

**THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS  
ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN FOR CASELOAD MANAGEMENT  
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2016**

The Third Judicial Circuit of Arkansas consists of Jackson, Lawrence, Randolph and Sharp Counties. The circuit has three divisions served by the following judges: Harold S. Erwin, Division 1; Philip G. Smith, Division 2; and Kevin N. King, Division 3. The said presiding judges have unanimously adopted the following plan for caseload management, pursuant to Administrative Order No. 14 of the Supreme Court of Arkansas:

GOAL OF THE PLAN: This plan is designed to insure the efficient and prompt resolution of cases and other business of the courts within the circuit, and to apportion the cases and business of the Courts among the judges as randomly and equally as is reasonably possible.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This administrative plan shall take effect January 1, 2016 or upon approval of the Supreme Court, and shall remain in effect until approval of a subsequent plan by the Supreme Court.

ASSIGNMENT OF CASES GENERALLY: The Circuit Courts in each county of the circuit are organized into subject matter divisions as follows: Civil, Criminal, Domestic Relations, Juvenile, and Probate. Additionally, there currently are three specialty courts in operation within the district, those being drug court programs in Jackson, Lawrence, and Randolph counties. The designation of these division and specialty courts shall in no way limit the powers and duties of the respective assigned judges. Judges shall not be assigned exclusively to particular subject matter divisions or specialty courts so as to preclude them from hearing other cases that may come before them. Each judge may schedule sessions to hear contested or uncontested cases in chambers in any of the five subject matter divisions.

SPECIFIC CASELOAD ASSIGNMENT:

- (1) The Division 1 judge will hear primarily criminal cases, civil cases, and Jackson County drug court cases, as well as juvenile delinquency revocations and emergency juvenile detention matters as time and scheduling allow.
- (2) The Division 2 judge will hear primarily civil cases, domestic relations cases, probate cases, criminal cases, and Lawrence County and Randolph County drug court cases.
- (3) The Division 3 judge will hear primarily juvenile cases, child support cases, Department of Human Services cases, probate cases, civil cases, and cases involving orders of protection.

- (4) All judges in the circuit will hear involuntary commitment cases, which will be brought before the judge most convenient to the county needing the hearing.
- (5) All judges in the circuit may sign ex-parte orders of protection in domestic abuse cases.
- (6) All judges in the circuit will hear additional cases in each Division as the need arises. Cases may be transferred between Divisions by agreement of the judges, in which event the judge of the originating Division shall issue an order transferring the case to the other Division prior to adjudication. Transfer orders shall not be required for uncontested matters, criminal pleas, domestic abuse hearings, or commitment hearings.

**ADJUSTMENT OF CASELOAD ASSIGNMENTS:** The judges of the Third Judicial Circuit shall meet at the end of each calendar year to determine whether any adjustment in caseload assignments from one division of the Circuit Court to another are necessary to maintain proper balance of caseloads and to otherwise conform to the directives of the Supreme Court.

**RECUSALS:** Any judge recusing in a case shall confer with any or all other judges in the circuit regarding transfer of the case to another judge, and the recusing judge may by agreement transfer the case to any other judge in the circuit for final adjudication. If all the judges in the circuit recuse from or decline to accept transfer of a case, the original recusing judge shall request assignment of a trial judge pursuant to Supreme Court Administrative Order No. 16.

**SPECIALTY COURTS:** Drug Courts are operated in Jackson, Lawrence, and Randolph Counties. All three are post-adjudication programs and are open to defendants with pending non-violent felony charges, or pending probation or parole revocations on non-violent convictions. The Jackson County Drug Court is funded entirely by the State of Arkansas; the Lawrence and Randolph County Drug Courts are funded by the State of Arkansas and by collection of defendants' assessed fees and court costs. Drug Court team members in each court include (1) the presiding judge, (2) the prosecuting attorney, (3) the public defender, (4) the ACC probation officer, (5) the ACC substance abuse counselor, (6) the ACC administrative assistant, (7) the County Sheriff or his representative, and (8) the local Chief of Police or his representative. The judges of the Third Judicial Circuit hereby certify that these programs are conducted in compliance with Arkansas statutes governing drug court programs, Arkansas sentencing laws and guidelines, and Arkansas statutes and rules regulating assessment and collection of court costs, fines, and probation assessments.

**DISTRICT COURTS:** No State District Courts operate within the Third Judicial Circuit. Local District Courts with county-wide jurisdiction are established and operate in each of the four counties of the Circuit. Each local District Court has a single District Judge operating from a single venue in their respective

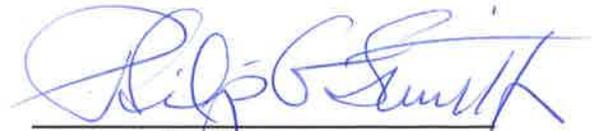
counties. No specialty courts are operated by any local District Court in the Third Judicial Circuit.

The judges of the Third Judicial Circuit have discussed this caseload management plan, giving due consideration to the relative time factors involved in various types of cases in each subject matter division of the courts. We are in agreement that this plan divides the caseloads approximately equally and randomly among the judges and will most efficiently serve the needs of the citizens of the Third Judicial Circuit.

Therefore, we respectfully submit this plan for judicial caseload allocation for your consideration and approval.

---

Harold S. Erwin, Division 1  
Circuit Judge  
Third Judicial Circuit



---

Philip G. Smith, Division 2  
Circuit Judge  
Third Judicial Circuit

---

Kevin N. King, Division 3  
Circuit Judge  
Third Judicial Circuit

counties. No specialty courts are operated by any local District Court in the Third Judicial Circuit.

The judges of the Third Judicial Circuit have discussed this caseload management plan, giving due consideration to the relative time factors involved in various types of cases in each subject matter division of the courts. We are in agreement that this plan divides the caseloads approximately equally and randomly among the judges and will most efficiently serve the needs of the citizens of the Third Judicial Circuit.

Therefore, we respectfully submit this plan for judicial caseload allocation for your consideration and approval.

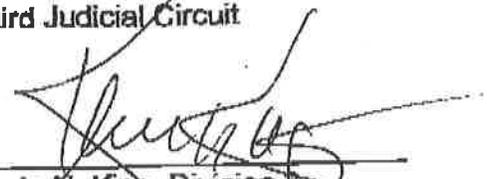
---

Harold S. Erwin, Division 1  
Circuit Judge  
Third Judicial Circuit



---

Philip G. Smith, Division 2  
Circuit Judge  
Third Judicial Circuit



---

Kevin N. King, Division 3  
Circuit Judge  
Third Judicial Circuit

counties. No specialty courts are operated by any local District Court in the Third Judicial Circuit.

The judges of the Third Judicial Circuit have discussed this caseload management plan, giving due consideration to the relative time factors involved in various types of cases in each subject matter division of the courts. We are in agreement that this plan divides the caseloads approximately equally and randomly among the judges and will most efficiently serve the needs of the citizens of the Third Judicial Circuit.

Therefore, we respectfully submit this plan for judicial caseload allocation for your consideration and approval.



Harold S. Erwin, Division 1  
Circuit Judge  
Third Judicial Circuit



Phillip G. Smith, Division 2  
Circuit Judge  
Third Judicial Circuit

---

Kevin N. King, Division 3  
Circuit Judge  
Third Judicial Circuit