



STATE OF FLORIDA  
NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

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**STEFANIA C. JANCEWICZ**  
Osceola County Judge

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Judicial Assistant

**OSCEOLA COUNTY CIVIL DIVISION 60-G, COURTROOM 4B**

Courtroom Guidelines, Procedures and Expectations (*Effective 01/02/2026*)

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IN ORDER TO ASSIST COUNSEL, THE LITIGANTS AND THE COURT, THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES<sup>1</sup>, PROCEDURES, PRACTICES AND EXPECTATIONS ARE HEREBY ADOPTED FOR THE COUNTY CIVIL DIVISON NUMBER 60-G, IN OSCEOLA COUNTY, FLORIDA WHEN PRACTICING BEFORE JUDGE STEFANIA C. JANCEWICZ.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

***\*\*\*The Judicial Assistant and the Clerk's office cannot and will not give legal advice\*\*\****

### **Contact Information for Judge's Office/Judicial Assistant:**

The division e-mail is [60osceola@ninthcircuit.org](mailto:60osceola@ninthcircuit.org). Please use this e-mail when:

1. requesting hearing time (*after* coordinating an available date using [aiCalendar](#)) or cancelling a hearing;
2. requesting general information;
3. forwarding a copy of notice for trial;
4. submitting a proposed order (*note:* the proposed order must be a Word document, and the motion **must** be e-filed and either showing as docketed by the Clerk prior to submission or be attached to the motion with proof that it has been filed—which would be the e receipt of filing);

### **Contact Information for Clerk's Office:**

Please be advised that the Clerk's Office is a separate agency from the Ninth Circuit and Judge's office, and the Judicial Assistant cannot assist with duties that should be handled by the Clerk's office. For information pertaining to the Clerk's Office, please visit their website at: <https://osceolaclerk.com/>.

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<sup>1</sup>The above standards, procedures, practices and guidelines are minimum standards. All counsel are presumed to be familiar with and are expected to abide by the *Rules Regulating The Florida Bar*, and the *Guidelines for Professional Conduct* promulgated by the Trial Lawyers Section of The Florida Bar and adopted by the Conference of Circuit Judges. Copies of each of these documents may be obtained from The Florida Bar and/or are available on-line on its website <http://www.floridabar.org>. In addition, counsel must be aware of the *Ninth Judicial Circuit Courtroom Decorum Policy* promulgated on February 11, 2003. (See <http://www.ninthcircuit.org> [For Attorneys/Information/Rules & Policies/Courtroom Decorum Policy](#).)

This Court is held to the additional standards set forth in Code of Judicial Conduct and the Principles of Professionalism for Judges.

## **CASE MANAGEMENT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER**

All parties are expected to be familiar with and strictly comply with the requirements of the Ninth Circuit Administrative Order No. 2021-04-03. If the Parties fail to comply with the requirement to timely file a CMO, the Court reserves the right to enter an appropriate Order Nunc Pro Tunc to date of filing or any other date thereafter the Court deems equitable and just.

First Party Insurance Cases must also comply with the Ninth Circuit Administrative Order 2009-12-03.

### **SUBMISSION OF PROPOSED ORDERS**

The Judge is only aware of filings and motions if/when the Division is made aware. Therefore, for any motions which do not require a hearing, proposed orders may be submitted for the Judge's consideration once the motion is shown as visibly docketed in Benchmark. Unless provided to the Court during a hearing, all proposed orders **must** be submitted to the Division email address ([60osceola@ninthcircuit.org](mailto:60osceola@ninthcircuit.org)). Any submissions via other email address and/or the U.S. Mail will be summarily rejected.

Submissions to Division 60 must state: the Case Number including the suffix (*i.e.*, EV, CF, CL, SP, etc.) in the beginning of the Subject Line of the email; the name or type of proposed order (*i.e.*, "order on motion to continue"); and the case name. If your submission is time sensitive, urgent, or the Judge has indicated she is waiting for it, please be sure to flag the importance as high and state in the subject line. For example:

2025 CC 000000 EV – URGENT Final Judgment for Possession – Smith v. Jones.

The proposed order **must** be a Word document, list the full case caption and the subject and ruling of the court, *i.e.* *"Order Granting Plaintiff's Motion for Partial Summary Judgment on Liability."* See Fla.R.Civ.P. 1.100(c)(2). All submissions should be circulated to opposing counsel and the Court must be notified if opposing counsel agrees with the content and the form of the proposed order. Opposing counsel must advise the Court of any objection to the proposed order. If parties are unable to agree on the form and content of the order, the objecting party must provide specific objections by e-mail. **When saving the Order, use the following format: Case Number-Title of Order, ie. "2026-CC-1015—Final Judgment."**

The Certificate of Service must state the name and e-mail for the parties being served via E-Portal Service and the full mailing address for parties who are not participating in the E-Portal Service.

If a hearing on a filed motion has been scheduled, do not submit a proposed order prior to the hearing unless it is an agreed order which resolves the motion. Such an agreed order must state the hearing is cancelled and the submitting email must also alert the Division the entry of the order will cancel the hearing.

The Court will strive to issue orders and rulings in a timely manner. Should you wish to follow up on a submission, DO NOT RESUBMIT THE PROPOSED ORDER. Please send an email to the Division no sooner than ten (10) business days to inquire as to the status of the order. Duplicate submissions only serve to further delay the Court's review of proposed submissions.

## **HEARINGS**

To obtain hearing times, access the [aiCalendar](#) from the Ninth Circuit Website, Osceola County, Division 60-G. Hearing times are listed in blocks of fifteen (15) minute increments. To schedule hearings longer than 15 minutes you may stack, consecutive increments – (30) minute hearing would be two (15) minute increments i.e., 10:00 and 10:15.

After the required “meet and confer” and after coordinating hearing time(s) with opposing counsel or *self-represented* litigants, please contact the Division by EMAIL with the agreed upon date/time. Be sure include all required information by Division 60 as listed on [aiCalendar](#):

**\*\*\*In the Subject Line:**

HEARING REQUEST – CASE NUMBER – CASE NAME

**\*\*\*In the Body of the Email:**

Coordinated or Unilateral:

Case No.:

Full Case Style:

Motion(s):

Plaintiff Attorney (if none, list *pro se*):

Defendant Attorney (if none, list *pro se*):

DATE/TIME COORDINATED:

Amount of time requested:

Conferral Date (for all motions filed prior to 01/01/25):

If Summary Judgment, does this hearing date comply with Rule 1.510(6)?

**\*\*\*If your request is missing any of the above information, it will not be confirmed.**

Once the date/time is confirmed by the Judicial Assistant, the requesting party must prepare and file the Notice of Hearing with the Clerk of Court within three (3) business days of the confirmation and provide a courtesy copy to the Judicial Assistant via Division email no later than two weeks prior to the hearing.

For the convenience of everyone, the following rules apply to the setting and handling of hearings:

**1. Conferrals:**

For motions filed prior to January 1, 2025, the parties must confer *prior* to requesting a hearing and must expressly state the date of the conferral in the hearing request. All motions filed in County Civil cases on or after January 1, 2025, must comply with Fla.R.Civ.P. 1.202 and parties are encouraged to have another conversation prior to all hearings in a good-faith effort to resolve the issues raised in the motion.

**2. Setting of hearings:**

Hearings time(s) must be cleared with opposing counsel or *self-represented* parties. Good faith cooperation is expected from counsel, their support staff, and *self-represented* litigants.

**3. Cooperation of counsel/parties:**

The requesting party may request to unilaterally set a hearing should opposing counsel, their staff or *self-represented* litigants fail to respond **within three (3) business days** or refuse to cooperate or respond. The requesting party must provide **at least a two-weeks' notice** to the opposing counsel/party who failed to cooperate or respond and the difficulty should be specifically set forth either in the motion or in the notice of hearing.

Additional motions shall not be “piggy-backed” by cross-notice unless the movant first confirms with opposing counsel **and the Judge’s Judicial Assistant** that sufficient additional time can be reserved in which to hear them. **Please note that only the party setting a hearing may cancel the hearing and a notice of cancellation is required to be filed with the clerk (and a courtesy copy provided to the Division Email) before the hearing will be cancelled.**

**4. Video Hearings:**

Requests for remote hearings will be considered by motion on a case-by-case basis, and **such motion must be filed at least ten (10) business days prior to the hearing.** A proposed order on the motion (Word format) must be submitted to the Division email as soon as the motion has been docketed by the Clerk’s office for it to be considered by the Court. The submission email should clearly state that it is a request for video hearing and the date/time of the hearing. **Remote requests are not permitted for Non-Jury Trials, for evidentiary hearings or for any hearings that will require more than 30 minutes to be heard.**

**5. Emergency Hearings:**

If an emergency situation arises, counsel may request a hearing be set on short notice. The body of the motion must contain a detailed explanation of the circumstances constituting the emergency as well as the substance of the motion. The motion must be filed with the Clerk and a copy e-mailed to the Division before a hearing will be set. The Court will review the motion and if it is deemed an emergency, the Judicial Assistant will contact counsel to set the hearing.

**6. Discovery Motions and Motions to Compel:**

The mere filing of a Motion is insufficient. All motions upon which a party seeks relief or ruling must be “called up” for hearing to bring the matter properly before the Court (unless the matter is agreed upon by the Parties or the Court deems a hearing unnecessary). All Discovery motions, including any Motion to Compel, must comply with the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure to include, but is not limited to, a certification of a good faith attempt to resolve that matter without court action. See Fla.R.Civ.P 1.380(a) (2). If no response or objection has been filed to initial Supreme Court approved discovery requests, the moving party may submit a proposed order (in Word Format) with the Motion. If, after review, the Court determines a hearing is necessary, the Judicial Assistant will advise accordingly.

**7. Motions for Protective Orders:**

The filing of a Motion for Protective Order, without presenting it to the Court, is insufficient. The Court will make itself available for hearings on said motions as soon as possible where the motion could not have been filed and heard in the due course of discovery.

**8. Motions in Limine (MIL):**

MIL may not be scheduled for a hearing unless they contain a certification of a good faith attempt (as to each item) to resolve the matter without court action. Notices of hearing on MIL must specifically identify the specific issues which remain in controversy after counsel has conferred. **MIL will not be heard at trial.** Motions in Limine must be filed and disposed of prior to pre-trial conference (unless another order directs otherwise).

**9. Legal Memorandum and Citations:**

Any legal memorandums or briefs, along with hard copies of the significant cited authorities, **shall be provided to the Court and copies to opposing counsel at least (3) business days before the hearing.** The Court will attempt to review the motion and the memorandums and read the cases cited therein prior to the hearing so that an immediate ruling may be rendered. Highlighting pertinent sections of case law is appreciated. *Brevity is also appreciated.* Case law and Memorandums provided to the Court during the hearing may not be considered. **The Court, on occasion, may rule on motions without a hearing.**

**10. Limitation on Hearings:**

All hearings related to discovery or trial matters must be filed and heard prior to the pre-trial date. NO HEARINGS DIRECTED TOWARDS MATTERS INVOLVING THE TRIAL WILL BE HEARD DURING THE ACTUAL TRIAL PERIOD.

**11. Orders and Rulings of the Court:**

If counsel is/are asked to prepare an order, the order **shall be** drafted and circulated within 3 working days and must be submitted **to the Court** within 7 days of the hearing, with a copy to opposing counsel. **All proposed orders following a hearing should state in the subject line “AFTER HEARING”.** The Court will strive to issue orders and rulings in a timely manner. If it is necessary to take an issue under advisement, the Court will attempt to set a date by which the Court will issue its ruling. If the parties bring proposed orders to the hearing, please make certain (1) a copy is provided to opposing counsel; (2) the party has stamped, addressed envelopes (for persons not registered with the E-Portal Filing); and (3) the caption contains more than the word “Order”. All Orders must describe in the caption the subject and ruling of the court, *i.e.* “Order Granting Plaintiff Motion for Partial Summary Judgment on Liability.” *See* Fla.R.Civ.P. 1.100(c)(2).

**12. Hearings on Motions for Rehearing, Reconsideration or New Trial.**

Upon filing said Motion(s), please send a copy directly to the Division email for the Judge’s review. The Court will either rule without a hearing, direct a written response be filed by opposing counsel or the JA will contact the movant to schedule a hearing.

## **CANCELLATION POLICY**

You may NOT file a notice of cancellation for any event set by the Court (Final Hearings set by the Court, Case Management Conferences, etc.). Additionally, a “Notice of Settlement” is insufficient to cancel any Court-scheduled event.

Only the party who set the hearing may cancel the hearing. Please file the Notice of Cancellation immediately and notify the Division via e-mail of all cancellations/settlements/voluntary dismissals so that the calendar may be opened up for other matters.

“CANCELLATION” must be written in the Subject line AND reasons for cancellations are required. If the cancellation is due to resolution or settlement, a proposed ORDER must be included in the email (in WORD format).

**Any cancellations received after 5:00 p.m. two (2) business days prior to the hearing might not be processed in time to actually cancel the hearing and Counsel must appear for the hearing and advise the Judge directly.**

## **PRIOR TO TRIAL**

A *Pre-Trial Compliance Order* will be issued by the Court when the dates are set for pre-trial and trial. The Uniform Order should be reviewed in detail and the dates for completion of various items calendared. The Court will presume that each attorney and each party is familiar with the requirements of that order. THE COURT EXPECTS STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH THE ORDER ABSENT A TIMELY MOTION AND ORDER OF COURT MODIFYING THE CONDITIONS THEREIN. Joint stipulations to extend times set forth therein are not permitted.

1. **Mediation:** The Mediation **MUST BE COMPLETED** prior to trial. The Plaintiff is charged with timely submitting the mediation order for the Court’s signature and the parties are jointly responsible for making certain the mediator files a final report with the Court. Non-compliance of either or both parties to attend mediation (or to timely pay each party’s share of the mediation cost) may result in sanctions by the Court, to include the striking of pleadings and/or order to pay costs and fees resulting from non-compliance.
2. **Witnesses, Exhibits and Experts:** The pre-trial order requires disclosure of witnesses, exhibits and experts with specificity in a timely manner. Exhibits must be presented for review, initialed by opposing party and/or annotations of any objections (without which, later-made objections may be deemed waived as improperly preserved). Experts must be disclosed and must be made available for discovery by the retaining party without the necessity of a subpoena for the retained expert. Opinions rendered at trial will be limited to those disclosed to opposing counsel in either a written report prior to the depositions or in response to deposition or written discovery questions prior to the close of Discovery.
3. **Joint Meeting of Counsel:** Plaintiff is charged with arranging a meeting of all counsel, which shall occur at least 30 days prior to trial. Attendance is mandatory by the attorneys who will actually be trying the case.

4. **Motions to Continue:** If counsel believes the trial date is not workable, an immediate request for continuance should be made. All Motions to Continue must be (1) in writing; (2) signed by the attorney and the parties requesting same; (3) identify the position of opposing counsel on the motion; (4) set forth when the parties will be ready for trial, if granted; and, (5) comply with [Fla.R.Civ.P. 1.460](#). Stipulated Motions to Continue will **not** result in the trial being continued unless and until the Court reviews the motion and enters an order on same. The Court may require a hearing on the Motion.

## **CASE MANAGEMENT HEARINGS**

Case Management Hearings will be utilized to discuss witness problems, jury instructions issues, audiovisual equipment needs, need for interpreters, time allotment for voir dire, length and time of opening statements and closing arguments, responsibility for obtaining a court reporter and other trial related issues<sup>3</sup>. Case Management Hearings are NOT the time to handle Motions to Continue or discovery issues, as these matters must have been raised and heard well before the case management hearing. PARTIES SHOULD BE READY TO TRY THEIR CASES AS OF THE FINAL CASE MANAGEMENT HEARING.

## **TRIALS**

Trials will take place in **Courtroom 4B** unless otherwise indicated. Attorneys should check with the Judicial Assistant the day before the trial to confirm the actual courtroom that will be used. Counsel and their clients are to be in the courtroom and ready for trial no later than 15 minutes prior to scheduled time. Notwithstanding any emergencies or other matters outside the Court's control, the hearing/trial will start as soon thereafter as possible.

1. **Courtroom Etiquette and Decorum:** Counsel shall stand when addressing the Court or the jury. Counsel should seek permission of the Court to approach the bench, the clerk, the witness or the jury. All parties and attorneys shall avoid "outside" contact with the venire/jury and counsel shall so instruct their clients and witnesses. Counsel shall admonish their clients and witnesses that gestures, facial expressions or any manifestations of approval or disapproval of anything occurring in the courtroom is absolutely prohibited. Counsel shall address all arguments to the Court and not opposing counsel. Please see *Ninth Judicial Circuit Courtroom Decorum Policy* available at <http://www.ninthcircuit.org>.
2. **Cell Phones, PDA, Communication Devices:** Cell phones must be turned off when in the courtroom. If necessary to make or take phone calls, please step out of the Courtroom. Witnesses will not be permitted to possess any type of communication device while on the witness stand and shall not have any documents or other paperwork with them while testifying unless already admitted into evidence or presented by an attorney for identification and/or refreshing recollection. All participants and spectators shall behave appropriately with the respect due to each other and the Court.

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<sup>3</sup>While the Court will attempt to provide a specific date for trial, all cases are presumed to be ready on the first day of the trial docket and are subject to advancement on the docket to an earlier date (within that trial period).

3. **Cell Phones, PDA, Communication Devices:** Cell phones must be turned off when in the courtroom. If necessary to make or take phone calls, please step out of the Courtroom. Witnesses will not be permitted to possess any type of communication device while on the witness stand and shall not have any documents or other paperwork with them while testifying unless already admitted into evidence or presented by an attorney for identification and/or refreshing recollection. All participants and spectators shall behave appropriately with the respect due to each other and the Court.
4. **Court Reporter** - The same Court Reporter must report the entire trial to enable jury read backs. In the Joint Pre-Trial Statement, the parties will advise the Court who will retain the Court Reporter.
5. **Voir Dire:** The Court will conduct a preliminary voir dire of the jury. Counsel are welcome to request that the Court explore certain areas that may be important to the trial but sensitive in nature. Counsel are reminded to be considerate of the jurors' personal lives during their inquiries as well as the jurors' time constraints. While the Court will afford counsel significant latitude in questioning, the Court will limit repetitive questions. Counsel shall not attempt to either explore the facts of the case or explain the law that may apply in the case, nor attempt to curry favor with the venire.
6. **Jury Selection Process:** After voir dire, the Court will first ask each side for any cause strikes. Upon completion of cause challenges, the Court will move to pre-emptory challenges. The Court will start with the first juror and move sequentially as they are seated in the venire, alternating between counsels until a panel is chosen. Back striking during jury selection is always permitted. The number of alternates will be determined by the type and length of the trial. Each party will have one additional strike as to each alternate.
7. **Opening and Closing:** Only demonstrative aids or exhibits marked by the clerk, agreed to by all counsel or approved by the Court, may be used in either opening or closing. Counsel may move away from the podium, but shall remain mindful of the jury's space. Counsel should stay at least three feet back from the jury rail at all times. The Court will discuss with counsel the time requirements for both opening and closing at the pretrial conference and will expect that a reasonable estimate be provided by counsel. Counsel are expected to adhere to these time constraints.
8. **Exhibits:** All exhibits are to be marked for identification by the clerk **prior to the day of trial**. Exhibits which will be stipulated into evidence may be marked into evidence as exhibits. Once exhibits are marked in evidence they become the property of the Clerk of Court and may not be altered or removed from the courtroom without Court Order. No exhibits are to be published or exhibited to the jury until admitted into evidence and/or authorized by the Court.

**Audiovisual and/or equipment questions should be addressed with Court Administration:** <http://www.ninthcircuit.org/programs-services/audio-visual>.

9. **Demonstrative Aids:** Any demonstrative aid that is to be used at trial must be marked by the clerk and exhibited to opposing counsel and the Court prior to the week of trial. The Court will hear argument of any counsel opposing the use of the demonstrative aids prior to the trial week. No aids are to be shown to the jury without prior approval of the Court.
10. **Experts:** The Court will not accept or qualify a witness as an expert in front of the jury. Challenges to an expert's qualifications and his or her ability to testify must be addressed prior to the start of the trial period and therefore outside the presence of the jury. Experts are to be cautioned by the attorney who calls the expert of "in limine" rulings and the effect of the invocation of the Rule of Sequestration.
11. **Use of Depositions:** If depositions are to be used at trial in any manner (impeachment, video testimony, etc.), counsel introducing same shall ensure hard copies are available both for the Court and for the witness being questioned.<sup>4</sup>
12. **Objections:** The Court will not allow speaking objections in front of the jury. When counsel rises to object, ONLY the legal basis for the objection should be stated. If elaboration is necessary, the Court will call counsel to the Bench for a Bench Conference or address the matter outside the presence of the jury. Counsel shall not interrupt opposing counsel or a witness's answer with an objection unless the answer or question is patently objectionable. Once the Court has ruled, no further argument shall be permitted. If a specific proffer is needed to preserve for appeal, the proffer shall be requested and (if granted) made outside the presence of the jury.
13. **Jurors:** The Court generally will allow jurors to take notes and to ask questions where necessary (as per Section 40.50, Florida Statutes). If any counsel objects to these procedures, such objection should be addressed to the Court prior to the day of trial.
14. **Jury Instructions:** Jury instructions are to be prepared and stipulated to by both sides and prior to Case Management Conference. Disagreements will be addressed at Case Management Conference upon notice and request. A hard copy must be provided to the Court as well as a copy in Word format via e-mail. The Court intends to provide the jury with a written copy of all jury instructions when the jury retires to deliberate. Final instructions should not contain any citations, titles, information or reference of any kind as to who requested the instruction. In certain cases, the Court may provide some substantive law instructions to the jury during preliminary instructions and/or before closing arguments. Should any counsel wish to request this option, the request should be addressed with the Court prior to the first day of trial.

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<sup>4</sup>In Osceola County some documents electronically filed with the Court are imaged and may not be readily available in hard copy to the Court.

## **SETTLEMENT OR RESOLUTION**

The Court must be notified immediately of any settlement or resolution of any matter on the trial docket. However, Notices of Settlement will NOT be considered sufficient for the purposes of cancelling a trial. The trial will not be removed from the actual docket, is subject to trial call and the attorneys must appear until such time as the docket reflects that the matter has been fully resolved (*i.e.*, docketed Stipulation and Order or Notice of Voluntary Dismissal).

## **INFORMATION NOT COVERED**

If any matters concerning the conduct of the pre-trial or trial procedures of Osceola Civil Division 60-G are not covered herein; counsel is free to contact the Court. A status hearing can be set at which time the Court will attempt to answer any inquiries. The Court appreciates counsels' efforts to understand and comply with this Court's procedures.

## **USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN PAPERWORK**

The Court does not prohibit the use of Artificial Intelligence ("AI") in its division. However, if any party or self-represented party has used AI in the preparation of any complaint, answer, motion, brief or other paper filed with the Court in Division 60-G, the party MUST, in a clear and plain factual statement, disclose that AI has been used in the filing and CERTIFY that each and every citation to the law or the record in the paper has been independently verified as accurate. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in sanctions against the party, which may include striking of pleadings and dismissal.