

**IN THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER S-2024-025
(Supersedes Administrative Order S-2023-063)**

GENERAL MAGISTRATES IN THE DEPENDENCY DIVISION

The interests of the public and of the litigants require a flexible and speedy resolution of matters pending in the Dependency Division. Florida Rule of Juvenile Procedure 8.257 provides for the appointment of general magistrates when the court finds it necessary. It is necessary for the prompt and efficient administration of justice in this circuit to appoint general magistrates to hear and consider matters pending in the Dependency Division.

In January 2024, a new general magistrate was assigned to the Dependency Division and Division GM-4 was abolished. For more efficient operations, it is necessary to re-establish Division GM-4 and instead abolish Division GM-3.

By the power vested in the chief judge under Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215(b)(2) and Florida Rule of Juvenile Procedure 8.257, it is ORDERED:

1. Appointments

Tracy L. Ellis, Michelle R. Blume, and Lisa Phillips are appointed as general magistrates of the Juvenile Dependency Division. The general magistrates serve under the direction of the administrative judge of the Juvenile Dependency Division.

2. Divisions

Divisions "GM-1," "GM-2," and "GM-4" are re-established as general magistrate divisions within the Dependency Division. Division "GM-3" is abolished effective immediately. The general magistrates are assigned to the general magistrate divisions as follows:

<u>General Magistrate Division</u>	<u>General Magistrate</u>
"GM – 1"	Tracy L. Ellis
"GM – 2"	Michelle R. Blume
"GM – 4"	Lisa Phillips

3. Case Assignments

A. Case Number Assignment

Any dependency matter referred by the court to a general magistrate will be assigned via the Judicial Automated Workflow System (JAWS) to either General Magistrate Division "GM-1," "GM-2," or "GM-4."

Except as provided in section 3.B. of this administrative order dealing with the assignment of related cases, the assignment of a referred matter to a general magistrate will be determined by the last two digits of the case number according to the following table:

GM-1 TRACY ELLIS	GM-2 MICHELLE BLUME	GM-4 LISA PHILLIPS
01	00	38
03	02	40
05	04	42
07	06	44
09	08	46
11	10	48
13	12	49
15	14	50
17	16	52
19	18	54
21	20	56
23	22	58
25	24	60
27	26	62
29	28	64
31	30	66

33	32	68
35	34	70
37	36	72
39	51	74
41	53	76
43	55	78
45	57	80
47	59	82
	61	84
	63	86
	65	88
	67	89
	69	90
	71	91
	73	92
	75	93
	77	94
	79	95
	81	96
	83	97
	85	98
	87	99

B. Related Case Exception to Case Number Assignment

Notwithstanding the case number, if the court refers a matter to a general magistrate in a case concerning a new child born into a family with an already existing dependency case, the order of referral for the new child will assign the matter to the same general magistrate who is already handling or who previously handled the related dependency case. This exception does not apply if the court has terminated jurisdiction of the related case based on the adoption of the child or if the court no longer has jurisdiction of the related case.

4. Referral

The general magistrates may hear any juvenile dependency

case referred for the purpose of judicial review or any other related matter authorized by the Florida Rules of Juvenile Procedure. Upon the filing of any juvenile dependency matter that may be referred to a general magistrate, any party may submit to the judge assigned to the case a proposed Order of Referral to the General Magistrate. Any objection to a referral must be in writing and filed within 10 days of the date of service of the signed order of referral. If an objection is filed, the case will remain with the judge.

5. Hearing and Reports

When a matter is referred to the general magistrate, the matter referred will be set for hearing on a specific date and at a specific time before the general magistrate. The general magistrate will proceed with the hearing and the preparation and filing of reports in the manner set out in Florida Rule of Juvenile Procedure 8.257.

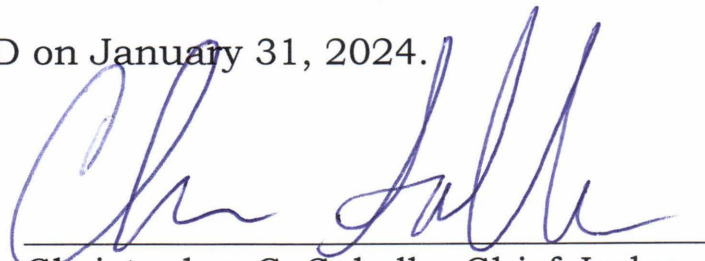
6. Effect on Previous Administrative Orders

This administrative order supersedes Administrative Order S-2023-063 (*General Magistrates in the Dependency Division*).

7. Effective Date

This administrative order is effective February 1, 2024.

ENTERED on January 31, 2024.



Christopher C. Sabella, Chief Judge

Attachments: Oaths of General Magistrates

Original: Cindy Stuart, Clerk of the Circuit Court

Copy to: All Dependency Division Judges and General Magistrates
Gina Justice, Trial Court Administrator

Department of Children & Families
Guardian ad Litem Program
Michelle Farquharson, Quality Management Director,
Children's Network of Southwest Florida
Ashley Cannon, Managing Attorney, Children's Legal
Services
Jonathan Jenkins, Regional Counsel's Office
Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office

OATH OF TRACY ELLIS - GENERAL MAGISTRATE

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH

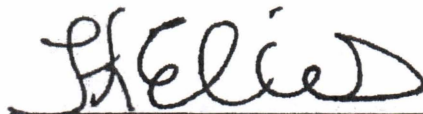
I do solemnly swear (or affirm):

That I will support, protect, and defend the Constitution and Government of the United States and of the State of Florida;

That I am duly qualified to hold office under the Constitution of the state; and

That I will well and faithfully perform the duties of General Magistrate on which I am now about to enter.

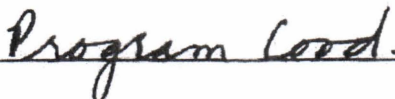
So help me God.



Signature

The foregoing instrument was sworn to and subscribed before me this 17th day of November, 2008, by Tracy Ellis who is personally known to me and who did take an oath.


Signature and Seal of Officer Administering Oath
Notary Public State of Florida
Janice Albury
My Commission DD759557
Expires 03/18/2012
Name of Officer Typed, Printed or Stamped


Title

OATH OF MICHELLE RENEE BLUME - GENERAL MAGISTRATE

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH

I do solemnly swear (or affirm):

That I will support, protect, and defend the Constitution and Government of the United States and of the State of Florida;

That I am duly qualified to hold office under the Constitution of the state; and

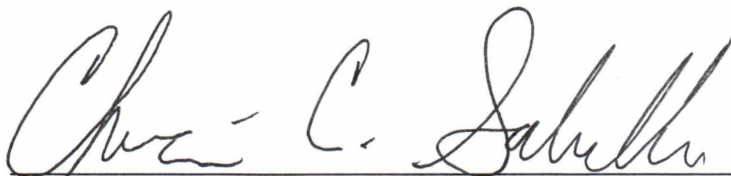
That I will well and faithfully perform the duties of General Magistrate on which I am now about to enter.

So help me God.



Signature

The foregoing instrument was sworn to and subscribed before me on December 19, 2023, by Michelle Renee Blume who is personally known to me and who did take an oath.



Signature and Seal of Official Administering Oath

Christopher C. Sabella

Name of Official Typed, Printed or Stamped

Chief Judge

Title

OATH OF LISA PHILLIPS - GENERAL MAGISTRATE

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH


I do solemnly swear (or affirm):

That I will support, protect, and defend the Constitution and Government of the United States and of the State of Florida;

That I am duly qualified to hold office under the Constitution of the state; and

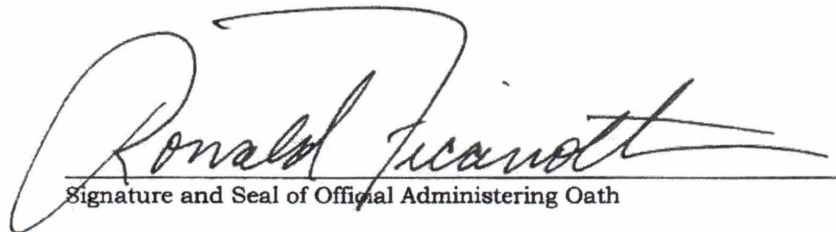
That I will well and faithfully perform the duties of General Magistrate on which I am now about to enter.

So help me God.



Signature

The foregoing instrument was sworn to and subscribed before me on November 15, 2022, by Lisa Phillips who is personally known to me and who did take an oath.



Signature and Seal of Official Administering Oath

Ronald N. Ficarrotta
Name of Official Typed, Printed or Stamped

Chief Judge
Title