

Family Matters in the Fourth Circuit



UPDATES AND
ANNOUNCEMENTS
FOR THE FOURTH
CIRCUIT COURT

VOLUME 1 | ISSUE 6 | WEEK OF OCTOBER 28, 2024

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

This week marks the end of National Breast Cancer Awareness month, a time dedicated to spreading awareness about a disease that affects 1 in 8 women in the United States every year. We would like to acknowledge individuals and families who have experienced Breast Cancer, whether you are a survivor or know someone affected by it. Beyond this month we will continue to support you!

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

Let's keep the ball rolling! This week will mark two months of this term, made successful by all the hard work our team has contributed to maintaining and improving our Court. We can't do it alone! This newsletter outlines a few ways you can help our Court run smoothly when practicing here. Additionally, find exciting staff announcements, an updated calendar, and more!

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HOLIDAY PARENTING TIME MOTIONS

If you have a pending case that involves minor children and the holiday schedule may be at issue, we urge you to begin discussions to resolve these issues. Where there is no resolution, please file your motions early to ensure timely resolution. **All motions to address holiday parenting time for the Thanksgiving holiday must be filed by November 8th and motions to address winter break holiday parenting time must be filed no later than December 6th.**

STAFF UPDATES



Pictured: Attorney Vermillion and his family (left) and the Fourth Circuit staff (right) celebrating his swearing in!

Last week, we announced that our Student Law Clerk, Dakota Vermillion, passed the Bar Exam. This week, Judge Williams had the honor of swearing him in! He was supported by his family and our staff. Attorney Vermillion is excited to announce that he will transition to working in the Knox County District Attorney's Office. We are very thankful for everything he has done for the Fourth Circuit Court in the three years he has been here. We are very proud of Attorney Vermillion and all that he has—and will—accomplish!

CALENDAR

Check out the list below for important Court dates for November and December, including office closures and adoption dates.

NOVEMBER



November 8: Deadline to file parenting time motions to address the Thanksgiving holiday.

November 11: Court closed for Veteran's Day.

November 28 & 29: Court closed for Thanksgiving holiday.

DECEMBER



December 6: Deadline to file parenting time motions to address winter break holidays.

December 9: Adoption Docket.

December 16: Last Adoption Docket of the year!

December 19: Last ID, Default, and Show Cause Docket of the year!

December 20: Last Motion Docket of the year!

December 23--January 1: Court closed for the holidays.

January 3: First Motion Docket of 2025!



UPDATES TO COURT APPEARANCES

As our Court updates its processes and procedures, hearings can begin earlier.



Thank you for embracing the waiver of appearance on ID divorces. We've missed seeing you but are happy it has been so well received. Because of this streamlined process, we are available to start contested matters earlier. ***Please be sure if you have a Default scheduled on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday that you arrive promptly at 9 a.m.***



If you have a contested case scheduled on a ***Tuesday or Wednesday, ensure that you and your clients are prepared to start promptly at 9:30 a.m.***



Additionally, we ask that all attorneys and parties be present and prepared to ***start their hearings on the Thursday docket promptly at 9:00 a.m.***



Friday motions will still be on a staggered schedule as reflected on the published docket each week. ***Please be sure to check the time your case has been assigned for hearing.***



On adoption day, please arrive with enough time to ***be ready to go at 9 a.m.***


NEW CHAMBER RULES


The wait is almost over! A comprehensive document with the new Chamber Rules will be released on December 4, 2024! In the meantime, continue to read these newsletters to stay up to date on new rules, including:




Effective immediately, only one witness is required in Default Divorces. In all other Default cases, no witness is required.



 **Service by Publication:** We have learned that the clerk's office is not receiving proof of publication from some newspapers. Before we are able to grant a Motion for Default on a case where service was obtained by publication, proof of the publication must be on record. This can either be in the form of a copy of the actual notice that ran in the paper or in an affidavit from the printer confirming the publication for four weeks in the paper.

 Additionally, all publication orders in termination of parental rights matters should include language stating that all requirements of T.C.A. 36-1-117(m)(3) have been met.

 Adult adoptions may now take place by affidavit and with a Waiver of Appearance.

STATUS CONFERENCE DOCKET

If you recently filed a case that was assigned to the Fourth Circuit Court, you may have noticed a Status Conference Order in your service pack. The status conference is set for a date certain (approximately six months from the date of filing the Complaint or Petition) with the Special Master presiding. Appearance of attorneys of record and unrepresented litigants is required at the status conference; represented litigants may appear if they choose to do so. The status conference will take place via videoconference, or via teleconference at the discretion of the Special Master.

This will be an opportunity to ascertain the status of cases and put in place any scheduling orders or address any issues that may be helpful in moving the cases along.

MISSED A NEWSLETTER?

Currently, all newsletters and announcements from the Fourth Circuit Court are posted on the Circuit Court Clerk's website under the tab for Judge Williams's Chamber Rules. You may find them here:

<https://circuitclerk.nashville.gov/judge-stephanie-j-williams-memorandums-and-rules/>

SHARE

Our Updates and Announcements are for everyone. Please feel free to share with your staff, clients, and anyone else who may have an interest. Anyone who would like to be added to the email list may contact Special Master Kristen Menke at: kristenemenke@jjsnashville.gov.

Should you have any questions about anything contained in this memorandum or any matters of the Court, please feel free to contact us at: 615-862-5910. Stay tuned for more updates!

Have a great week!
Judge Williams and the Fourth Circuit Court Staff

