

Judge Raymond Forbess, Jr., is one of two Judges who handle all cases under the jurisdiction of the County Court, including Civil, Small Claims, Traffic, and Misdemeanor Criminal cases. Judge Forbess handles first appearance the week he is on the criminal bench. Judge Forbess also handles one-half of the Juvenile Delinquency cases.

THE COURT DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVE MOTIONS FILED ON THE CLERK'S DOCKET. ANY MOTION TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE COURT MUST BE EMAILED TO THE JUDICIAL ASSISTANT.

SCHEDULING:

Attorneys requesting a hearing must do so by email. Submit a request to the Judicial Assistant at Shellyh@clayclerk.com and include the case style, case number, type of hearing, and how much time is requested.

ZOOM HEARINGS:

With the exception of trials, civil hearings will be conducted by Zoom unless the facts and circumstances surrounding the case dictate otherwise.

Trials will be conducted in person unless special circumstances exist. You must file a Motion and Proposed Order for the Judge's consideration at the time the hearing is set.

The Zoom I.D. for Civil hearings is **470 263 6503**

WRITS, ORDERS & FINAL JUDGMENTS:

In light of paperless court, all proposed Writs, Orders, and Final Judgments shall be sent by email in Word Format to Shellyh@clayclerk.com, after you have e-filed all supporting documents. Please do not follow-up with hard copies.

All documents must be typed in 12 point font with 1 inch margins. Case style should follow Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 1.100.

Orders submitted in a format that makes modification of the Order difficult, or that does not follow the above-stated format will be returned for amendment.

MEDIATION:

Cases in which a complaint for Eviction alleges damages (count II) will be required to attend mediation prior to setting a trial. If a Defendant fails to appear for mediation, a default may be entered against him/her. If a Plaintiff fails to appear, the case may be dismissed.

Parties to all county civil cases who wish to participate in mediation but are unable to agree on a mediator should motion the Court to appoint a mediator.

CRIMINAL

All Criminal hearings will be conducted in person for First Appearance

FIRST APPEARANCE:

First Appearance is conducted via zoom at 8:00 a.m. every morning Judge Forbess is on the criminal bench. First Appearance is handled via zoom under meeting number: 879 458 6568

APPEARANCE OF RETAINED COUNSEL:

Upon filing a notice of appearance/waiver of appearance/plea of Not Guilty, counsel is not required to appear at Arraignment. The case will automatically be passed to the private attorney pretrial date two weeks after the Arraignment. Private Attorney Pretrials are held on Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. when Judge Forbess is on the criminal bench.

CONTINUANCES IN ALL CASES:

Motions for Continuance must be made in writing and submitted at least 24 hours in advance.

PRO SE LITIGANTS:

At this time, the Court is still accepting paper documents from Pro Se litigants. All filings must be typed or in legible handwriting.

SMALL CLAIMS COURT:

Whether represented by counsel or *pro se*, Small Claims litigants will be required to attend mediation prior to setting a trial. If mediation is unsuccessful, the parties will attend a pretrial conference and if necessary, the case will be set for trial.

TRAFFIC COURT:

Traffic Court is conducted in person unless otherwise notified.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY:

Juvenile Court is conducted on Wednesdays when Judge Forbess is on the criminal bench. Hearings are in person unless otherwise notified.

Please note that Judges are barred by Judicial Ethics from speaking with individuals about specific cases outside of a formal hearing. Judges are prohibited from dispensing legal advice.