

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 3.911-5/22

IN RE: CLOSURE OF CIRCUIT CIVIL DIVISION “AB”

Having a limited number of available circuit judges, the Circuit has decided that Circuit Civil Division “AB” must be closed in order to provide for the creation of an additional division elsewhere within the court’s jurisdiction.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority conferred by Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215, it is **ORDERED AND ADJUDGED** as follows:

A. CLOSURE OF DIVISION “AB”

1. Effective May 6, 2022, the Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller (“Clerk”) will not assign any newly filed cases to Division AB. Newly filed cases after that date shall be randomly assigned to the remaining eleven circuit civil divisions.
2. Effective June 30, 2022, the Clerk will close Circuit Civil Division “AB” within its case maintenance system ("Showcase").

B. TRANSFER OF PENDING CIRCUIT CIVIL CASES

1. Court Administration, with approval by the Chief Judge, will divide all cases pending in Division AB into substantially equal shares, with the intention of equitably apportioning those cases among the eleven remaining circuit civil divisions. Court Administration will provide to the Clerk a list of approximately five-hundred (500) cases for reassignment per week. The first list of cases to be randomly reassigned shall be provided starting on June 1, 2022. Approximately five-hundred (500) cases shall be sent to the Clerk, per week, thereafter until reassignment of all Division AB cases is completed.
2. Starting June 1, 2022, the Clerk will begin the process of issuing a Notice of Reassignment for each case in Division AB and serving it on the Plaintiff either electronically or by United States Mail.
3. The issuance of the Notice of Reassignment shall effectuate the transfer of the case. The Clerk will update its case maintenance system at the time of issuing the Notice.

The Notice of Reassignment shall be docketed and available for public viewing within one (1) business day of the reassignment.

4. The Clerk's Notice of Reassignment shall contain a reference to this Administrative Order and include the following directives to the Plaintiff:
 - a. Within seven (7) days of the service of the Notice of Reassignment, the Plaintiff shall serve in accordance with Rule of Judicial Administration 2.516 a copy of the Notice of Reassignment on all parties who have not been dismissed or dropped from the action.
 - b. The Plaintiff shall also file a Notice of Service of the Notice of Reassignment ("Notice of Service") with the Clerk, to be docketed in the case. The Notice of Service will include a complete service list.
5. All Notices of Reassignment must be filed and served by the Clerk by June 30, 2022.
6. No later than June 30, 2022, the Clerk shall provide to Court Administration the complete list of transferred cases and their reassigned divisions. This list will also be posted on the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit's website upon completion of reassignment.

C. HEARING CALENDAR AND TRIALS

1. The Division AB Uniform Motion Calendar and Special Set Hearing Calendar will be suspended effective June 17, 2022. **All hearings and trials currently scheduled after that date are cancelled, unless parties are specifically notified by the Court that their hearing will still be heard after June 17, 2022, by a substitute or senior judge.**
2. If a hearing scheduled to occur after June 1, 2022 is cancelled, that hearing will need to be reset in front of the reassigned judge following receipt of the Notice of Reassignment from the Clerk.
3. In cases with an order setting a trial in Division AB after June 1, 2022, the newly assigned judge will *sua sponte* issue an Order Resetting Trial. If parties do not receive a new trial order within 45 days of reassignment, the parties shall file a Notice for Trial or Motion for Pretrial Conference pursuant to Fla. R. Civ. P. 1.200(b) to bring the matter to the new judge's attention and secure a new order setting trial.
4. All deadlines associated with currently issued trial orders in Division AB shall remain in effect wherever possible unless and until they are superseded by a new order entered by the reassigned division judge.

D. EMERGENCY MATTERS

1. Emergency motions that are filed prior to reassignment, as determined by the date of issuance of the Clerk's Notice of Reassignment, shall be heard by the substitute or senior judge presiding over Division AB. Emergency Motions filed after the date of reassignment, shall be heard by the judge of the reassigned division.

E. ASSIGNMENT OF REOPENED, CLOSED CASES

1. Closed cases previously assigned to Division AB which are reopened after May 6, 2022, shall be immediately randomly reassigned to one of the existing circuit civil divisions. The Clerk shall issue a Notice of Reassignment in the manner set forth in section B above, however, the Clerk's Notice will be served on the party reopening the case and the party reopening the case (whether plaintiff or defendant) will be the one required to serve the notice on the other parties.

DONE and SIGNED in Chambers at West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, this
4th day of May, 2022



Glenn D. Kelley
Chief Judge