

Judicial Practices and Procedures
(last modified April 7, 2026)

Barbara Twine Thomas, Judge
Christen Redding, Judicial Assistant

Contact Information

Mailing Address: 401 N Jefferson Street, Room 230, Tampa, FL 33602
Physical Address: 401 N. Jefferson Street, Annex Courtroom 18, Tampa, FL 33602 (enter at Edgecomb Courthouse, 800 E Twiggs Street, Tampa, FL 33602)
Telephone: (813)272-6874
E-mail: felonydivisiona@fljud13.org

Table of Contents

A. Communications with the Judicial Office 1
B. Scheduling Procedures 2
C. Remote Appearance 4
D. Submission of Orders and Judgments..... 5
E. Courtesy Copies of Case Law and Other Documents..... 5
F. Emergency and Other Urgent Matters 5
G. Exhibits for Evidentiary Proceedings 5
H. Pretrial Procedures and Conferences 6
I. Setting Case for Trial 7
J. Other Division Procedures 7

A. Communications with the Judicial Office

- **Method of Communication:** All communications to the judicial office must be submitted by e-mail to felonydivisiona@fljud13.org. The subject line must contain the case number, case name, and relevant matter (e.g., 2025 CF 001234 – State v. Doe – Type of Hearing / 2-Hour Hearing Requested.)
- **Ex parte Communications:** All communications with the judicial office must comply with Canon 3 of the Code of Judicial Conduct, which prohibits a judge from initiating, permitting, or considering ex parte communications and from considering other communications outside the presence of the parties concerning a pending or impending proceeding, unless authorized by law. All parties must be copied on any e-mail directed to the judicial office, unless an ex parte communication is authorized by law.

- **Unsolicited Communications:** Unsolicited communications from non-parties will not be considered by the court. Parties may only contact the judicial office in accordance with these practices and procedures.
- **E-Filing Portal Contact Information:** All attorneys and self-represented litigants must provide an e-mail address to receive signed orders electronically, unless excused. Fla. R. Gen. Prac. & Jud. Admin. 2.516. It is the responsibility of attorneys and self-represented litigants to update their contact information using Form 2.603 any time there is a change in the e-mail account registered for electronic service.
- **Response to Inquiries:** The Judicial Assistant cannot answer your legal questions, and will not explain your situation to the judge. Your opportunity to speak to the Judge will be in court only. No information regarding any case will be provided to anyone other than the Defendant, ONLY if they are not being represented by an attorney. If the Defendant is represented by counsel, all requests or motions shall be filed and argued by counsel.

B. Scheduling Procedures

- **Court Schedule:** Generally, the Court will hold two successive dockets weeks, which will be followed by successive weeks for jury trials. Usually, jury selection will occur only on Monday mornings at 8 am, in those two successive jury trial weeks.

During the first docket week, **Pretrial conferences** will occur on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings at 8:30 a.m. **Pretrial conferences** are set to discuss the specific plans for trial. Parties must be prepared to discuss, plea offers, pending motions, legal issues, witness availability problems, speedy trial, the score sheet, etc. The court will colloquy the defendant. **Trial Counsel and the Defendant must be at the Pretrial Conferences.** Appearances cannot be waived.

During the second docket, on Tuesday at 8:30 am cases remaining set for trial will heard on the Jury Trial Scheduling docket. During the Jury Trial Scheduling docket, the court and the parties will endeavor to determine the date of jury selection and on which day each trial case may proceed to trial.

Jury trial weeks will begin on Mondays at 8:00 a.m.

Motions to Continue Pretrial and Jury Trial dates will generally be held every Thursday at 11:00 a.m. via zoom. Motions to Continue must be

filed and set for hearing **before** the Pretrial date and as soon as the parties are aware of grounds to continue.

Dispositions will generally be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of the first docket week and Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of the second docket week.

Bond Motions will generally be held Fridays of docket weeks at 10:00 a.m. in person. In custody defendants will be transported.

Motions to Modify/Terminate probation are conducted once a month and will generally be held on a Friday of one of the docket weeks and will begin at 10:30 a.m. via zoom. (Please check with the Judicial Assistant for the specific hearing date).

Motions will generally be heard Monday through Friday afternoons on docket weeks.

- **Arraignments:**

Arraignments will be held every Wednesday. On docket weeks they will begin at 11:00am and on trial weeks they will begin at 8:30 a.m. In Custody defendants will not be transported for any Arraignment dates. Out of custody defendants must appear for all Arraignment dates.

Private Counsel: If there is a Notice of Appearance and Waiver of Arraignment filed, you and your client do not need to attend. Please be aware **Pretrial and Jury Trial dates will be set from arraignment on all cases.** Status or disposition conferences are generally disfavored unless it will move the case towards resolution. Contact the Judicial assistant for a disposition when needed.

- **Scheduling Hearings:** Hearings must be requested by e-mail at felonydivisiona@fljud13.org copying opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant, to coordinate the scheduling of the hearing.
- **Notice of Hearing:** A notice of hearing **must** be filed and served by the moving party, immediately after reserving hearing time. All notices of hearing must contain the ADA notification required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.540.
- **Submission Deadlines:** The court must receive all materials for the hearing no later than five business days before the hearing.
- **Order of Proceedings:** Attorneys will sign up on the sign-up sheet in the

courtroom. The State Attorney will call the docket. Please let the State Attorney, who is calling the docket, know of any scheduling conflicts.

- **Continuance Procedure for Pretrial Conference and/or Trial:** Motions to Continue Pretrial and or Trial are heard every Thursday at 11:00 a.m. via zoom (unless a Court Holiday or the Division is closed). Counsel requesting the Motion to Continue shall contact the Division A, Judicial Assistant at felonydivisiona@fljud13.org to obtain the next available motion date. The Motion to Continue must be filed before requesting a hearing date. Judge Twine Thomas does not hear Motions to Continue at Pretrial.
- **Cancelling Hearings:** In instances, when an attorney may be allowed to cancel a hearing, the attorney must first notify the judicial assistant and advise of the request to cancel a hearing. If cancellation is allowed and agreed to by both parties, the moving attorney must then also immediately file and serve a notice of cancellation on opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant.
- **Motions to Modify Probation/Terminate Probation:** The Court does require a hearing on these matters. Therefore, a hearing date and time must be obtained from the Judicial Assistant and a Notice of Hearing, with the assigned date and time must be filed by the moving party. You may contact the Judicial Assistant at felonydivisiona@fljud13.org or (813)272-6874 to obtain a hearing date and time.
- A copy of the Motion to Modify/Terminate Probation and Notice of Hearing must be hand delivered, mailed or emailed to Division A Judicial Assistant at felonydivisiona@fljud13.org.
- You may obtain the forms needed for your Motion to Modify/Terminate Probation from your probation officer or from the 13th Judicial Circuit Public Defender's website. <https://www.pd13.state.fl.us/forms/>

C. Remote Appearance

- **Remote / Zoom Appearance Procedure:** No remote/zoom appearances are permitted when the hearing is set as an in-person proceeding. The court may make an exception for expert or medical professionals, upon agreement of the parties. There are no hybrid proceedings. Remote/ Zoom Hearings can be set as requested and approved by the Court.
- **Platform Used:** The court uses Zoom for remote appearances.
- **Platform Meeting ID#:** Meeting ID#: 656 204 7464, Password: 1908

ZOOM Link is: <https://zoom.us/j/6562047464>

- **Technology Needs:** All participants in the remote appearance must have video and audio capabilities.

D. Submission of Orders and Judgments

- **Format:** All proposed orders must be submitted in PDF format. If all parties agree to the order, please title the Order “STIPULATED”. If parties are not in agreement of the proposed Order a hearing must be set on the matter, prior to any order being placed in the judicial queue.
- **Submission Method:** Proposed orders should be submitted through the e-filing portal, if the parties both agree to the proposed order.
- **Deadline for Submissions:** Proposed orders must be submitted within 10 days after any hearing.

E. Courtesy Copies of Case Law and Other Documents

- **When Required:** Courtesy copies of case law and any proposed reference material shall be submitted to the court.
- **Submission Method:** E-mail to felonydivisiona@fljud13.org
- **Deadline for Submissions:** Courtesy copies must be delivered to the court no later than five (5) days before the scheduled hearing.

F. Emergency and Other Urgent Matters

- **Requirements:** If a party believes there is a factual basis for setting an emergency hearing, a detailed motion setting forth the following must be filed: (1) the issues to be resolved, (2) reasons why an emergency hearing is necessary, and (3) the amount of time needed for each party’s presentation.
- **Scheduling:** If the court determines that an emergency exists, a hearing will be scheduled unilaterally by the court. All parties shall make themselves available for the emergency hearing, barring exigent circumstances.

G. Exhibits for Evidentiary Proceedings

- **Submission Method:** Evidence should be brought to court pre-marked with exhibit tags stapled or affixed to each exhibit in the upper right-hand corner. The exhibit marking should track with an exhibit list filed with the Clerk of Court prior to the hearing.
- **Format:** Exhibits must be submitted to the clerk of court in paper format, single-sided. All attorneys and self-represented litigants must bring sufficient copies of each exhibit for the clerk, the court, and each party to review during the hearing or trial. Exhibits must be labeled in the following format: State's Exhibit 1 or Defendant's 1.
- **Deadline for Submissions:** Unless otherwise ordered, all exhibits must be brought to the courtroom at the hearing.

H. Pretrial Procedures and Conferences

- **Procedures Relating to Pretrial Procedures and Conferences:** Counsel of record who will be trying the case is required to attend the Pretrial Conference on the matter.

The Defendant must be present at the Pre-Trial Conference. The Defendant's personal presence at the pretrial conference is vital because it gives the Court the opportunity to conduct a colloquy regarding any plea offers from the State and make sure the Defendant is aware of the minimum sentence based on the Criminal Punishment Code scoresheet, the statutory maximum sentence, and any other factors that may affect his exposure to prison and other sanctions.

Without the Defendant's presence, the Court cannot discern the Defendant's understanding of the potential penalties and ascertain a knowing and voluntary choice to proceed with trial.

The Court uses the pretrial conference to assess whether the parties are prepared for trial. The Court queries both parties about any outstanding motions; whether depositions still need to be taken; how many witnesses each side will present; and the number of jurors needed for the panel.

The Court finds it is necessary for the Defendant to personally participate in these proceedings as it is the last opportunity to resolve the case prior to trial and to ensure the Defendant is aware of the status of the case.

Any offers extended by the State to the Defendant to resolve the case and the revocation of such offer at the Pre Trial Conference.

No negotiated pleas are accepted on Jury Selection Day.

The only pleas on jury selection day shall be open and at the discretion of the Court.

- **Other Procedures Relating to Pretrial Procedures and Conferences:** All motions must be filed and set for hearing prior to the Pretrial conference. All motions not heard prior to the Pretrial Conference shall be deemed waived and such motions shall not be grounds for a continuance of the Trial date.

I. Setting Case for Trial

- **Procedure:** Effective January 1, 2026, Circuit Criminal Division A is transitioning to a new schedule. Generally, the Court will hold two (2) docket weeks in a row followed by two (2) jury trial week dockets.

Pretrial conferences will be on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday mornings beginning at 8:30 a.m. during the first docket week. If a case remains set after Pretrial on our second docket week, Tuesday at 8:30am, we will have a Jury Trial Scheduling docket where the Court will schedule which days during the following two-week Jury trial period cases will proceed to Jury Trial. Jury Trials begin at 8:00am.

J. Other Division Procedures

- **ADA Accommodations:** If you need an ADA accommodation, please contact the ADA Coordinator via email ADA@fljud13.org; telephone 1-813-272-7040; hearing impaired 1-800-955-8771; voice impaired 1-800-955-8770; or US Mail Administrative Office of the Courts. Attn: ADA Coordinator, 800 E. Twiggs Street, Tampa, FL 33602.
- **Interpreter Requests:** If an interpreter is needed for a hearing or trial, please contact: interpreterrequest@fljud13.org or fill out a request form online <https://www.fljud13.org/CourtPrograms/CourtInterpreter/ContactUs.aspx>