

JUDGE BECKY TITUS, CIRCUIT JUDGE
Family Court - Division 2

JUDGE TITUS REQUIRES THAT THE SCHEDULING ATTORNEY **PROVIDE A COPY OF THE NOTICE OF HEARING, A COPY OF THE MOTION, AS WELL AS ANY SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS OR PLEADINGS REFERENCED IN THE MOTION TO BE HEARD.** THESE DOCUMENTS SHOULD BE FURNISHED TO THE J.A. AT LEAST ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE DATE OF THE HEARING.

OFFICE INFORMATION: Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. **Phone no.** (941) 861-4866. The office is closed from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. for lunch. Hearings are held in Courtroom 1 on the 6th Floor, at the Sarasota Criminal Justice Building, 2071 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota, FL, 34237. Mailing address: P.O. Box 48927, Sarasota, FL, 34230.

FAX NUMBER: Judge Titus' fax number is 941-861-4865. The fax machine should be used for **emergencies only.** Notices of hearing and other non-urgent documents should be hand-delivered or mailed to the judge's office.

LOCAL RULES: Local Rules for the 12th Judicial Circuit are available from the Sarasota County Bar Association (941-366-6703) or can be accessed via the internet at www.sarasotabar.com. **Discovery Motions.** Judge Titus strictly adheres to Local Rules 5a and 5b regarding discovery motions. Any discovery motion not in full compliance (including a Certificate of Good Faith) with these Rules will be stricken and the hearing canceled.

TELEPHONE APPEARANCES: Judge Titus allows telephone appearances only on hearings 30 minutes or less in length and that are non-evidentiary in nature, unless stipulated to by the parties. The scheduling attorney **must** provide a phone number on the Notice of Hearing for the party who is to be called. When the Judge is ready for the hearing, the clerk will initiate a **collect call** to that party unless a toll-free number is provided. As there may be multiple hearings scheduled at the same time, the court may not call at the exact time the hearing is set. Conference calls should be arranged via a service that provides "audio conferencing" as the court will initiate one call only.

FAMILY COURT:

1. *Mediation must occur on any custody, visitation or parental responsibility issue* before a hearing is set before the court, as required under section 44.102(2)(c), Florida Statutes.
2. *All claims for temporary relief* shall be set before the Family Division Magistrate, the Honorable Barbara Ingram, using JACS. The scheduling attorney must prepare an Order of Referral for the judge's signature unless an Order has previously been entered.
3. *All non-Title IV-D child support establishment, enforcement, or modification proceedings* must be set before the Honorable Barbara Ingram, Support Enforcement Hearing Officer, using JACS, in accordance with Fla. R. Fam. P. 12.491 and Administrative Order 99-19. No referral order is necessary. Title IV-D proceedings shall be set before the Honorable Dorothy Hauge, Support Enforcement Hearing Officer.
4. *Motions for Contempt of Visitation and Shared Parental Responsibility* must be specific as to each violation, including dates, and must refer to the specific language in the order or judgment which has allegedly been violated.

5. Additionally, all parties to a dissolution of marriage proceeding with minor children or a paternity action are required by Fla. Statute 61.21, with or without a separate court order, to complete the Parent Education and Family Stabilization Course and file proof of compliance prior to the entry by the court of a final judgment.

SCHEDULING: A motion must be filed *before* scheduling it for hearing and hearings will be limited to the time reserved on JACS. Hearings of *more* than 60 minutes must be scheduled through the Judicial Assistant. Attorneys should not combine and schedule back to back 15 minute hearings to acquire 30 minutes of hearing time or back to back 30 minute hearing times to obtain a 60 minute hearing. If a hearing of more than two hours is needed, counsel should send a copy of the motion to the court with a cover letter outlining the reason(s) for the requested hearing time.

EMERGENCY HEARINGS: The J.A. can only give out emergency hearing time on the judge's instructions. Accordingly, all "emergency" motions must be filed with the Clerk of Court and served upon the opposing party, except in those rare cases which permit *ex parte* relief. The cause of the emergency must be incorporated in the body of the motion. All motions requesting emergency hearing time must be submitted in writing, including an estimate of the amount of hearing time requested. After review, the judge will determine if a hearing is required.

MOTIONS FOR REHEARING, RECONSIDERATION AND NEW TRIAL: All motions for rehearing, reconsideration and for new trial are to be submitted directly to the judge's office, along with a cover letter. After review, the judge will determine whether a hearing is required.