

GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR JUDGE ROBERT W. HODGES

PROCEDURES FOR SCHEDULING HEARINGS

When e-mailing or calling to obtain available hearing time, please have available the case number, case style, type of motion to be scheduled, the amount of hearing time requested, and names of all counsel of record. The Motion **must** be filed prior to obtaining hearing time. Once hearing time is coordinated with all counsel, confirm the date with this office prior to preparing your Notice of Hearing, to assure that time is still available, as hearing dates cannot be “held.”

Please provide the Court with a courtesy copy of the Notice of Hearing, once filed, by e-mail at cmatthews@circuit5.org. A courtesy copy of the Motion being heard *does not* need to be sent with the Notice of Hearing, as the Motion should already be in the court file.

The Court requires that all hearings be coordinated. Typically, unilaterally set hearings are not scheduled. If you are unable to coordinate a hearing, please call our office.

Unless otherwise specified, all hearings will be held in Courtroom 3A.

NOTICES FOR TRIAL

Notices for Trial should include how much trial time will be anticipated, and whether the trial is a jury or non-jury trial. Once the notice is filed, the case will be set for a case management conference. The case will not automatically be set on a trial docket. Please provide a courtesy copy of the Notice for Trial once filed, by e-mail to cmatthews@circuit5.org.

NOTICES FOR TRIAL – FORECLOSURE CASES

Foreclosure cases usually do not require a pretrial or case management conference. Attorneys and *pro se* litigants will need to contact this office to obtain dates and times for trial. Notices for Trial should include how much time will be anticipated.

TELEPHONIC APPEARANCES/CONFERENCE CALLS

Requests for telephonic or conference call appearances are governed by Rule 2.530 of the Florida Judicial Administration Rules. All requests must be in writing and notice must be given to the opposing party.

Testimony may be taken through communication equipment only if a notary public or other person authorized to administer oaths in the witness’s jurisdiction is present with the witness and administers the oath consistent with the laws of the jurisdiction.

The cost for use of the communication equipment is the responsibility of the requesting party unless otherwise directed by the Court.

For CourtCall appearances, contact CourtCall directly at 888-882-6878, at least 1 business day prior to the hearing date, to set up your telephonic appearance.

Personal appearances are required for Trials and Pretrial Conferences.

PROCEDURES FOR CANCELLING HEARINGS/TRIALS

In addition to filing your notice of cancellation, immediately notify this office by telephone or e-mail, when a hearing is to be cancelled. If a case has settled and should be removed from the trial docket, please contact the Court to indicate the same. Only the party that scheduled the hearing, or the Court, has the authority to cancel the hearing.

CROSS-NOTICING HEARINGS

Cross-noticing a hearing without the Court's approval is not permitted. Before requesting the setting of an additional motion(s) at a previously scheduled hearing, the attorneys must contact our office so the Court can determine if sufficient time is available to have the additional motion(s) heard.

PROPOSED ORDERS

A proposed order should **always** be submitted immediately, upon filing the following motions:

- Motions for Extensions of Time
- Motions for Leave to Amend Complaint
- Motions to Appoint Process Server
- Motions to Appoint Guardian or Attorney Ad Litem
- Motions for Telephonic Appearance

Proposed orders are not accepted through the Florida Courts E-portal at this time. Proposed orders must be submitted either by US Mail or by e-mail (but please, not both).

Proposed orders may be submitted by e-mail to cmatthews@circuit5.org, if all parties are represented by counsel. If there are any pro se parties, conforming copies and envelopes will need to be submitted with the proposed order, via U.S. Mail, or hand delivery. If submitting a proposed order by e-mail, it must be in Word format.

COMMUNICATION WITH MY OFFICE

Attorneys and *pro se* litigants are welcome to call or e-mail my office. Please be aware that my office does not tolerate abusive language or unprofessional conduct on the phone. Any phone call wherein a person yells, screams or curses will be immediately terminated without warning. In addition, my office will not answer any future phone calls from individuals who cannot abide by these instructions. Those individuals will thereafter need to communicate with my office in writing.