

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA**

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER H-2024-50

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER ASSIGNING DUTY JUDGE ROTATION
FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2025**

WHEREAS, The Undersigned having considered there are times that an assigned Judge is not available to sign orders, warrants, or other documents that require immediate action; and

WHEREAS, realizing that it is in the best interest of judicial efficiency that there be a Judge assigned on a regular weekly basis to handle unusual and extraordinary requests or proceedings which require such immediate action; and

WHEREAS, further realizing that it would be unfair and inequitable to have one Judge permanently assigned to handle such matters, and that it would be in the best interest of fairness to rotate this duty among the various Judges of the county; and

WHEREAS, being otherwise advised in the premises, it is upon consideration **ORDERED AND ADJUDGED** as follows:

1) The Administrative Judge of Hernando County shall place the names of all circuit and county Judges in the county into a random rotation, and shall rotate weekly the names of the Judges in order to establish a sequence of weekly assignments as Duty Judge for such duties as described herein during the calendar year 2025. A schedule of such rotation shall be prepared, attached hereto, and become a part of this order. This duty shall be in addition to weekend First Appearance duties as assigned by the Chief Judge of the circuit.

2) The assigned Duty Judge shall be physically present in the courthouse, except for lunch or unforeseen circumstances, Monday through Friday, during normal working hours when the courthouse is open, to handle any matter necessary during the assigned week. The Duty Judge shall also be available to Hernando County after normal hours during his or her duty week. Court administration staff shall maintain an updated list of contact numbers for each judge. These phone numbers shall be used and distributed for judicial duties only. A duty week begins at 8:00 a.m. on Monday and lasts until 5:00 p.m. on Friday unless the holiday duty rotation dictates otherwise.

SHOULD ANY JUDGE HAVE SCHEDULING CONFLICTS FOR HIS OR HER ASSIGNED WEEKLY DUTY, IT SHALL BE HIS OR HER RESPONSIBILITY TO CONTACT ANOTHER JUDGE TO BE AVAILABLE. ANY SWITCHING OF SUCH DUTY JUDGE ASSIGNMENTS SHALL BE DONE IN WRITING WITH COPIES TO THE FOLLOWING: ALL JUDGES, CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, STATE ATTORNEY, PUBLIC DEFENDER, HERNANDO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, GENERAL COUNSEL AND 5TH CIRCUIT HELPDESK.

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3) Nothing in this order shall preclude Judges from trading duty assignments or accepting responsibility for another Judge's duties by agreement, in writing, in the manner set forth herein.

4) Any County Court Judge who receives this duty is hereby assigned to act as a Judge of the Circuit Court of the Fifth Judicial Circuit should an emergency requiring the actions of a Circuit Judge arise during his or her duties. Likewise, any Circuit Court Judge who receives this duty is hereby assigned to act as a Judge of the County Court of Hernando County should an emergency requiring the actions of a County Judge arise during his or her duties.

5) The Administrative Judge, local Court Administration and the General Counsel shall at all times be kept advised, in writing, of all changes or modifications to the duty Judge schedule so they may maintain a master list of which Judge is responsible for coverage.

It is FURTHER ORDERED and ADJUDGED that this Order shall take effect at 12:01a.m. January 1, 2025 and shall rescind and replace Administrative Order H-2023-43 at that time.

DONE and ORDERED in Chambers in Brooksville, Hernando County, Florida, this 30th day of October 2024.



Daniel B. Merritt, Jr
Chief Judge
Fifth Judicial Circuit

D3 MJR

DUTY SCHEDULE FOR 2025

MONTH	WEEK OF	JUDGE	CHANGES
January <i>New Years Day 1st</i>	Dec 30 -31 Jan 2-3	Barbee	
<i>Vergara 4-5</i>	6-10	Hitzemann	
	13-17	Scaglione	
<i>MLK 20th</i>	21-24	Vergara	
	27-31	Toner	
February <i>Merritt Jr. 1-2</i>	3-7	Bell	
<i>Barbee 8-9</i>	10-14	Merritt Jr.	
	17-21	Eineman	
	24-28	Barbee	
March <i>Hitzemann 1-2</i>	3-7	Hitzemann	
	10-14	Scaglione	
	17-21	Vergara	
	24-28	Bell	
April	March 31 – April 4	Toner	
<i>Eineman 5-6</i>	7-11	Merritt Jr.	
<i>Good Friday 18th</i>	14-17	Eineman	
<i>18-20 Scaglione</i>	21-25	Barbee	
May <i>Toner April 26-27</i>	April 28 – May 2	Scaglione	
	5-9	Hitzemann	
<i>Vergara 10-11</i>	12-16	Vergara	

DUTY SCHEDULE FOR 2025

MONTH	WEEK OF	JUDGE	CHANGES
	19-23	Toner	
<i>Memorial Day 26th</i>	27-30	Bell	
June	2-6	Merritt Jr.	
<i>Merritt Jr. 7-8</i>	9-13	Eineman	
<i>Barbee 14-15</i>	16-20	Barbee	
	23-27	Hitzemann	
July <i>Bell 28-29</i> <i>July 4th Holiday</i> <i>Hitzemann 4</i>	June 30 – July 3	Scaglione	
<i>Hitzemann 4-6</i>	7-11	Vergara	<i>County Judge Conference 8-10</i>
	14-18	Toner	
	21-25	Bell	
August	Jul 28 – Aug 1	Merritt Jr.	
	4-8	Eineman	<i>Circuit Judge Conference 3-6</i>
<i>Eineman 9-10</i>	11-15	Barbee	
	18-22	Hitzemann	
<i>Scaglione 23-24</i>	25-29	Scaglione	
September <i>Labor Day 1st</i> <i>Toner 1</i>	2-5	Vergara	
	8-12	Toner	
<i>Vergara 13-14</i>	15-19	Bell	
<i>Rosh Hashanah 23rd</i>	22, 24-26	Merritt Jr.	

DUTY SCHEDULE FOR 2025

MONTH	WEEK OF	JUDGE	CHANGES
October <i>Yom Kippur 2nd</i>	Sept 29 – Oct 1, Oct 3	Eineman	
	6-10	Barbee	
<i>Merritt Jr. 11-12</i>	13-17	Hitzemann	
<i>Barbee 18-19</i>	20-24	Scaglione	
	27-31	Vergara	
November <i>Bell 1 -2</i>	3-7	Toner	
<i>Veteran's Day 11th</i> <i>Hitzemann 8-9, 11th</i>	10, 12-14	Bell	
	17-21	Merritt Jr.	
<i>Thanksgiving 27-28</i>	24-26	Eineman	
December	1-5	Barbee	
	8-12	Hitzemann	
<i>Eineman 13-14</i>	15-19	Scaglione	
<i>Chief Discretionary 24th</i> <i>Christmas 25th</i> <i>Chief Discretionary 26th</i>	22-23	Vergara	
<i>Scaglione 24 – 28</i>	Dec 29 - Jan 2	Toner	