

Sixth Judicial Circuit
Case Assignment Plan, Effective January 1, 2024

1. **Goal of the Plan:** Pursuant to Administrative Order Number 14, as amended, the judges of the Sixth Judicial Circuit have agreed to a Case Assignment Plan that will maximize the resources of Pulaski and Perry Counties while equitably dividing the caseload among the seventeen (17) circuit judges. The Plan takes into consideration various factors, including, but not limited to, the current caseload assignment, the location of the facilities, the number of courtrooms suitable for jury trials, and the desire of each individual judge regarding case assignment.

By presenting this Plan to the Arkansas Supreme Court, the judges of the Sixth Judicial Circuit recognize that the Plan is a compromise of many factors and that the goal is to serve best the citizens of Pulaski and Perry Counties. Changes in the Plan may be made depending on changed circumstances during the effective term of the Plan. Any change will be presented for approval of the Arkansas Supreme Court before implementation.

2. **Effective Dates:** This Plan shall be enacted for the period between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2025. The Plan shall remain in effect during that period unless otherwise modified and shall continue until the Arkansas Supreme Court has approved another Plan.

3. **Voting:** Pursuant to the Per Curiam Opinion delivered January 30, 2003, a majority of the circuit judges in the judicial district shall be sufficient to adopt a plan. In the Sixth Judicial Circuit, there are seventeen (17) circuit judges; therefore, nine (9) votes are required to adopt a plan, and any modifications thereafter.

4. **Administrative Plan:** All cases are to be apportioned among the circuit judges as equally as possible by random selection, and cases may be reassigned as necessity requires. A circuit judge to whom a case is assigned shall accept that case unless he or she is disqualified, or the interests of justice require that the case not be heard by that judge.

Pulaski County Caseload Plan:

- a. Pulaski County Average Caseload. Using year end 2022 case filing figures, the total number of cases filed in Pulaski County was 21,741, an increase of 2,338 cases above the figures used in the 2022 Plan. The caseload of each circuit judge, if divided equally between the seventeen (17) judges, would be approximately 1,279 for calendar year 2022. The circuit judges acknowledge that since the juvenile courtrooms are located separate from the Pulaski County Courthouse, the logistics require a deviation from the concept of equal case filings for each judge. The judges will continue the pre-diversion program

in juvenile court and have the responsibility of monitoring the participants.

The case filings as of March 31, 2023, from the Pulaski Circuit Clerk indicate an increase in filings could increase substantially over year end 2022 filings. These new filings are not included in this Case Assignment Plan, but if the trend continues, an Amended Case Assignment Plan may be submitted for consideration at the end of 2023.

- b. The Circuit Judges and the eight (8) State District Judges, as of January 1, 2022, have agreed that pursuant to Administrative Orders 14 and 18, the State District Judges will hear a category, or categories, of cases referred to them by the circuit court as will be described in more detail below. It is estimated that approximately 1800 to 2400, hearings are set each year for the State District Judges but with hearings canceled for lack of service or the entry of agreed orders, the actual number of hearings held is substantially less. The Circuit Judge continues to have jurisdiction of the case for other issues.

The judges of the 6th Judicial Circuit have noticed a trend since 2008 of the numbers of cases filed and the increase/decrease of filings in certain subject matters. As a result of these trends, it is necessary for the judges to monitor the filings periodically to ensure that each judge is receiving a fair and proportionate number of cases each year.

- c. Breakdown of Subject-Matter Divisions:

Case Type:	Number of Cases:
	<u>Using Year End 2022 figures</u>
Criminal	4,492
Civil	8,902
Domestic	4,525
Juvenile	1,010
Probate	2,812
TOTAL	21,741

- d. For calendar year 2024, these judges will hear the following type cases in Pulaski County:

1. Judges Byrd-Manning and Shanice Johnson will share in the juvenile caseload.
2. Judges Compton, Gill, Honorable, Leon Johnson, and Whatley will share in the criminal caseload.

3. Judges Connors, Fox, James, Pierce, Welch, and Wright will share in the civil caseload. Judge Honorable will continue to handle any civil cases she has pending at the end of 2023.
4. Judges Connors, James, Amy Johnson, Shawn Johnson, Reif, and Tucker will share in the domestic relations caseload. Judge Gill will continue to handle any domestic relations cases he has pending at the end of 2023.
5. Judges Connors, Amy Johnson, Shawn Johnson, Reif, and Tucker will share in the probate caseload. Judge Gill will continue to handle any probate cases he has pending at the end of 2023.
6. Judges Compton, Connors, Fox, Gill, Honorable, Amy Johnson, Shawn Johnson, Reif, Tucker, Welch, and Whatley will participate in the rotation of hearings at Civil Commitment Mental Health Court. Judges Byrd-Manning, James, Shanice Johnson, and Pierce agree to serve as back-up Civil Commitment Mental Health Court Judges in emergency situations.

e. The division of cases is listed below. The numbers of cases listed are approximations because the filings will vary from year to year.

Div.	Judge	Percentage (No. of cases)	Total
1 st	L. Johnson	22% criminal (988)	988
2 nd	Tucker	20% dom (905); 22% prob (619)	1524
3 rd	Compton	22% criminal (988)	988
4 th	Wright	19% civil (1691)	1691
5 th	Honorable	17% criminal (764)	764
6 th	Fox	19% civil (1691)	1691
7 th	Whatley	22% criminal (988)	988
8 th	Byrd-Manning	50% juvenile (505)	505
9 th	Gill	17% criminal (764)	764
10 th	Shanice Johnson	50% juvenile (505)	505
11 th	James	Specialty Ct (100); 16% civil (1424); 8% dom (362)	1886
12 th	Connors	8% civil (712); 12% dom (543); 12% prob (337)	1592
13 th	Reif	20% dom (905); 22% prob (619)	1524
14 th	Shawn Johnson	20% dom (905); 22% prob (619)	1524
15 th	Amy Johnson	20% dom (905); 22% prob (619)	1524
16 th	Welch	19% civil (1691)	1691
17 th	Pierce	19% civil (1691)	1691

- The above figures do not include the truancy cases and the dependency neglect classes assigned to Judges Byrd-Manning and Shanice Johnson. In addition, the above figures do not represent the juvenile guardian, juvenile adoption and informal diversion cases to which the juvenile judges are responsible.
- The above figures do not include the people who absconded or who are in treatment assigned to Judge James.
- The above figures do not include probation and suspended imposition of sentence revocations petitions which are assigned to the criminal judges.

- The above figures do not include domestic relations and probate cases which are reopened and assigned to the domestic relations and probate judges.

For calendar year 2025, these judges will hear the following type cases in Pulaski County:

1. Judges Byrd-Manning and Shanice Johnson will share in the juvenile caseload.
2. Judges Gill, Leon Johnson, Honorable, and the new circuit court judges elected in the 7th and 16th Divisions will share in the criminal caseload.
3. Judges Compton, Connors, Fox, James, and Wright will share in the civil caseload.
4. Judges Connors, Honorable, Amy Johnson, Shawn Johnson, Reif, Tucker, and the new circuit court judge elected in 17th Division will share in the domestic relations caseload.
5. Judges Connors, Honorable, Amy Johnson, Shawn Johnson, Reif, Tucker, and the new circuit court judge elected in 17th Division will share in the probate caseload. The probate judges will be included in the case distribution at Mental Health Court. In addition, Judge Fox, Gill, Compton, and the new circuit court judges elected in the 7th and 16th divisions will participate in the rotation of hearings at Civil Commitment Mental Health Court. Judges James, Shanice Johnson, and Byrd-Manning agree to serve as back-up Civil Commitment Mental Health Court Judges in emergency situations.

e. The division of cases is listed below. The numbers of cases listed are approximations because the filings will vary from year to year.

Div.	Judge	Percentage (No. of cases)	Total
1 st	L. Johnson	22% criminal (988)	988
2 nd	Tucker	16% dom (724); 16% prob (450)	1174
3 rd	Compton	23% civil (2047)	2047
4 th	Wright	23% civil (2047)	2047
5 th	Honorable	13% criminal (584); 9% dom (407); 9% prob (253)	1244
6 th	Fox	23% civil (2047)	2047
7 th	New Judge	22% criminal (988)	988
8 th	Byrd-Manning	50% juvenile (505)	505
9 th	Gill	21% criminal (943)	943
10 th	Shanice Johnson	50% juvenile (505)	505
11 th	James	Specialty Ct (100); 20% civil (1781)	1881
12 th	Connors	11% civil (979); 11% dom (498); 11% prob (309)	1786
13 th	Reif	16% dom (724); 16% prob (450)	1174
14 th	Shawn Johnson	16% dom (724); 16% prob (450)	1174
15 th	Amy Johnson	16% dom (724); 16% prob (450)	1174
16 th	New Judge	22% criminal (988)	988
17 th	New Judge	16% dom (724); 16% prob (450)	1174

This Plan is made with the specific understanding that pursuant to Administrative Order No. 14, a new plan will have to be submitted to the Arkansas Supreme Court after each election. The judges agree that this Plan will not create a precedent as to how cases are assigned in the future. The judges also recognize that it is likely that the number of cases in each subject matter may increase or decrease over the next year or two and that modifications may be required.

f. Use of Courtrooms and Jury Pools. Since not all judges have courtrooms that are suitable for jury trials, those judges lacking such a courtroom shall contact a circuit judge who does have a courtroom suitable for a jury trial. The judges shall coordinate the setting of jury trials, the sharing of jury pools, and resolve any other issues that arise that will facilitate the setting of jury trials. A request for a jury trial by one of the judges will take precedence over any non-jury matter for that day. Any judge hearing juvenile cases and in need of courtroom facilities for a jury trial shall contact any of the judges at the Pulaski County Courthouse to arrange for the use of their courtroom and jury pool.

Perry County Caseload Plan:

a. In 2022, there were a total of 377 cases filed in Perry County:

Criminal	97
Civil	98
Domestic	95
Probate	70
Juvenile	17

- b. The Circuit Clerk of Perry County will assign each new case to one of the participating circuit judges to assure that each judge will have substantially the same number of cases as other judges hearing the same case type to which they are assigned. The assigned judge is responsible for the case file.
- c. The circuit judges hearing criminal cases in Perry County in calendar years 2024 and 2025 will each have a pre-trial day and then a trial day approximately two (2) weeks later, if necessary. Judges Gill and Compton will hear criminal cases in Perry County on a rotating basis.
- d. Those circuit judges doing non-criminal cases in Perry County in 2024 shall be Judges Connors, Amy Johnson, Shawn Johnson, Pierce, Reif, Tucker, Wright, and Welch.

- e. Those circuit judges doing non-criminal cases in Perry County in 2025 shall be Judges Connors, James, Amy Johnson, Shawn Johnson, Reif, Tucker, Wright, and the new 17th Division Judge.
- f. Those circuit judges hearing juvenile cases in Perry County in 2024 and 2025 will be Judges Byrd-Manning and Shanice Johnson.
- g. The Judges of the Sixth Judicial District are committed to maintaining a physical presence in Perry County.

5. Drug Court and Veterans' Treatment Court: Pulaski County's Sixth Judicial Circuit's Drug Court program has been in operation since 1994; the Veteran's Court has been in operation since December 2011; and Perry County's Sixth Judicial Circuit's Drug Court program has been in operation since 2023. Judge James presides over Pulaski County Drug Court and Veteran's Court cases. Judge Gill will serve as the back-up Judge when Judge James is unable to preside. The program is a post adjudication process and has been since early 1998. Prior to that time, it was a pre-adjudication process. Judge Gill presides over Perry County's Drug Court cases.

6th JUDICIAL DISTRICT DRUG COURT PROGRAM

Pulaski County Adult Drug Court Judge Patricia James Presiding

A. **Description of Program and How it is Operated.** The 6th Judicial District Drug Court (PAC) is a post-adjudication program. Participants are given a 36-month probation period. It is designed to be an 18-month program. Participants must have a dependency on drugs or alcohol and there is no requirement they be charged with a drug offense to be eligible. The individual must be eligible for CCC/RPF thus, they cannot have a prior or pending violent felonies or sex crime. Upon graduation, the probation is terminated, and the participant is immediately eligible for expungement.

PAC ADMISSION PROCESS

The participant must be identified as high risk/high needs and clinically appropriate for the program. The defense attorney will submit a referral the Prosecuting Attorney. After the request is submitted, the Prosecutor will review the pending charges and criminal history. If deemed appropriate for further review, the participant will be scheduled for assessment through the Arkansas Community of Corrections.

One assessment will be administered by a probation officer to determine the participant's risk and needs. Another assessment will be administered by a drug/alcohol advisor to determine clinical appropriateness for the program. Entry into PAC is usually limited to those who are determined as high risk/high needs and meet criteria for substance use disorder.

After the completion of these assessments, the probation officer and drug/alcohol advisor will share the information with the Drug Court team for final review. If the

request is approved by the Drug Court team, the participant will complete a conditional plea statement in the originating court and be provided a date for acceptance of plea and sentencing before the PAC Judge. Prior to this court date, the participant makes an appointment with the defense attorney to complete all necessary forms. A hearing will be set to be formally accepted into Drug Court.

B. **Statutory or Legal Authority.** A.C.A. §16-98-301 et. seq

C. **Certification.** The program conforms to all applicable sentencing laws, including fines, fees, court costs, and probation assessment.

D. **Description of the Program's Use of Court Resources.** Team members include, the circuit judge, court staff, treatment providers counselors from ACC, public defenders, Clinical supervisor, Law Enforcement liaison, Mentors, Prosecutors, and probation officers. Team members participate in staffing and in hearings to ensure that all available resources are used in a timely manner to meet individualized needs. Treatment is provided by a contract agency through the Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Division.

E. **Source of Funding for Program.** PAC is funded by monthly fees paid by each participant and federal and state grants. Drug treatment is paid for by the Arkansas Community Correction. Administrative Office of the Courts assists with payment for transitional housing.

**Perry County Adult Drug Court
Judge Andy Gill, Presiding**

A. **Type of Program and Description of Operations:** Perry County Adult Drug Court is a voluntary, fourteen-month, pre-adjudication, multi-phase intervention program designed to address the needs of criminal defendants with substance use disorders. Adult Drug Court is available only to defendants meeting program eligibility requirements. The defendant must be an adult resident of Perry County; must not have a pending charge for a violent felony or a previous conviction for a violent felony, as defined by A.C.A. § 16-98-301(b)(3); must not have a previous conviction that would require registration as a sex offender; must be identified as high-risk/high-need, as determined by a validated risk-need assessment; and must have a moderate-to-severe substance use disorder. An eligible defendant must plead guilty to a pending felony offense, sentencing is then deferred, and the defendant is transferred to the Perry County Adult Drug Court for treatment and supervision services. Plea and transfer occur with full consent on the record and in writing of the defendant, prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, and the presiding judge. Perry County Adult Drug Court conducts court proceedings every Monday at 8:30 a.m. at the Perry County Courthouse in Perryville, Arkansas; 113 N Plum Street, Perryville, AR 72126.

B. **Statutory Authority:** Perry County Adult Drug Court is authorized pursuant to A.C.A. §16-98-301-307.

C. **Certification of Compliance:** Perry County Adult Drug Court operates in compliance with all applicable sentencing laws, including fines, fees, court costs, and probation assessments. Team members have attended training programs offered by the Administrative Office of the Courts. Perry County Adult Drug Court was implemented and operates in accordance with best-practice standards.

D. **Use of Court Resources:** The Perry County Adult Drug Court team includes (1) Circuit Court Judge, (1) Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, (1) Deputy Public Defender, (1) Court Coordinator, (1) Treatment Provider, (1) Probation Officer, and (1) Law Enforcement Representative. All Adult Drug Court team members meet weekly for staffing and court review hearings.

E. **Sources of Funding:** Sources of Funding: Perry County Adult Drug Court receives funding and support from Perry County, the Public Defender Commission, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Department of Community Corrections, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and federal and state grant opportunities as they arise and become available. There are sufficient resources for the operation of the program, as required by A.C.A. §16-98-305.

6TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT VETERANS' COURT PROGRAM

A. **Description of Program and How it is Operated.** The 6th Judicial District Veterans' Court (VTC) is a post-adjudication program that serves Veteran's with a dependency on drugs or alcohol. For VTC, an individual can be eligible with only a mental illness. They must be eligible for Veterans Administration (VA) benefits, and it helps if the veteran is eligible for CCC/RPF. Since CCC/RPF is not a requirement, veterans with violent charges or violent priors are accepted into the program.

VTC ADMISSION PROCESS

The participant may request a referral to VTC through their defense attorney, which will then be submitted to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office. At this time, you will need to notify your defense attorney that you are a veteran and eligible for treatment at the VA. The Veteran Treatment Court Liaison can provide you a letter stating you are eligible for services at the VA. After the request is submitted to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Prosecutor will review your pending charges and criminal history. If the Prosecuting Attorney determines that your request should be considered for further review, you will be scheduled for assessment through Arkansas Community Corrections (ACC).

One assessment will be administered by a probation officer to determine your risk and needs. Another assessment will be administered by a drug/alcohol advisor to determine clinical appropriateness for the program. Entry into Drug/Veteran Treatment Court is usually limited to those who are determined as high risk/high needs and meet

criteria for substance use disorder. After the completion of these assessments, the probation officer and drug/alcohol advisor will share this information with the Drug/Veteran Treatment Court team for a final review.

If the request is approved by the Drug/Veteran Treatment Court team, you will complete in the originating court a conditional plea statement in the originating court and be provided a date for acceptance of plea and sentencing before the Drug/Veteran Treatment Court Judge. Prior to this court date, you must make an appointment with your defense attorney to complete all necessary forms. The participant will appear at a hearing before the Drug/Veteran Treatment Court Judge to be formally accepted into Drug/Veteran Treatment Court.

B. **Statutory or Legal Authority.** A.C.A. §16-101-102 et. seq

C. **Certification.** The program conforms to all applicable sentencing laws, including fines, fees, court costs, and probation assessment.

D. **Description of the Program's Use of Court Resources.** Team members include, the circuit judge, judicial staff, probation officers, VA Liaison and Vet's Judicial Outreach Officer(s). Team members participate in meetings and in hearings to ensure that all available resources are used in a timely manner to meet the needs of the veterans.

E. **Source of Funding for Program.** VTC is funded by monthly fees assessed to each of the participants and federal and state grants. Also, the cost of treatment is covered by the VA Hospital.

6. **Meetings for Judges:** The Administrative Judge shall establish regular meetings for all circuit judges of at least quarterly, or often, as is necessary. If at least three (3) circuit judges request a special meeting, the Administrative Judge shall promptly call a meeting for all circuit judges.

7. **Selection of Administrative Judge:** On February 23, 2023, the Arkansas Supreme Court issued a Per Curiam Order selecting Judge Whatley as the Administrative Judge. Judge Whatley will serve as the Administrative Judge until such time as the next election is required to be conducted in accordance with Administrative Order No. 14.

8. **Reassignment of subject matter:** The issue of burn-out was first raised by the Arkansas Supreme Court in a per curiam opinion several years ago. The Court recognized that a judge assigned to a particular subject matter may, in time, request an assignment to hear other type subject matters of cases other than those currently assigned to that judge.

As is true in the current Case Assignment Plan for 2022, several judges have requested a different mix of cases such as an increase in civil cases, a decrease in domestic relations cases and an increase in criminal cases. Amendment 80 gives the judicial circuits the luxury of modifying its case assignment plans to accommodate these requests.

To remedy the situation and to address the issue of burn-out of all judges, as a vacancy occurs in one or more of the seventeen (17) divisions of circuit court, the use of seniority will be utilized to allow a sitting circuit judge to relocate his/her division of court into the facilities of the vacant judicial division and to assume all or part of the case type currently assigned that division as long as it is consistent with the current Case Assignment Plan.

The courtroom and chamber assignments for 2024 are as follows:

1 st	L. Johnson	401 West Markham, Room 420
2 nd	Tucker	401 West Markham, Room 320
3 rd	Compton	401 West Markham, Room 240
4 th	Wright	401 West Markham, Room 202
5 th	Honorable	401 West Markham, Room 410
6 th	Fox	401 West Markham, Room 210
7 th	Whatley	401 West Markham, Room 220
8 th	Byrd-Manning	3001 West Roosevelt, 2 nd Floor
9 th	Gill	401 West Markham, Room 440
10 th	Shanice Johnson	3001 West Roosevelt, 2 nd Floor
11 th	James	401 West Markham, Room 230
12 th	Connors	401 West Markham, Room 350
13 th	Reif	401 West Markham, Room 310
14 th	Shawn Johnson	401 West Markham, Room 300
15 th	Amy Johnson	401 West Markham, Room 340
16 th	Welch	401 West Markham, Room 330
17 th	Pierce	401 West Markham, Room 360

The courtroom and chamber assignments for 2025 are as follows:

1 st	L. Johnson	401 West Markham, Room 420
2 nd	Tucker	401 West Markham, Room 320
3 rd	Compton	401 West Markham, Room 330
4 th	Wright	401 West Markham, Room 360
5 th	Honorable	401 West Markham, Room 410
6 th	Fox	401 West Markham, Room 210
7 th	New Judge	401 West Markham, Room 230
8 th	Byrd-Manning	3001 West Roosevelt, 2 nd Floor
9 th	Gill	401 West Markham, Room 440
10 th	Shanice Johnson	3001 West Roosevelt, 2 nd Floor
11 th	James	401 West Markham, Room 240
12 th	Connors	401 West Markham, Room 350
13 th	Reif	401 West Markham, Room 310
14 th	Shawn Johnson	401 West Markham, Room 300
15 th	Amy Johnson	401 West Markham, Room 340
16 th	New Judge	401 West Markham, Room 220
17 th	New Judge	401 West Markham, Room 202

9. **Seniority of Appointed Judges:** In order for the Sixth Judicial Circuit seniority provisions to be consistent with the enactment of A.C.A. § 7-10-103(f)(1)(B)(ii)(b), seniority for appointed judges who subsequently run and win election for a different division shall be determined as follows:

- (a) If the appointed judge’s appointed period is less than twelve (12) months, seniority of such individual shall begin with the first day of such individual’s elected term of office;
- (b) If the appointed judge’s appointment is more than twelve (12) months, seniority of such individual shall be computed from the first day of such individual’s appointment period. Provided that any judge who has been elected AND has taken office prior to the expiration of such individual’s appointment period shall retain seniority over the appointed individual.

10. **State District Court Judges:** Pursuant to Supreme Court Administrative Order No. 18, section 6, and legislation passed in the 2011 legislative session, eight (8) District Judges in Pulaski County were made State District Judges as of January 1, 2017. The Judges, as of January 1, 2024, will be Judge Wayne Gruber, Judge Rita Bailey, Judge Randy Morley, Judge Milas H. “Butch” Hale, III, Judge Paula Juels Jones, Judge Melanie Martin, Judge Mark Leverett and Judge Vic Fleming.

The State District Judges are authorized to hear certain cases that have been referred to them by the Circuit Judges of Pulaski County, Arkansas or cases which have been transferred to them by consent, pursuant to Administrative Order No. 18.

PARTICIPATING STATE DISTRICT JUDGES

NAME	DISTRICT COURT	ASSINGMENT/ALLOCATION OF CASES
MILAS HALE	SHERWOOD	12.5%
RITA BAILEY	JACKSONVILLE/MAUMELLE	12.5%
WAYNE GRUEBER	PULASKI COUNTY	12.5%
RANDY MORLEY	NORTH LITTLE ROCK	12.5%
PAULA JUEL-JONES	NORTH LITTLE ROCK	12.5%
MELANIE MARTIN	LITTLE ROCK	12.5%
MARK LEVERETT	LITTLE ROCK	12.5%
VIC FLEMING	LITTLE ROCK	12.5%

ASSIGNMENT OF CASES: The State District Judges have signed an exchange agreement, a copy of which is attached to this Case Assignment Plan, permitting the respective judges to sit in the respective courts other than their own pursuant to and under the authority of Ark. Const. Amend. 80, Sec. 7; Ark. Code Ann. Sec. 16-17-102 and Supreme Court Administrative Order No. 18, section 6. By signing this agreement, the District Judges will have the authority to hear circuit court cases with jurisdiction and venue in Pulaski and Perry Counties that have either been referred to them or which have been transferred to them by consent in civil, probate and domestic relations cases.

The Circuit Judges of the Sixth Judicial Circuit, as indicated by their approval to this Plan, intend to fully utilize the full-time District Judges possible pursuant to the requirements of Administrative Order No. 18, Sec. 6. A record should be made of all matters referred to state district judges.

MATTERS SUBJECT TO REFERENCE

The State District Judges shall hear cases originating from the Office of Child Support and Enforcement, final Petitions for Orders of Protection, and unlawful detainer actions. The State District Judges have agreed to and have been assigned specific days to hear these cases. A calendar of the schedules of the judges will be maintained by the Administrative Judge and is open for inspection. The State District Court will hear cases Monday through Thursday of each week. A courtroom in the Juvenile Justice Center has been created and used by the State District Judges. The Circuit Court has arranged for staffing including a case coordinator and bailiff.

The cases are assigned to one of the circuit judges, but the category of cases is heard by referral by the State District Judges pursuant to Admin. Order No. 18. In addition to the category of cases described above, other matters may be submitted to the State District Judges such as authorized by Admin. Order No. 18 (6)(b) upon agreement of the Circuit Judges and the State District Judges. If there are any substantive changes to this Implementation Plan, the Supreme Court will be asked to approve the change.

The administrative judge for the 6th Judicial Circuit, with the concurrence of a majority of the circuit court judges, and with the consent of the district judges, has appointed the judges of the Pulaski County District Court, the Little Rock District Court-Criminal Division, the Sherwood District Court, the North Little Rock District Court-Criminal Division, and the Maumelle/Jacksonville District Court to hear the following matters authorized by the Arkansas Rules of Criminal Procedure 1.8 (b)(iii)-(v):

1. Make a reasonable cause determination pursuant to Arkansas Rule of Criminal Procedure 4.1(e); and
2. Conduct a first appearance pursuant to Arkansas Rules of Criminal Procedure 8.1, at which the Criminal Magistrate may appoint counsel pursuant to Rule 8.2; inform a defendant pursuant to Rule 8.3; accept a plea of "not guilty" or "not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect"; conduct a pretrial release inquiry pursuant to Rules 8.4 and 8.5; release a defendant from custody pursuant to Rules 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3; and conduct preliminary hearings pursuant to A.C.A. § 16-93-307.
3. Issue search warrants pursuant to Rule 13.1; issue arrest warrants pursuant to Rule 7.1 or A.C.A. § 16-81-104; and issue summons pursuant to Rule 6.1

Recording equipment has been installed and is in use.

DISTRICT COURT SPECIALITY COURT

11. **Pulaski County Mental Health Court:** The Little Rock District Court, has created the Pulaski County Mental Health Court-Little Rock, which was established pursuant to ACA Sec. 16-100-101 and ACA Sec. 16-100-201, et seq. The Court will operate subject to the criteria contained in the Amended Little Rock District Court Administrative Plan. The Court is a voluntary, post-adjudication, highly intensive supervision program designed to address the needs of high risk/high needs persons with a mental illness or co-occurring disorder with current misdemeanor criminal cases.

Statutory or Legal Authority. Pursuant to ACA Sec. 16-100-204 (b)(2), the administrative plan for the judicial circuit may designate a district court judge(s) to administer the mental health specialty court program if a judicial district does not have a circuit judge who is available to administer the mental health specialty court program on a consistent basis.

The district court judge designated to administer the mental health specialty court program is:

Judge Melanie Martin, Little Rock District Court Division 1

Certification. The program conforms to all applicable sentencing laws, including fines, fees, court costs, probation assessment, and sentencing alternatives.

- a. **TYPE OF PROGRAM AND DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS:** Pulaski County Mental Health Court-Little Rock is a voluntary, post-adjudication, highly intensive supervision program designed to address the needs of high risk/high needs persons with a mental illness or co-occurring disorder with current misdemeanor criminal cases. Mental Health Court is available only to defendants meeting program eligibility requirements; the defendant must be an adult resident of Pulaski County, having no unresolved felony offenses or active offenses. Mental Health Court is a minimum of twelve (12) months. Mental Health Court is held the second and fourth Thursday of each month at 2:30 p.m., at Little Rock District Court-1st Div. Criminal, 600 W. Markham, Little Rock, AR.

Admission to the Mental Health Court is completed in a series of steps:

Step One: Application- If the defendant meets the above criteria, he/she or defense counsel may make a request for a referral to Mental Health Court, which then must be submitted to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Speedy trial will be tolled during the entire process.

Step Two: Preliminary Approval- After the request is submitted to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Deputy Prosecuting Attorney will review the pending charges and criminal history. If the Deputy Prosecuting attorney determines that the

defendant's request should be considered for further review and approved, the defendant will be scheduled for an assessment.

Step Three: Probation Assessment- An assessment will be administered by the Probation Officer to determine the defendants' risk and needs. The Probation Officer will schedule a subsequent assessment with a Mental Health treatment Provider.

Step Four: Mental Health Assessment- Another assessment will be administered by a Mental Health Treatment Provider in order to determine clinical appropriateness for the program. Entry into Mental Health Court is usually limited to those who are determined as high risk/high needs and meet program criteria.

Step Five: Mental Health Court Team Review- After the completion of the assessments, the probation officer and treatment providers will share the information with the Mental Health Court Team for a final review.

Step Six: Plea-If the defendants request is approved by the Mental Health Court Team, he/she will be provided a date for acceptance of plea before the Mental Health Court Judge. Prior to the court date, the defendant must make an appointment with defense counsel to complete all necessary forms.

Step Seven: Sentencing- The defendant will appear at a hearing before the Mental Health Court Judge to be formally accepted into Mental Health court.

- b. **Use of Court Resources:** The Pulaski County Mental Health Court-Little Rock team includes one (1) full-time District Judge, (1) full-time Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, (1) full-time Deputy Public Defender, (1) Probation Officer, (1) Law Enforcement Officer, (1) Coordinator, and (4) Representatives from community treatment providers, including Centers for Youth and Family Services, Professional Counseling Associates, Department of Human Services, and Veterans Affairs. Team members have attended training programs offered by the State of Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts. Pulaski County Mental Health Court- Little Rock was implemented and operates according to the MHC Best Practices and Arkansas Law.
- c. **Sources of Funding:** Pulaski County Mental Health Court-Little Rock receives support from the City of Little Rock, the Public Defender Commission, the Pulaski County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, and Federal Providers.

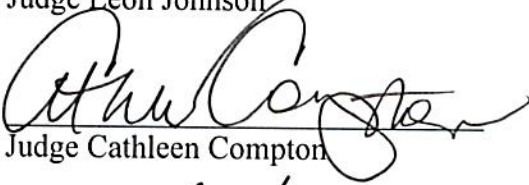
12. Copies of District Court Administrative Plans: A copy of the Administrative Plans for the District Courts in Little Rock, North Little Rock, Pulaski County, Sherwood, Maumelle, Jacksonville, Cammack Village and Perry County are attached. Paragraph 10, above, is incorporated into each of the District Court Administrative Plans as if set out word for word therein.

The Case Assignment Plan for the Sixth Judicial Circuit is submitted for approval on this 21st day of May, 2023.

Approved:



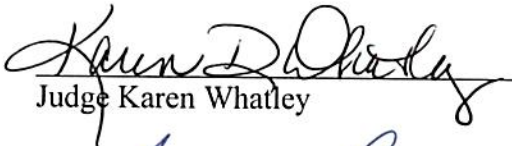
Judge Leon Johnson



Judge Cathleen Compton



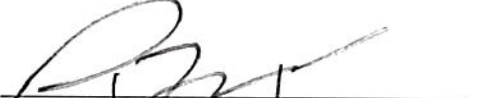
Judge LaTonya Honorable



Judge Karen Whatley



Judge Andy Gill



Judge Patricia James



Judge Mike Reif



Judge Amy Johnson



Judge Mackie Pierce



Judge Casey Tucker



Judge Herb Wright



Judge Tim Fox



Judge Tjuana Byrd-Manning



Judge Shanice Johnson



Judge Cara Connors



Judge Shawn Johnson



Judge Morgan "Chip" Welch