

**IN THE COURTS OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2022-19**

RE: ADMINISTRATIVE CLOSING OF INACTIVE REOPENED CIVIL CASES

WHEREAS, rule 2.545, Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration, requires judges to take charge of cases and control case progress until no further judicial action is required; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of Florida, in AOSC21-17, Amendment 3, has implemented new procedures requiring presiding judges to actively manage civil cases; and

WHEREAS, the Escambia County Clerk of the Court (the “Clerk”) reopens cases when a party submits a post-judgment pleading, motion, or other filing; and

WHEREAS, many such reopened cases have been inactive for substantial periods of time; and

WHEREAS, many filings in reopened cases have been abandoned by the parties or are otherwise moot; and

WHEREAS, for case management and accurate reporting of the number of cases engaged in active litigation, it is necessary to purge the dockets of reopened cases which are dormant and require no further judicial attention other than administrative closure;

NOW, THEREFORE; pursuant to the authority of the Chief Judge, under section 43.26, Florida Statutes, and Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215(b),

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. The Clerk shall, on July 1, 2022, identify all reopened cases in circuit civil, probate, family, county civil, small claims, and dependency, wherein no case filings or court events occurred within the previous 10 months;
2. For each case identified under Paragraph 1, the Clerk shall docket and e-serve this Administrative Order upon each party or the party's attorney(s) at the email address(es) designated for e-service pursuant to rule 2.516, Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration.
3. If no record activity occurs within sixty (60) days following the date of service of the Administrative Order, the Clerk shall proceed to administratively close all reopened cases identified pursuant to Paragraph 1.
4. On an annual basis, each July 1, the Clerk shall identify all reopened cases in circuit civil, probate, family, county civil, small claims, and dependency, wherein no case filings or court events have occurred within the preceding 10 months. The Clerk shall then follow the procedure as outlined in Paragraphs 2 and 3 with regard to the identified cases. Such annual review shall take place until further order of the Chief Judge.
5. Reopen fees initially paid for the filing of a motion or pleading are earned at the time of filing and are not subject to refund.
6. To reopen a case that has been closed pursuant to this order, a party shall pay any applicable filing fees to the Clerk.

7. This order does not apply to open cases that qualify for or are subject to dismissal for lack of prosecution pursuant to rule 1.420, Florida Rules of Civil Procedure.

DONE AND ORDERED in Pensacola, Escambia County, Florida, this 13
day of June, 2022.



JOHN L. MILLER
CHIEF JUDGE

Copies furnished to:

All Judges, First Judicial Circuit

All Clerks, First Judicial Circuit

Robin Wright, Trial Court Administrator

Kasey Watson, Public Information Officer, First Judicial Circuit

Escambia Santa Rosa Bar Association for publication

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