

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 16TH  
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF THE STATE OF  
FLORIDA IN AND FOR MONROE COUNTY

Filed and Recorded in Official Records of  
MONROE COUNTY KEVIN MADOK, CPA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2.080/20-1  
Amended as to signature date only

IN RE:

FILING CASES AND CONDUCTING  
PROCEEDINGS IN CIRCUIT AND  
COUNTY COURT

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WHEREAS, the Chief Judge is charged by Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215 with the responsibility for administrative supervision of the circuit and county courts; and

WHEREAS, procedures related to the filing of cases are within the scope of this requirement; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit to the extent possible, to hear cases in a courthouse location which is convenient to litigants, witnesses, attorneys and the general public; and

WHEREAS, Article V, Section 7 of the Florida Constitution states that a circuit or county court may hold civil and criminal trials and hearings in any place within the territorial jurisdiction of the court as designated by the Chief Judge;


IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED AND ADJUDGED:

- A. For purposes of filing cases, the following geographic divisions are established within Monroe County:
1. Lower Keys Division: Including the City of Key West to the west end of Spanish Harbor Bridge, which are served by the Monroe County Courthouse at Key West.
  2. Middle Keys Division: Beginning at the west end of Spanish Harbor Bridge to the east end of Channel Five (5) Bridge, which are served by the Branch Courthouse at Marathon.
  3. Upper Keys Division: Beginning at the east end of Channel Five (5) Bridge, to and including Key Largo and that portion of Monroe County situated upon the mainland of Florida, which are served by the Branch Courthouse at Plantation Key.

- B. Circuit and County Court cases shall be filed in the appropriate geographic division in accordance with the following criteria:
1. Criminal, juvenile delinquency and traffic—where the offense is alleged to have occurred;
  2. Civil, including small claims, family and probate—where a defendant or respondent resides, where the cause of action accrued or where the property in litigation is located;
  3. Juvenile dependency—in accordance with Paragraph B.2., except for cases arising from Big Pine Key, which shall be filed in the Middle Keys.
- C. Proceedings in Circuit and County Court cases should be conducted in the courthouse facility serving the geographic division of Monroe County where the case was filed to the extent that it is feasible to do so. However, the presiding judge, in his or her discretion, may elect to conduct some or all of the proceedings in a case in a courthouse facility located in a geographic division of Monroe County other than the division where the case was filed. Such action by the presiding judge does not constitute a transfer of a case to a different geographic division or a reassignment of a case to another judge, actions which can only be taken by the Chief Judge.
- D. Depositions of parties properly taken in Monroe County under applicable rules of procedure or substantive law shall be taken within the geographic division in which the case was filed unless all parties agree to hold the depositions in an alternative location. When the presiding judge elects to conduct hearings in a courthouse facility other than the division where the case was originally filed pursuant to Paragraph C. the parties should still conduct depositions within the geographic division in which the case was filed unless all parties agree to hold the depositions in an alternative location.
- E. The provisions of this Administrative Order shall not be deemed to vest any litigant with substantive legal rights.

This Administrative Order vacates and supersedes Administrative Orders 2.020 97-1 and 2.025.

DONE AND ORDERED at Key West, Monroe County, Florida, this 12<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2020.

  
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Honorable Mark H. Jones  
Chief Judge