

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

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER L-2022-30-A**

**RE: AMENDED PRETRIAL PROCEDURES FOR CERTAIN SMALL  
CLAIMS CASES WHERE THE DEFENDANT HAS NOT BEEN  
SERVED**

**WHEREAS**, the undersigned, being designated by the Chief Judge as Administrative Judge for Lake County, pursuant to Rule 2.215(b)(5), Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration; and,

**WHEREAS**, within the county courts of Lake County, it is deemed necessary for the prompt, effective, and efficient administration of justice to avoid undue confusion and uncertainty for the public, litigants, and others involved in the court system, and to eliminate the need for individualized orders, this Administrative Order is appropriate to prescribe certain procedures applicable to small claims cases;

It is **THEREFORE ORDERED** as follows:

1. In every small claims case, when a summons is returned to the Clerk as "unexecuted/non-served" upon the defendant; the plaintiff shall have 45 days from the date of the pre-trial conference listed on the original summons, to have a subsequent summons issued. Failure to have a proper subsequent summons issued will result in the case being dismissed, without prejudice to refile, requiring no further order, notice, or hearing.
2. The Court may continue the small claims pre-trial two times to allow a plaintiff to obtain service on a defendant. If the defendant has not been served by the third small claims pretrial date, the Court shall dismiss the case without prejudice to refile.

3. The Clerk is hereby ordered not to issue a summons on a closed small claims case unless a party has first petitioned the Court to re-open the case and obtained leave.

**DONE AND ORDERED** in Chambers in Tavares, Lake County, Florida, this 16<sup>th</sup> day of September 2025.



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**JAMES BAXLEY  
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE,  
LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA**