

**IN THE TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR THE STATE OF FLORIDA  
LEE COUNTY** **FAMILY LAW DIVISION**

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**ORDER REGARDING FAMILY LAW MATTERS  
PENDING BEFORE JUDGE AMY HAWTHORNE**

**YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT**, pursuant to AOSC21-17, effective June 21, 2021, all domestic relations/family law proceedings may be conducted in person. In addition, Twentieth Judicial Circuit Administrative Order 2.41, Third Amended, effective October 15, 2021, provides for remote and in person proceedings. Therefore, the undersigned has adopted the following policies with regards to Division U (Hawthorne) cases. In person proceedings will either be held in Courtroom 4H on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor or a 5<sup>th</sup> floor courtroom in the Lee County Justice Center, 1700 Monroe Street, Fort Myers, Florida, 33901. Parties must confirm with the Court's Judicial Assistant for the correct courtroom.

**EVIDENTIARY MATTERS**

All evidentiary hearings and will be conducted as in-person proceedings unless a party requests the matter be heard by Zoom. Parties requesting a hearing by Zoom must make the request at the time of scheduling.

**PLEASE NOTE: For in-person proceedings**, trial/hearing exhibits need NOT be filed electronically in the court file as was previously required by 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Administrative Order 2.40. For in-person proceedings, parties must bring hard copies of exhibits to the trial/hearing to be filed with the clerk. Parties must also bring a hard copy of all the exhibits for the Court. **For proceedings held by Zoom**, all exhibits must be electronically filed pursuant to the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Administrative Order 2.40.

**NON-EVIDENTIARY PROCEEDINGS**

All non-evidentiary hearings for which hearing time longer than 15 minutes is requested will be conducted in-person unless a party requests a hearing by Zoom. Parties requesting a hearing by Zoom must make the request at the time of scheduling.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**Emergency matters** will be handled on a case by case basis. Please forward a copy of any emergency motion to the Judicial Assistant. Only matters of extreme urgency, such as matters of life and death or instances of irreparable harm will be considered on an emergency basis. Please review the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Administrative Order No. 2.17 and Loudermilk v. Loudermilk, 693 So.2d 666 (Fla. 2d DCA 197) with regards to matters that may be considered an emergency. The Court will determine whether an emergency matter will be held in person or

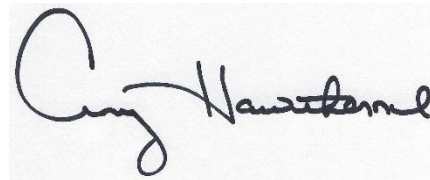
through Zoom conferencing on a case by case basis. An emergency motion must include a request for Zoom conferencing if it is so desired. If no such request is made, the Court will assume the movant is requesting an in-person hearing.

Either party may file a motion to convert an in-person proceeding to a Zoom proceeding or to convert a Zoom proceeding to an in-person proceeding by filing the motion with the Clerk and forwarding a copy to the Court no later than 10 days prior to the hearing. The motion must state with specificity the grounds on which a party is requesting conversion. **Failure to forward a copy of the motion to the Court on the same day it is filed will result in the denial of the motion.**

**PLEASE NOTE: Masks in the courthouse are not required. In addition, social distancing may be requested.** See Twentieth Judicial Circuit Administrative Order No. 2.41, Third Amended, entered October 15, 2021.

**If a matter is to be heard virtually through Zoom, all prior requirements regarding Zoom conferencing remain in full force and effect. See the Zoom Conferencing Requirements on the Court's page of the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court Administration website found at [www.ca.cjis20.org](http://www.ca.cjis20.org). If an evidentiary hearing or trial is to be held through Zoom conferencing, all exhibits must be electronically filed pursuant to the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Administrative Order 2.40. In addition, the rules of Virtual Courtroom Etiquette as posted on the Court's page of the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court Administration website must be followed.**

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers at Lee County, Florida.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. J. Hawthorne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

September 2, 2021