Judge McFee's Judicial Practices and Procedures

(updated 12/12/25)

Contact Information: Judicial
Assistant, Magda Cugat
E-mail: acugat@ca.cjis20.org
Telephone: 941-637-2375

Table of Contents

A. Communications with the Judicial Office 2
B. Scheduling Procedures 2
C. Technology Needs 3
D. Submission of Orders 3
E. Emergencies and Other Urgent Matters 3
F. Forms 4
G. Other Division Procedures 4

A. Communications with the Judicial Office

- **Method of Communication:** All communications to Judge McFee's office must be submitted by email to Judge McFee's assistant, Nicole at acugat@ca.cjis20.org. The subject line should contain the case number, case name, and relevant matter (e.g., 2025 CF/CP 001234 – Doe v. Doe – 2-Hour Hearing Requested).

- **Ex parte Communications:** All communications with the judicial office must comply with Canon 3(B)(7) of the Code of Judicial Conduct, which prohibits a judge from initiating, permitting, or considering ex parte communications and from considering other communications outside the presence of the parties concerning a pending or impending proceeding, unless authorized by law. All parties must be copied on any e-mail directed to the judicial office, unless an ex parte communication is authorized by law.

- **Unsolicited Communications:** Unsolicited communications from non-parties will not be considered by the court.

- **E-Filing Portal Contact Information:** All attorneys and self-represented litigants must provide an e-mail address to receive signed orders electronically, unless excused. Fla. R. Gen. Prac. & Jud. Admin. 2.516. It is the responsibility of attorneys and self-represented litigants to provide and/or update their contact information using Form 2.603, Designation of Current Mailing and E-Mail Address form. The Designation of Current Mailing and E-Mail Address form can be found on the Charlotte County Clerk of Court's website.

- **Response to Inquiries:** Judicial Assistants are not lawyers and cannot give legal advice. By law, they cannot recommend lawyers or advise a person on how to handle a case. They do not have the authority to approve requests to continue a matter or excuse a court appearance.

B. Scheduling Procedures

- **Court Scheduling:** The courtroom schedule is posted on the 20th Judicial Circuit's website. To schedule a hearing the scheduling party should e-mail the judicial assistant, copying opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant, to obtain additional dates/times. The Motion or Petition must be viewable on the Clerk's website before requesting hearing time.

- **Notice of Hearing:** A notice of hearing must be filed and served after reserving hearing time. All notices of hearing must contain the ADA notification required by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.540.

- **Use of Communication Technology:** The use of communication technology by phone or Zoom are governed by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.530 for non-criminal matters and Florida Rule of Criminal Procedure 3.116 for criminal matters. Requests for remote appearance must be made at least 24 hours before a hearing.

- **Continuance Procedure:** Continuances are governed by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.545(e) and Florida Rule of Criminal Procedure 3.190(f).

- **Cancelling Hearings:** When cancelling a hearing please notify the judicial assistant as soon as possible. You must also file and serve a notice of cancellation on opposing counsel and any self-represented litigant.

C. Technology Needs

- **Technology Needs:** All audio/visual requests must be submitted in writing to CharlotteHelpdesk@ca.cjis20.org.

D. Submission of Orders

- **Format:** All proposed orders must be submitted in Word format. Please make sure the supporting documents are viewable on the Clerk of Court's website before submitting an order.

- **Submission Method:** The E-Filing Portal only, unless rejected by the E-Filing Portal.

E. Emergencies and Other Urgent Matters

- **Requirements:** If a party believes there is a factual basis for setting an emergency hearing, a detailed motion setting forth the following must be filed: (1) the issues to be resolved, (2) reasons why an emergency hearing is necessary, and (3) the amount of time needed for each party's presentation.

- **Scheduling:** If the court determines that an emergency exists, a hearing will be scheduled unilaterally by the court. All parties shall make themselves available for the emergency hearing, barring exigent circumstances.

F. Forms

- **Access:** Felony plea forms and Probate checklists are available under Judge McFee's downloads on the 20th Judicial Circuit's website.

- **Usage:** A probate checklist must be filed for all dispositive orders.

G. Other Division Procedures

- **Probate Hearings:** All probate matters are referred to the Magistrate for a hearing. Please contact Magistrate Koch's office, Kristy Sandrock, KSandrock@CA.CJIS20.ORG, or 941-637-2213 to obtain hearing time from the Magistrate's Assistant.

- **ADA Accommodations:** ADA Accommodation Request Forms can be found on the 20th Judicial Circuit's website.

- **Interpreter Requests:** Please refer to Administrative Order 2.36 on the 20th Judicial Circuit's website.

- **Felony Hearings In-Custody Defendants:** If being requested to appear in-person in the courtroom, the Judicial Assistant must be notified of the request prior to 2:30pm, the day prior so proper transport arrangements can be made.

- **Motions:** All Motions must cite to the legal authority upon which the motion is based within the first paragraph of the motion. Motion filed without Constitutional, Statutory, Rule, or Caselaw Authority are subject to being stricken or hearing time may be denied.