

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA**

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER: H-2025-14

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER CONSOLIDATING DRUG COURT AND FELONY POST-
ADJUDICATORY DRUG COURT EXPANSION PROGRAM IN HERNANDO COUNTY
and ESTABLISHING HERNANDO COUNTY ADULT POST-ADJUDICATORY DRUG
COURT**

AND

RESCINDING ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS H-2018-24 and H-2019-29-A

WHEREAS, Chapter 397.334, Florida Statutes, establishes within the State of Florida “treatment-based courts”; and,

WHEREAS, Administrative Order H-2018-24 which replaced Administrative Order H-2010-45, established the Drug Court Program in Hernando County; and

WHEREAS, Administrative Order H-2019-29-A established the Felony Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court Expansion Program in Hernando County; and

WHEREAS, both programs are similar in nature, which includes following the Florida’s Best Practices for Adult Drug Court Programs, as adopted by the Florida Supreme Court (rev. 2023); and

WHEREAS, both programs currently serve defendants/offenders from eligible post-adjudicatory felony cases in Hernando County; post-adjudicatory violation of probation cases and eligible post-adjudicatory 3rd degree non-violent felony offenders under Chapter 810, Florida Statutes who would otherwise be incarcerated or any other felony offense that is not a forcible felony as defined in section 776.08, Florida Statutes, will be eligible, including:

1. Offenders with sentencing scores of 60 points or fewer;
2. Offenders with sentencing scores of 60 points or fewer who have violated community control or probation due to a positive or suspect drug screen – if the underlying offense occurred on or after July 1, 2009; and

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WHEREAS, Chapter 397, Florida Statutes, in its entirety, establishes the provision of substance abuse services within the State of Florida, and

WHEREAS, the Fifth Circuit currently receives funds to provide services for the benefit of participants in both Adult Drug Court Programs; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the success of both Adult Drug Court Programs and in the interest of judicial economy and for the efficient administration of justice,

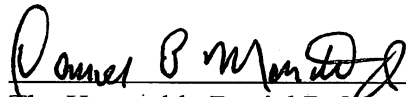
IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

1. The Drug Court Program and the Felony Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court Expansion Program in Hernando County shall be consolidated into one Program which shall now be known as **Hernando County Adult Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court**.
2. A Circuit Judge shall be assigned to **Hernando County Adult Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court**.
3. This Order shall be effective immediately upon approval and shall apply to all pending cases currently in the above-referenced programs and any future cases pending before the Circuit Court in and for Hernando County, Florida.
4. **Hernando County Adult Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court** shall handle eligible cases from the other Circuit Criminal Divisions for possible referral to substance use disorder treatment and support.
5. Effective immediately, any Defendant who applies for acceptance into the **Hernando County Adult Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court** shall be required to pay an application fee of **\$250.00**, unless waived or adjusted by the Judge presiding over drug court matters in Hernando County.
6. Effective April 1, 2025, any Defendant who participates in **Hernando County Adult Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court** shall be required to pay a fee of **\$100.00** per month (or any part thereof), unless waived or adjusted by a Circuit Judge presiding over drug court matters in Hernando County.

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7. All amounts due and owing under each program prior to April 1, 2025, which have not been paid, shall continue to be due and owing. Further, there shall be no refunds of any assessed fees which have already been paid.
8. The Clerk of Court is authorized to accept any participation fees or funds collected for the **Hernando County Adult Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court** and shall deposit same into Fund 1242, 3489902 revenue account.
9. The policies and procedures of the **Hernando County Adult Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court** shall be set forth in the Policy & Procedure Manual and shall include court requirements, eligibility criteria and referral procedures.
10. If a Defendant's participation in the program is terminated for cause, the Defendant shall be terminated from the drug court program and sentenced accordingly by the Judge presiding over **Hernando County Adult Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court**. The balance of any assessed but unpaid drug court fees will become a lien of record.
11. The **Hernando County Adult Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court** is created and shall be maintained subject to the availability of adequate funding.
12. All hearings conducted pursuant to this administrative order shall be electronically recorded.
13. This Order shall rescind and replace Administrative Order H-2018-24 titled "Administrative Order Regarding the Drug Court Division in Hernando County and Rescinding Administrative Order H-2010-45," AND Administrative Order H-2019-29-A titled "Amended Order Regarding the Establishment of a Felony Post-Adjudicatory Drug Court Expansion Program in and for Hernando County."

DONE and ORDERED in Chambers, at Brooksville, Hernando County, Florida
this 29th day of March 2025.


The Honorable Daniel B. Merritt, Jr.
Chief Judge, Fifth Judicial Circuit