the magistrate division administrative offices at **407-836-2024**.



Media Relations -- It is the Ninth Judicial Circuit's goal to meet the informational needs of the media and public, ensure the rights of litigants to fair court proceedings and guarantee the operational integrity of the courts. Initial appearances and arraignments are broadcast daily on the Court's website.

Whenever possible, judicial orders, jury instructions and relevant court documents are made available to the media in a timely manner. Media should visit the Court's website to learn more about the policies and procedures for interaction between the media and the Court. The Circuit hosts media workshops to assist journalists in understanding the programs and services offered by the Court. These workshops provide media representatives the opportunity to talk to the judiciary about topics of concern. Information is provided daily to news media about specific cases, new projects and innovations in the judicial system, and the court's community outreach efforts. For more information, call **407-836-2047** or email ctadkl1@ocnjcc.org.

Mental Health Court (Osceola) --

Mental Health Court, which began in Osceola County in 2000, is a diversionary program aimed at helping mentally challenged individuals arrested for non-violent misdemeanor or felony offenses who need treatment rather than incarceration. The Mental Health Court judge is responsible for administering mental health court and coordinating the role of the judiciary with the functions of the various agencies and providers. In Osceola County call **407-742-2411**.



Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program --

The Neighborhood Restorative Justice (NRJ) Program is a diversionary program for first time juvenile offenders. Restorative justice diverts less serious crime from the juvenile court system while empowering victims and the community with a key role in the justice process. The program requires juveniles to take responsibility for their crimes and make reparations. At the same time, the program builds on the offenders' strengths and assets to make them productive citizens. To be eligible, the juvenile must first admit guilt to the charges and accept responsibility for the harm caused. A conference is scheduled in the community where the offender lives with a Neighborhood Accountability Board, comprised of trained volunteers from the community, the victim, offender, offender's parent(s) or guardian(s) and



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any community member affected by the crime. The parties discuss and develop appropriate sanctions for the juvenile. If victim restitution is owed, full payment is required to successfully complete the program. A Sanctions Coordinator, who is a law enforcement officer from the community, monitors the juveniles. The juveniles are required to check in once a week with their assigned Sanctions Coordinator. They are also placed on a Behavior Contract which assigns curfews, makes school attendance mandatory (they cannot receive any referrals, suspensions or expulsions) and prohibits the use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs. If the program is completed, the original charge is dismissed. If not, the case is returned to the state attorney for prosecution in court. This program has been successful through partnerships with the police departments of Apopka, Ocoee, Winter Garden, Eatonville, Maitland and the Orange County Sheriff's Office. Referrals for the Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program are made at the discretion of the Juvenile States Attorney's Office of the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court. In 2009, 151 juveniles completed the NRJ Program with the help of the over 50 committed volunteers and police officers who collectively volunteered 6,844 hours of time. Over \$4,200 of restitution was collected and paid to the victims of juvenile crime in Orange County through the NRJ Program. The Juveniles who completed the NRJ Program in 2009 performed over 7,336 hours of Community Service in their respective communities. For information, call 407-836-9553.

Ninth Circuit Website -- The Ninth Judicial Circuit's website is an award winning, educational, and interactive site, providing a wealth of information on the judiciary and the courts. The site continues to evolve to meet the needs of users since a major upgrade was unveiled in October of 2007. The new design offers a dramatically different look and approach that provides portals configured for specific high volume user groups and takes advantage of the latest in web and video streaming technology. The website content includes, but is not limited to, the following information:



- Administrative Orders
- Annual Reports
- Appellate Opinions
- Audio/Visual Services
- Community Relations
- Court Dockets
- Court Forms
- Court History
- Court Holidays
- Court Reporters
- Court Resource Center
- Courtroom 23
- Directions to the Courthouses
- Divisions
- Employment Opportunities
- Family Court Case Management
- Hearing Schedule
- Inside the Courts
- Judicial Profiles
- Jury Services
- Live Broadcast
- Podcasts

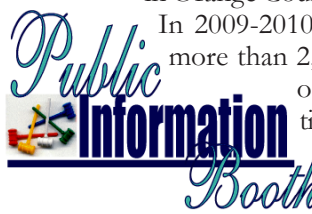
- Press Releases
- Speakers Bureau
- Statistics
- Talking Brochures
- Technology Services
- Tours
- Videos

NinthCircuit.org received millions of hits each year with over 100,000 daily inquiries. The Court's website is developed and maintained by the staff of the Ninth Judicial Circuit. Please visit the site at www.NinthCircuit.org.

Ninth In a Nutshell from the JAs -- The Judicial Assistants of the Ninth Circuit use this program to forge an information link between local law offices and the judiciary. Judicial Assistants provide a procedural manual with helpful information about the Circuit, including division assignments, telephone numbers, location of chambers, instructions for the Judicial Automated Calendaring System (JACS), court preferences for each judge and other helpful hints. Order forms for the manuals are available on the court's website in the attorney's section under information then court forms. For more information, call 407-836-2350.

Public Information Booth -- The Orange and Osceola Courthouses, as well as the Orange County Juvenile Justice Center, have Public Information booths. In Orange County, the booth is located in the courthouse rotunda and has been in operation since December 1998. At the Thomas S. Kirk Juvenile Justice Center and at the Osceola County Courthouse, the Public Information Booth is located in the main lobby. Volunteers are recruited and managed by Court Administration to staff the booths, providing assistance and directions to litigants, attorneys and general public at these facilities. Volunteers provide a valuable service to the court, the county and to the public. Since the program began, information booth volunteers in Orange County have logged more than 36,517 hours.

In 2009-2010, volunteers in Orange County logged more than 2,952 hours which represented a savings of more than \$44,000.00. In that same time period, information booth volunteers in Osceola County logged 415 hours which represented a savings of more than \$6,000 last year.



Sanctioned to Read -- The Ninth Judicial Circuit's Sanctioned to Read program is devoted to improving the reading skills and self-confidence of juveniles who are court-ordered or court referred into the program. Sanctioned to Read was created in August 2003 to achieve literacy for students through a 40-hour tutoring program that is highly individualized and motivational. The program also incorporates diagnostic and prescriptive elements. It is guaranteed to increase a student's reading ability at least one grade level. Students are tutored in various skills, including: oral (receptive) vocabulary, phonics, written vocabulary, written comprehension, oral reading, and language skills. The program, by design, not only improves reading skills required for language arts classes, but also helps



Ninth Judicial Circuit Court
Orange County Teen Court

Programs & Services

students in other academic areas where reading comprehension is important, such as social studies and science. When the students' reading skills improve, their self-confidence and self-esteem also improve. In Orange County 180 students have completed the entire reading program with an average grade increase of 3.12 in comprehension and vocabulary, and .82 age level increase in oral/receptive vocabulary. There was also a grade level increase of 3.35 in written language skills, such as grammar. In Osceola, 32 students benefited from this program which commenced in 2009 thanks to a BYRNE/JAG Grant. It is also supervised under the Alternative Sanctions Program. For more information on the Osceola Program, call 407-742-2518. In Orange County, call 407-836-9313.



SPEAKERS BUREAU

Speakers Bureau -- As part of the Ninth Judicial Circuit's community outreach efforts, a Speakers Bureau was established to make the courts user-friendly, and to enhance the public's perception and understanding of the court's role in the community. Members of the judiciary and Court Administration staff are available to speak to schools and community groups on topics of interest. The courts have a major influence on

society and daily life, and the judiciary can provide insight into how civil and criminal cases proceed through the court system and how conflicts are resolved. Judges can speak on topics such as alternative dispute resolution, landlord/tenant issues, small claims, court technology, family law, juvenile justice system, jury service, and the civil and criminal justice system. To request a speaker, call 407-836-0471.

Staff Attorney Department -- Staff attorneys provide integral support to the judiciary by researching complex legal questions on pre-trial, trial and post-trial issues which arise in all divisions of the court. They also assist the judges with a variety of other matters, such as appeals, writs, post conviction motions, and capital cases. They prepare written memoranda in some cases and in others, report directly to the judges, either in person or via e-mail. They regularly draft proposed orders and appellate opinions for the judges' review and approval. The staff attorney program greatly increases the efficiency of court operations by providing the judges more time to devote to hearings and trials and by ensuring that difficult questions of law are thoroughly researched. In 2009, the staff attorneys researched and prepared memoranda/proposed orders in 250 appellate cases, 650 post conviction matters and countless other cases in all areas of the law.



Staff Attorneys

Technology Services -- The Department of Technology Services provides comprehensive computer support for the court's 65 judges, 65 judicial assistants and 207 employees housed in seven court facilities that are located throughout the Ninth Judicial Circuit. Services include the following:

- Application development
- Audio/visual design, maintenance and support
- Computer maintenance and support



TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

- Courtroom technology
- Database administration
- Digital court reporting
- Evidence presentation systems
- Fiber installation
- Internet maintenance and support
- Public wireless Internet access
- Systems administration
- Training
- Video conference
- Web page development, maintenance and support

To reach Technology Services please call 407-836-6010 for Orange County and/or 407-742-2530 for Osceola County.

Teen Court -- Teen Court is a diversionary program for first-time juvenile offenders who are tried and sentenced by their peers.



Teen Court's purpose is to divert less serious cases away from the more formal juvenile court. Teen Court is based on the premise that youthful offenders will more readily accept responsibility for their actions when judged and sentenced by teens their own age. Teenage volunteers, who as

prosecutors, defense attorneys, deputies, the clerk and jurors, run the program. The judge is the only adult participant in the proceedings. To be eligible for Teen Court, participants must admit guilt to their non-violent misdemeanor or felony charges. The jury determines an appropriate sentence, which may include community service, a jail tour, drug testing, abiding by a curfew, serving on a Teen Court jury, making restitution, writing a report, or verbal or written apologies to victims or parents. If the sentence is completed, the original charge is dismissed. If not, the case is turned over to Juvenile Court. Judges and attorneys volunteer time to preside over the hearings. Both Orange and Osceola counties offer a free 40-hour reading improvement course for youth called Sanctioned to Read. We make referrals to impulse control and anger management classes. The Orange County program handled 1,395 criminal cases in 2008-2009 and has 265 teen volunteers. The Osceola County Program handled 681 criminal cases in 2008-2009, and its adult/teen volunteers donated a total of 4,553 hours of community service. Volunteers in Orange County Teen Court earn one-half a high school credit for working 75 hours in a school year and qualify for the Thomas S. Kirk Teen Court Scholarship. For Orange County, call 407-836-9517 or e-mail at ctaddm1@ocnjcc.org. In Osceola County, call 407-742-2465 or email at ctadam1@ocnjcc.org.

Tours -- Court Administration provides **C O U R T**

organized tours of the Orange and Osceola county courthouses to schools, community organizations and the general public. A written tour guide provides a floor-by-floor directory. The court also offers virtual tours of the Orange County Courthouse, via its website. Tour stops generally include the rotunda, the jury assembly room, courtrooms, judicial chambers, the judicial conference room and the computer room. The highlight of the tour is a stop in the court's high-tech courtroom. To take a virtual tour, simply visit



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www.ninthcircuit.org and select Virtual Tours. With mouse in hand, a virtual courthouse visitor can traverse the complex from a remote location without ever leaving his or her desk. To schedule a tour, please visit the court's website and complete an online request form. For additional information regarding tours of the Orange County Courthouses, call **407-836-2380**. For additional information regarding tours of the Osceola County Courthouse, please call **407-742-2413**.



Town Hall Meetings -- Town Hall meetings provide an opportunity for judges and citizens to meet and openly discuss concerns and issues regarding our judicial system. The meetings are generally held at a church or community center, and typically target a specific section of the community. These events not only offer citizens an opportunity to meet the judges

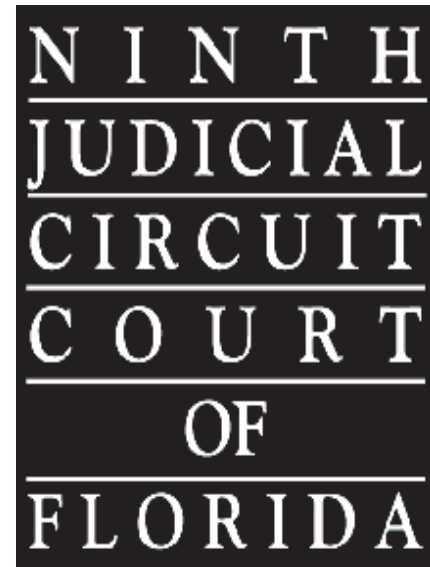
and learn about our judicial system, they also serve as a forum for judges to better understand the needs of the community and the perceptions people have of the courts. Town hall agendas usually include panel discussions, question and answer sessions, a meet and greet opportunity, and a "get to know your legal community fair," with booths from local community assistance and legal organizations. For information on upcoming Town Hall Meetings, call **407-836-0517**.

Truancy Court -- In July of 2004, the Florida Legislature provided funding for a statewide magistrate system. Following implementation of a Magistrate Division in the Ninth Circuit, a general magistrate was assigned to assist the circuit judges sitting in the Juvenile Division of the court. In the Ninth Circuit, one responsibility of this general magistrate is to conduct Truancy Court each Wednesday during normal business hours at the Thomas S. Kirk Juvenile Justice Center. In 2009 the general magistrate handled 109 new truancy cases. An additional program designed to focus on schools in our community which have the highest truancy rates, is held on Thursday evening beginning at 4:30 p.m. and is presided over by a special magistrate. This is referred to as Community-Based Truancy Court (CBTC). CBTC handled 195 new cases in 2009. Case management for both Truancy Courts is provided by two case managers who are supervised by the Juvenile Justice Coordinator, under Court Administration. Both the daytime and evening Truancy Courts provide students and their families with information and directions for services, as well as timely intervention. Sanctions can be imposed for noncompliance, and under certain circumstances cases can be referred to a Judge. For information on Truancy Courts, call Juvenile Court Administration at **407-836-7590** press "2" then press "4".



week basis. The goal is to have all companion cases linked together and assigned to one judge in order for the presiding judge to have a complete overview of all cases pertaining to an entire family. The UFC also has case managers to monitor court orders and the parties' compliance. Additionally, case managers research approximately 14,400 cases per year and reassign/notify the presiding judge of any and all open cases involving the parties. The case managers also provide litigants with information of community resources available to them. For more information, call **407-742-2531**.

Volunteer Program -- The Ninth Judicial Circuit's Volunteer Program is committed to promoting community awareness of and involvement in, the judicial system. The Court acknowledges the value of community support and its role in an effective and fair judicial system. Court volunteers save taxpayers thousands of dollars each year through their service. Court volunteers work in the information booths at the courthouses, as well as various departments in Orange and Osceola counties. Volunteers may also assist with numerous court programs, such as Teen Court, the Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program, and mediation programs. To volunteer in Orange County call **407-836-2261** and in Osceola County call **407-742-2418**.



For more information about the Ninth Judicial Circuit, please visit our award-winning web site at NinthCircuit.org

Unified Family Court (Osceola) -- The Unified Family Court (UFC) utilizes a fully integrated comprehensive approach in handling all cases involving children, families and victims of domestic violence while simultaneously resolving family disputes in a fair, timely, efficient and cost-effective manner. Since January 2006, the UFC has two judges assigned to handle all family and juvenile cases in a mirror image procedure and on an alternating



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