

In the  
Indiana Supreme Court



IN THE MATTER OF THE )  
 )  
APPROVAL OF LOCAL RULES )  
 )  
FOR LAKE COUNTY )

Case No. 45S00-1408-MS-522

ORDER APPROVING AMENDED LOCAL RULE

The Judges of the Lake Circuit and Superior Courts request the approval of an amended local rule for caseload allocation in accordance with Ind. Administrative Rule 1(E). Attached to this Order is the proposed amended local rule.

Upon examination of the proposed rule amendment requested by the Lake Circuit and Superior Courts, this Court finds that the proposed rule amendment, LR45-AR1-01 complies with the requirements of Ind. Administrative Rule 1(E), and, accordingly, should be approved and posted in the county clerk's office(s) and on the county clerk's website, if any, and on the Indiana Judicial Website.

IT IS, THEREFORE, ORDERED by this Court that amended Local Rule LR45-AR1-01 for Lake Circuit and Superior Courts, set forth as an attachment to this Order, is approved effective January 1, 2015. The Clerk of this Court is directed to forward a copy of this Order to the Hon. Thomas P. Stefaniak, Jr., Lake Superior Court, 3000 West 93rd Avenue, Crown Point, IN 46307; to the Hon. Diane Boswell, Lake Superior Court, 2293 North Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307-1854; to the Hon. Julie N. Cantrell, Lake Superior Court, 2293 North Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307-1854; to the Hon. William E. Davis, Lake Superior Court, 232 Russell Street, Hammond, IN 46320; to the Hon. Calvin D. Hawkins, Lake Superior Court, 3711 East Main Street, East Chicago, IN 46312-2299; to the Hon. Sheila M. Moss, Lake Superior Court, 2293 North Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307-1854; to the Hon. Clarence D. Murray, Lake Superior Court, 2293 North Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307; to the Hon. George Paras, Lake Circuit Court, 2293 North Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307-1854; to the Hon. John R. Pera, Lake Superior Court, 2293 North Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307; to the Hon. Nicholas J. Schiralli, Lake Superior Court, 2293

North Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307-1854; to the Hon. Diane Kavadias Schneider, Lake Superior Court, 2293 North Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307-1854; to the Hon. John M. Sedia, Lake Superior Court, 232 Russell Street, Hammond, IN 46320; to the Hon. Thomas W. Webber, Sr., Lake Superior Court, 15 West Fourth Avenue, Gary, IN 46402-1238; to the Hon. Elizabeth Tavitas, Lake Superior Court, 15 West Fourth Avenue, Gary, IN 46402-1284; to the Hon. Salvador Vasquez, Lake Superior Court, 2293 North Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307-1854; to the Hon. Jesse M. Villalpando, Lake Superior Court, 232 Russell Street, Hammond, IN 46320-1877; to the Clerk of the Lake Circuit and Superior Courts; and to the Division of State Court Administration. The Clerk is also directed to post this Order on the Court's website.

The Clerk of the Lake Circuit and Superior Courts is directed to enter this Order and attachment in the Record of Judgments and Orders for the Courts, to post this Order and attachment for examination by the Bar and the general public, and if available, to publish this Order and attachment on the county clerk's website.

DONE at Indianapolis, Indiana, on August 11, 2014.



Brent E. Dickson  
Chief Justice of Indiana

**LR45-AR1-01 PLAN FOR ALLOCATION OF JUDICIAL RESOURCES**

I. Pursuant to TR81(A), the Lake Circuit and Superior Courts adopt this Rule, effective January 1, 2015, governing the assignment of all cases filed in the Lake Circuit or Superior Courts as required by and in accordance with A.R. 1(E). Unless changed by the court through addition, deletion and/or amendment, these rules shall remain in effect until December 31, 2016. Notwithstanding the enactment of the following statutes, IC 33-28-1-2, IC 33-29-1-1.5, IC 33-29-1.5-2 and IC 33-31-1-9, which address jurisdictional issues, the Lake Circuit and Superior Courts adopt the following case assignment schedule:

1. All MR, FA, FB, FC (Murder and Felony Levels 1,2 3,4 and 5 after June 30, 2014) shall be filed in the Criminal Division pursuant to L.R. 45 C.R. 2.2.1 in such a manner so as to ensure the equal distribution of them in the Criminal Division Courts.

2. FD (Level 6 cases after June 30, 2014) cases shall be assigned amongst the four Criminal Division and four County Division Courts pursuant to the requirements of L.R. C.R.-2.2.1 in such a manner so as to ensure the equal distribution of them between the Criminal and County Division Courts.

3. PC, CM, and MC cases shall be filed pursuant to the requirements of L.R. 45 C.R. 2.2.1 with the following exception:

A. an additional 350 CM cases are to be filed in County Division 1 to meet caseload utilization requirements.

4. The filing of IF and OV cases is addressed in LR45-C.R.2.2.1, as modified below:

A. County Division 1 – (D07) will receive 60% of all IF cases filed in the County Division.

- B. County Division 2 – (D08) No IF cases shall be filed.
- C. County Division 3 – (D09) will receive 25% of all IF cases filed in the County Division.
- D. County Division 4 – (D12) will receive 15% of all IF cases filed in the County Division.
5. All JC, JD, JS, JP, JM, and JT cases shall be filed in the Superior Court, Juvenile Division.
6. All CT and PL cases shall be filed in the Clerk's Office in Crown Point. CT and PL cases shall be distributed throughout the Circuit Court and Superior Court, Civil Division, Rooms 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 in such a manner so as to comply with Administrative Rule 1(E). The Circuit and Superior Court shall cooperate to ensure such compliance. Any new CT or PL case which seeks emergency relief shall be brought to the attention of the Judge of the Lake Circuit Court or a Judge of the Superior Court, Civil Division, Rooms 6 or 7. That Judge shall address the emergency matter. The case shall thereafter be transmitted to the assigned Court as provided in this rule.
7. All MF and MI cases shall be filed in the Clerk's Office in Crown Point, where said cases shall be randomly assigned to the Circuit Court and Civil Division, Rooms 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7, in such a manner so as to ensure an equal division of these cases in each court. However, MI cases seeking a name change may be filed in the Clerk's Office in Crown Point, Gary, Hammond or East Chicago. Such cases shall be randomly assigned by the Clerk at each location in such a manner so as to ensure an equal division of them to the Circuit and Civil Division Courts at each location.

8. CC cases shall be filed in the Clerk's Office in Crown Point, Gary, Hammond and East Chicago. Such cases shall be randomly assigned by the Clerk at each location in such a manner so as to ensure an equal division of them to the Circuit and Civil Division Courts, with the following exception:

A. During any calendar year, no more than 400 CC cases shall be filed in Superior Court, Civil Division, Room 2, sitting at East Chicago.

9. Protective Order (PO) cases may be filed in the Circuit Court, Superior Court, Civil Division and Juvenile Division Courts by court location in the following manner:

A. In PO cases filed in Crown Point, where the parties are married with children and have a pending or previous dissolution case, the PO case shall be assigned to the Court having jurisdiction over the previous or pending case.

B. In PO cases filed in Crown Point, where the parties are married with children but no dissolution case has been filed, the PO case shall be assigned to the Circuit Court.

C. In PO cases filed in Crown Point, where the parties are not married but have children, the PO case shall be assigned to the Juvenile Division.

D. In PO cases filed in Crown Point, where the parties are not married but have children and have a pending case in the Juvenile Division, the PO case shall be assigned to the Juvenile Division.

E. Notwithstanding the above listed paragraphs A through D, in the event there is an emergency, serious injury, and/or threat of serious injury to the Petitioner, the PO case filed in Crown Point shall be assigned to the Circuit Court, Superior Court, Civil Division or Juvenile Division. After due consideration and determination of the Petition for Protective Order, said court shall transfer any further action on the Protective Order to the Court having jurisdiction over the companion case (dissolution or paternity).

F. In PO cases filed in Crown Point, where there is alleged domestic violence and the parties are not married and have no children, the PO case shall be assigned to the Circuit Court or Superior Court, Civil Division.

G. In PO cases filed in Crown Point, where stalking is alleged, the PO case shall be assigned to the Circuit Court or Superior Court, Civil Division.

H. In PO cases filed in Crown Point, where there has been domestic violence and one of the parties is in custody or criminal charges have been filed, the PO case shall be assigned to the Circuit Court or Superior Court, Civil Division.

I. In PO cases filed in Crown Point, where there has been sexual abuse of a minor alleged, the PO case shall be assigned to the Juvenile Division.

J. In PO cases filed in Gary, where the parties are married with children and have a pending or previous dissolution case in the Superior Court, Civil Division, Room Three, the PO case shall be assigned to Superior Court, Civil Division, Room Three.

K. Notwithstanding the above assignment parameters established for PO cases, all other Protective Orders filed in Crown Point, Gary and Hammond shall be assigned by the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Superior Court, Civil Division in such a manner so as ensure equal case distribution. All PO cases filed in the Clerk's Office on East Chicago shall be assigned to the Superior Court, Civil Division, Room 2 sitting in East Chicago.

L. The Clerk of the Circuit Court, Superior Court, Civil Division and Juvenile Division shall process all PO case filings and have them assigned and delivered to the proper Court consistent with these rules no later than 3:30P.M. unless there has been serious bodily injury or threat of bodily injury.

10. All DR and RS cases shall be filed in either the Circuit Court in Crown Point or in the Superior Court, Civil Division - Room 3 in Gary.

11. All MH, ES, EU GU and TR cases shall be filed in either the Circuit Court or in the Superior Court, Civil Division Rooms 2, 4 and 5. GU petitions filed by the Volunteer Advocates for Seniors and Incapacitated Adults (VASIA) program or any other volunteer adult guardian program shall be filed in Civil Division, Room 7.

12. Petitions for the appointment of a guardian over the person of a minor shall be filed in the Circuit Court or Superior Court, Civil Division, Rooms 2, 3, and 5, unless the Juvenile Division is vested with exclusive jurisdiction pursuant to any Indiana statute.

13. Petitions for adoption shall be randomly filed in the Civil Division courts located in Hammond and Gary and in the Circuit Courts and Civil Division courts located in Crown Point. Petitions for Adoption may also be filed in the Lake Superior Court, Civil Division, Room 2, sitting in East Chicago.

14. Petitions for adoption which are reasonably anticipated to be opposed by any person shall be filed either in the Circuit Court or in Superior Court, Civil Division, Room 3.

15. The County Division shall have exclusive original jurisdiction of all Small Claims Cases, appeals, and/or Trials De Novo of civil cases from City or Town Courts. The County Division courts shall maintain a Plenary Docket, with limited jurisdiction as more fully described below:

- A. There shall be no random filing of civil cases in the County Division.
- B. The Plenary Docket is limited to cases designated as PL, CT, CC and MI.
- C. Damages awarded in any case filed on the Plenary Docket shall not exceed \$10,000.00 (ten-thousand dollars).
- D. The term "damages" shall include attorney fees, but excludes court costs, post judgment interest and any sanctions that a court may impose.

16. No case seeking equitable relief shall be filed in the County Division except as follows:

- A. Orders directing the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to issue car titles, car registrations and driver's licenses,
- B. Evictions,

- C. Replevins, provided the value of the property at issue does not exceed \$10,000.00,
- D. Civil proceedings against property related to criminal activities, provided the value of the property does not exceed \$10,000.00.

17. This rule shall not be construed as limiting the powers of the County Division Courts with respect to collecting judgments, punishing contempts or enforcing its orders.

18. These rules should not be construed to exclude a County Division Judicial Officer from adjudicating a case by way of transfer or special judge assignment that would otherwise exceed the jurisdictional limits set forth in these rules for the County Division Courts.

19. By filing suit on the Plenary Docket or by filing a counterclaim or cross claim, a party waives any right to relief that is beyond the County Division's jurisdictional limits set forth in these rules. However, if a party can establish that the claim was mandatory or that due diligence would not have disclosed the need to request such relief prior to filing their suit, or that transfer is appropriate pursuant to T.R. 75(B), upon motion, the case shall be transferred to the Circuit or Civil Division Courts. Upon such transfer, the case shall no longer be constrained by the jurisdictional limits set forth in these rules.