

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

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. A-2024-11

**REGARDING THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
PRO BONO COMMITTEE**

AND

**VACATING, SUPERSEDING, AND REPLACING
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER A-2016-10**

WHEREAS, in 1990, the Florida Supreme Court held that “every lawyer of this state who is a member of The Florida Bar has an obligation to represent the poor when called upon by the courts and that each lawyer has agreed to that commitment when admitted to practice law in this state.” *In Re: Amendments to Rules Regulating The Florida Bar – 1-3.1(a) and Rules of Judicial Administration – 2.065 (Legal Aid)*, 573 So. 2d 800, 806 (Fla. 1990). Three years later, the Florida Supreme Court promulgated Rule 4-6.5(c) of the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar providing for the establishment of a pro bono committee in each judicial circuit. *In Re: Amendments to Rules Regulating The Florida Bar – 1-3.1(a) and Rules of Judicial Administration – 2.065 (Legal Aid)*, 630 So. 2d 501 (Fla.1993); and

WHEREAS, the Fifth Judicial Circuit established the local Fifth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee in accordance with Rule 4-6.5(c) by Administrative Order A-2016-10. It is now necessary for the efficient and proper administration of justice within the Circuit to

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update the leadership and composition of the Fifth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee; and

WHEREAS, by the authority vested in me as the Chief Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit and pursuant to Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration;

IT IS THEREFORE

ORDERED administratively **AS FOLLOWS**:

1. Pro Bono Committee

The Fifth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee (“Committee”) will continue to provide oversight and direction of pro bono legal services for the indigent in Marion, Lake, Hernando, Citrus, and Sumter Counties.

2. Composition of the Pro Bono Committee and Chair

The Committee will be comprised of the following members:

- A. The Chief Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit or the Chief Judge’s designee;
- B. The Presidents or their designees of each of the local voluntary County Bar Associations in and for Marion, Lake, Hernando, Citrus, and Sumter Counties, respectively, and such other representative(s) from said Bar Associations as they may deem appropriate;
- C. A representative from Community Legal Services of Mid-Florida, Inc., as determined by the Chair of the organization’s Board of Directors and a representative to

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be determined in like same fashion from any other pro bono and legal assistance service provider or organization made known to the Chief Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit.

D. At least one (1) member of the public.

E. At least one (1) "client eligible" member nominated by the other members of the Fifth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee, found by the undersigned to mean an individual eligible for the provision of pro bono services within the Fifth Judicial Circuit.

F. Additionally, Fifth Judicial Circuit General Counsel shall serve as a liaison to the local committee to assist with the committee's duties and responsibilities.

G. The Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by the Committee as provided in Rule 4-6.5(c) of the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar.

3. Plan and Annual Report

The Committee shall prepare a written circuit pro bono plan to be implemented after evaluating circuit pro bono needs and available pro bono services with the results to be monitored thereafter. Further, the Committee shall submit an annual written report to The Florida Bar Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services.

4. Committee Responsibilities

In meeting its responsibilities under Rule 4-6.5(c)(2) of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar, the Committee will meet

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periodically during the year to consider and review the Committee's work and progress toward completing the Committee's annual plan; to allocate and oversee funding issues, if any; to make recommendations on the community's needs, the possible resources available to meet those needs, and a long-term plan to fulfill the legal profession's obligation to its community; and to meet such other responsibilities as provided by said Rule.

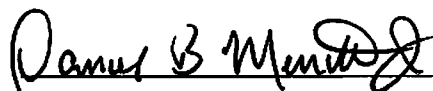
5. Previous Administrative Orders Superseded

This Administrative Order supersedes all previous Administrative Orders regarding *pro bono* services.

6. Effective Date

This Administrative Order shall take effect immediately and remain in full force and effect unless and until otherwise ordered by the Court.

DONE and **ORDERED** in Chambers in Brooksville, Hernando County, Florida, on this 27th day of Feb, 2024.



DANIEL B. MERRITT, JR.
CHIEF JUDGE
FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT