

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
IN AND FOR INDIAN RIVER, MARTIN, OKEECHOBEE, AND ST. LUCIE COUNTIES  
STATE OF FLORIDA

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2023-03**

**RE: CIVIL MATTERS TO BE REFERRED TO GENERAL MAGISTRATE**

**WHEREAS**, Rule 2.215 of the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration requires the Chief Judge of the circuit, consistent with branch-wide policies, to direct the formation and implementation of policies and priorities for the operation of all courts and officers within the circuit; and

**WHEREAS**, as a result of, inter alia, recent legislative changes<sup>1</sup>, branch directives<sup>2</sup>, and increased case filings within the civil division of the courts, additional resources are required within the division in order to effectively manage the workload of the division to promote the prompt and efficient administration of justice; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been determined that in order to facilitate the marshalling of civil cases from filing to disposition, the appointment of General Magistrates is deemed integral to the process.

**NOW, THEREFORE** in accordance with the authority vested in the chief judge by Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution, section 43.26, Florida Statutes, and Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215, it is hereby ORDERED:

1. General Magistrates within the circuit may be utilized for the purpose of hearing civil matters as agreed to by the parties or as referred by the assigned judge.
2. As referrals to a General Magistrate require the consent of the parties, should a party not consent to the use of a General Magistrate the party must file a written objection to the referral with the clerk of court, the presiding judge, and the opposing party(ies) prior to the commencement of the hearing on the issue(s) referred. Failure to file an objection shall constitute consent to the referred issue(s) being heard by the General Magistrate.
3. The General Magistrate shall not be referred nor shall the General Magistrate hear:
  - a. Jury trials
  - b. Bench trials
  - c. Final Hearings

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<sup>1</sup> See HB 387 (2023)

<sup>2</sup> AOSC23-29

4. Should the parties desire the referral of a matter to the General Magistrate prior to referral by the Court, an Order of Referral to the Magistrate in substantial conformity with that attached hereto as Exhibit A shall be provided to the Court for review and signature.

This administrative order shall take effect July 17, 2023

DONE AND ORDERED this 17th day of July, 2023 at Ft. Pierce in St. Lucie County, Florida.



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CHARLES SCHWAB, CHIEF JUDGE