

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND
FOR BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO.:
14-37-B
SUPERSEDES 91-136, 96-21-B & 11-42-B

**IN RE: JUDGES - CASELOAD ASSIGNMENTS - ASSIGNMENT OF CASES IN FELONY CRIMINAL
DEPARTMENT OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA**

A. CREATION OF DIVISIONS:

The Criminal Division of the Circuit Court of Brevard County consists of five divisions designated as Criminal Divisions I, IIA, IIB, IIC, and IID. One of the judges serving in the Criminal Department shall be appointed as Administrative Judge by the Chief Judge of the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF JUDGES:

The judge of each division shall be responsible for the progress and conduct of all cases assigned to that division from inception to conclusion, including, but not limited to pretrial, trial, and post trial motions, and shall exercise supervision over the preparation of all calendars and dockets of cases assigned to the division. Daily initial appearances at the Brevard County Jail shall continue to be handled by the county court judges of Brevard County. Felony arraignments and second appearances shall be handled by the assigned criminal division judge.

C. DEFINITION OF CAPITAL CASE:

For the purpose of this administrative order, a "capital case" is only a case in which an indictment has been filed charging one or more defendants with first degree murder.

D. ASSIGNMENT OF CASES:

(1) The Clerk of the Court shall establish a "GRID SYSTEM" for the assignment of felony cases. Case assignments shall be made based upon the region of the arresting agency. The "GRID SYSTEM" shall provide for the shifting of cases from one division to another to provide a balanced caseload.

(2) The regions shall be structured as follows:

DIVISION I: NORTH REGION - North side of Camp Road, West to Grissom Parkway, North to Port Saint John Parkway and West to I-95 to the North Brevard County Line.

DIVISION II: SOUTH REGION – All arrests with the address of Camp Road (including the jail) to South Brevard County Line.

In order to provide a balanced caseload, the "GRID SYSTEM" shall provide for the shifting of cases from one division to another. Division I cases may be shifted to Division II. Division II cases may be shifted to Division I, depending on the balance at the time of the review. The objective is for all criminal division judges to receive an equal number of cases.

- (3) Upon the filing of an initial charging document (including those charging capital offenses unless the initial charging document is an indictment) in the felony division of the Clerk's Office, the judge division assignment shall be made utilizing the following criteria:
 - (a) North Region cases shall be assigned to Division I of the Criminal Department of the Circuit Court.
 - (b) South Region cases shall be assigned to Division II of the Criminal Department of the Circuit Court. These cases shall be divided equally among the four sitting felony judges (or their successors) at the Moore Justice Center and they shall be defined as IIA, IIB, IIC, and IID. Substantive new cases assigned to Division II shall be allocated alphabetically by the defendant's last name (without regard to where in the South Region the arrest occurred) as follows:

A, E, G, M, T, U, V:	Division IIA
B, F, L, O, W, X:	Division IIB
C, I, J, N, P, R, Y:	Division IIC
D, H, K, Q, S, Z:	Division IID
- (4) Subsequent charging documents which identify additional defendants who are charged with offenses arising from the same incident shall receive the same judge division assigned as the defendant having the lowest case number. Subsequent cases charging unrelated offenses against the co-defendant shall be assigned by the Clerk as specified in paragraph D(3) above.
- (5) Violation of probation ("VOP") and violation of community control ("VOCC") cases shall be assigned as specified in paragraph D(3) above.
- (6) Except in capital cases in which a death sentence has been affirmed on appeal, post-conviction motions (3.800, 3.850, etc.) shall be assigned to the sentencing judge who imposed the last sentence in the case so long as that judge is on the criminal bench. If the sentencing judge is recused or is no longer in the criminal division, then the Clerk shall reassign the post-conviction motion to one of the judges in the criminal division in succession until all judges in the criminal division have an equal number, after which the rotation system among all of the criminal division judges will recommence.
- (7) Any case arising from the direct filing of a juvenile case shall be assigned as specified in paragraph D(3) above.
- (8) The clerk shall make adjustments in the "GRID SYSTEM" assignments based upon the following occurrences:
 - (a) Filing case reduced to a misdemeanor
 - (b) State Attorney action "Nolle Prosequi"
 - (c) State Attorney action "No File"
 - (d) Entry of an Order changing venue from Brevard County
 - (e) Entry of any Order of re-assignment

The Clerk is ordered to monitor the balance of case assignments on a quarterly basis, report the findings to the Chief Judge with a copy to each of the judges in the criminal department, and make any necessary adjustments in accordance with the criteria established in this Administrative Order to ensure a balanced case load among the Divisions. The Division II judges will meet semi-annually to recommend equalization

adjustments to the Chief Judge. The Clerk shall promptly report any difficulties in maintaining a balanced caseload to the Chief Judge.

- (9) Nothing in this Administrative Order prohibits the assigned circuit judges from transferring or adjusting particular case assignments in the interests of justice and judicial economy. For defendants with multiple cases assigned to multiple divisions, a transfer or reassignment is not necessary to effectuate a plea resolution of all cases in one division.

E. CAPITAL CASE ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES:

- (1) When an indictment is filed that includes a charge of first degree murder the case shall be assigned/reassigned in succession to those criminal division judges who are certified by the Supreme Court of Florida to handle capital cases; or their successors shall assume their position in the rotation. If an indictment includes more than one defendant, that judge shall be “skipped” in subsequent rotation assignments equal to the number of co-defendants charged in the Indictment. If the Chief Judge wishes to be part of the rotation, he/she will so advise the Clerk and the rotation succession shall be so adjusted.
- (2) Any judge assuming a criminal division shall take the required course on Handling Capital Cases before assuming the criminal division if possible, but in any event shall take the course at the earliest opportunity. Each criminal division judge shall comply with all “refresher” education requirements.
- (3) If a death sentence is affirmed on appeal then all post-conviction matters shall be heard by the sentencing judge for so long as that judge is on the circuit bench irrespective of their division assignment. If the sentencing judge is recused or is no longer on the circuit bench then the Clerk shall reassign the case for post-conviction proceedings to one of the judges in the criminal division in succession; as these judges leave the criminal division they will take with them any capital post-conviction proceedings previously assigned to them and their respective successors in the criminal division will be assigned the next capital post-conviction proceedings until all active judges in the criminal division have an equal number, after which the rotation system among all the criminal division judges will recommence.

F. DUTIES OF ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE:

The Administrative Judge of the Criminal Division, in addition to those duties specifically assigned herein, shall be responsible for the general supervision of that department and shall perform those administrative duties necessary to its efficient and effective operation in conformity with the applicable policies, procedures and rules governing the administration of that department as contemplated by Rule 2.215(b)(5), Florida Rules of Judicial Administration.

- G.** The Clerk of the Court is hereby directed to provide for modification in its procedure such as will properly implement this order as November 1, 2014.

DONE AND ORDERED this 24th day of October, 2014.

JOHN M. HARRIS
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CHIEF JUDGE

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