

245TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

Presiding Judge: Roy L. Moore
Associate Judge: James "Jim" Cooper

Contact:

Telephone:

713-274-1245

Website:

<https://www.iustex.net/Courts/Family/FAMILYCourt.aspx?crt=27>

Court Staff:

Court Coordinator:

Rosie Diaz

Head Clerk:

Vantres Flanagain

Assistant Clerk:

Gisselle Ramirez

Bailiff:

Troy Byers

Bailiff:

Tarshia Banks

Court Reporter:

Rachel Dutton

Mediation prior to Temporary Orders	Required in all cases absent a Motion and Order Waiving same.
Mediation prior to Final Trial	Required in all cases absent a Motion and Order Waiving same.
Parenting Classes	Recommended and encouraged but not required.
Name Changes	Daily on the Uncontested Docket.
Pre-Trials	Set by Judges as required
Issuance of Scheduling Orders	Three months after filing or as requested Post-Answer
DWOPs	Four to five months if no Answer, Waiver, or Service
Use of Parenting Coordinators/Facilitators	Not required.
Cases Involving Children's Preferences/ Interviewing Children in Chambers	Per the Tex. Fam. Code; Interviews conducted at the conclusion of testimony.
Preferential Settings	Approved by Judges based on calendar availability.
Motions for Continuance	First Trial setting, if agreed may by Rule 11; all others by Judge. Motion required to be filed two weeks out.
Amicus Appointments	By agreement or by Judge

246TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

Presiding Judge: Charley Prine
Associate Judge: Chelsie Ramos

Contact:

Clerks: 713-274-4500
Coordinator: 713-274-4505
Court Reporter: 713-274-4504
Bailiff: 713-274-4517
Website: <https://www.justex.net/Courts/Family/FAMILYCourt.aspx?crt=52>

Court Staff:

Court Coordinator: **Yolanda Harris**
Head Clerk: **Pat Montgomery**
Assistant Clerk: **Iris Delgado**
Official Bailiff: **Deputy K.D. Williams**
Bailiff for AJ: **Deputy M. Garcia**
Official Court Reporter: **Chelsea Allen**
Court Reporter for AJ: **Cynthia Shepherd**

Mediation prior to Temporary Orders	Mediation prior to a Temporary Orders hearing is required per Local Rule 7.1 in an appropriate case involving disputed custody or visitation issues.
Mediation prior to Final Trial	Mediation prior to final trial is required per Harris County Local Rule 7.2.
Parenting Classes	Parenting Classes are required per Harris County Local Rule 12.1. Online parenting classes are allowed.
Name Changes	<p><u>The following documents are required for an Adult Name Change:</u> Criminal Record (CHFF) through the Crime Records Division (DPS) in Austin or FBI (must be electronically filed); Certified/Original Birth Certificate; Copy of Petitioner's Driver's License; Copy of Social Security Card; and Order Granting Change of Name.</p> <p><u>The following documents are required for a Name Change of a Child:</u> Both parents must be present unless Waiver of Appearance/Citation is filed by non-appearing parent; Certified/Original Birth Certificate of Child; Copy of Petitioner's Driver's License; Copy of Social Security Card for Petitioner(s) and Child; and Order Granting Change of Name.</p>
Pre-Trials	Pre-Trial Conference will be held 10 days prior to trial.
Issuance of Scheduling Orders	Scheduling Orders are issued 90 days after the case is filed with 90 days' notice of the Trial setting.
DWOPs	Nonappearance by parties and their counsel at Pre-Trial conference may result in DWOP. Petitioner's or Movant's Nonappearance at trial will result in DWOP.

Use of Parenting Coordinators/Facilitators	Parenting Coordinators may be appointed after notice and hearing to present facts and circumstances supporting the need.
Cases Involving Children’s Preferences/ Interviewing Children in Chambers	The Court will conduct a child interview after notice and hearing, and if granted, the interview will be scheduled after school hours. No children are to be brought to the courthouse without prior approval of the court.
Preferential Settings	Preferential settings are rare.
Motions for Continuance	Motions for Continuance require a hearing and must state specifics about the reason the continuance is requested. Agreed Continuances are not automatic but subject to the same requirements. If continuance is granted, a scheduling order must be attached with new pretrial and trial date. Attorney Vacation letters that are timely filed with the Harris County District Clerk are honored without a hearing or motion for continuance.
Amicus Appointments	The Court will appoint an Amicus Attorney in appropriate circumstances. Any attorney interested in being appointed as an Amicus or Ad Litem should tender to the Court a resume and two business cards.

247TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

Presiding Judge: John Schmude
Associate Judge: Paula Vlahakos

Contact:

Telephone: 713-368-6570
Website: <https://www.justex.net/Courts/Family/FamilyCourt.aspx?crt=53>

Court Staff:

Court Coordinator: Pamela Hunt
Head Clerk:
Assistant Clerk: Ann Rodriguez
Bailiff: Mark Thierry
Bailiff: Wilma Dearmon
Official Court Reporter: Phyllis Gonzales

Mediation prior to Temporary Orders	Absent good cause shown, all parties and their attorneys are required to attend mediation prior to Temporary Orders hearings in which: 1) conservatorship and/or possession and access is at issue; or 2) the total time estimate for the hearing exceeds three hours.
Mediation prior to Final Trial	Mediation is required prior to final trial in all cases. Mediation is required even if the parties mediated temporary orders.
Parenting Classes	Per Harris County Local Rule 12. Adoption cases and modification cases no longer require a parenting class.
Name Changes	Per Texas Family Code.
Pre-Trials	Pre-trial conferences are required for jury trials and for trials with a time estimate of more than four hours.
Issuance of Scheduling Orders	Scheduling Orders will be issued six months after a case is filed.
DWOPs	Cases will not be dismissed because an entry is missed or needs to be reset.
Use of Parenting Coordinators/Facilitators	May be appointed by agreement of the parties or on the Court's own motion. If the parties agree on the coordinator/facilitator, the Court will generally honor those agreements.
Cases Involving Children's Preferences/ Interviewing Children in Chambers	Handled on a case-by-case basis.
Preferential Settings	The Court will preferentially set matters that have been reset multiple times or that the Court, due to time constraints, has been unable to accommodate.
Motions for Continuance	If a case has been pending less than one year, the parties may re-set with a Rule 11 Agreement directly with the Court Coordinator. If a case has been pending more than one year, please file a Motion of Continuance and set for hearing even if it is an unopposed or agreed motion.

Amicus Appointments

Appointments are always made when required by law. The parties may choose their amicus/ad litem by agreement. In the absence of an agreement, the Court shall choose. When an amicus/ad litem appointment is discretionary, the parties are free to agree whether an amicus/ad litem is appointed. If no agreement is reached, the parties may request that the Court make the appointment. If the Court decides that an amicus/ad litem should be appointed, the parties will be given the opportunity to agree on the amicus/ad litem. In the absence of an agreement, the Court shall choose. The Court may also decide that an amicus is necessary on its own motion.

257TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

Presiding Judge: Judy Warne
Associate Judge: Deborah Patterson

Contact:

Clerks: 713-274-4560
Coordinator: 713-274-4564/ Melissa_Parker@justex.net
Website: <https://www.justex.net/Courts/Family/FamilyCourt.aspx?crt=54>

Court Staff:

Court Coordinator: **Melissa Parker**
Head Clerk: **Lorena Mallett**
Assistant Clerk: **Tiffany Ward**
Bailiff: **Deputy Thomas**
Bailiff: **Deputy Johnson**
Official Court Reporter: **Eunice Tillman**
Court Reporter: **Beverly Ellis**

Mediation prior to Temporary Orders	Required if custody is an issue; Court cannot issue 'Band-Aid' Temporary Orders without testimony
Mediation prior to Final Trial	Required unless waived via motion and hearing
Parenting Classes	Per local rules.
Name Changes	Uncontested docket. If agreed – Children's name change requires birth certificates/ID – parents.
Pre-Trials	As set by the Coordinator. Generally, uncontested terminations, jury Trials
Issuance of Scheduling Orders	Issued 90-100 days after filing and set for 9 months from filing
DWOPs	If no service after 75 days, case set for DWOP.
Use of Parenting Coordinators/Facilitators	Will consider after Notice and hearing.
Cases Involving Children's Preferences/ Interviewing Children in Chambers	Before Temporary Orders hearing set, must have hearing (unless parties sign agreed order) on Motion to Confer. If child designates, Temporary Orders hearing will be set based on designations. If additional issues in affidavit, Court will consider Temporary Orders on that basis as well.
Preferential Settings	Set Motion or on Court's own Motion. Consideration of Preferential Setting includes times issues and out of area parties/witnesses.
Motions for Continuance	Do not stand and announce agreed continuance on Trial day. Cannot agree to Continuance. Set Motion and Hearing before Trial on Merits – Clerks will accommodate you.
Amicus Appointments	As needed. File motion and set hearing. Be prepared to assure Court there are funds to pay.
Other	Despite above rules, we are a Court that will consider extenuating circumstances. File motions and set hearings – or request approach, if all parties or counsel are present.

308TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

Presiding Judge: James Lombardino
Associate Judge: David Sydow

Contact:

Contact:

713-274-4600

Website:

<https://www.iustex.net/courts/Family/FAMILYCourt.aspx?crt=55>

Court Staff:

Court Coordinator:

Norma Ovalle

Head Clerk:

Krystal Gibson

Assistant Clerk:

Bailiff:

Joe Morin

Court Reporter:

Leticia Salas

Court Reporter:

Ramona Gonzalez

Mediation prior to Temporary Orders	Generally required, but exceptions may be made.
Mediation prior to Final Trial	Required, but exceptions may be made.
Parenting Classes	Not required unless ordered.
Name Changes	Per Tex. Fam. Code.
Pre-Trials	Required for jury trials. Case-by-case in all other cases.
Issuance of Scheduling Orders	Yes.
DWOPs	If you do not appear for Trial or Entry of Final Order, your case will be DWOP'd.
Use of Parenting Coordinators/Facilitators	Generally not court-ordered.
Cases Involving Children's Preferences/ Interviewing Children in Chambers	Upon request, if age 12 or older; case-by-case basis, if under 12. Generally, should be close to trial or hearing.
Preferential Settings	Generally, restricted to out-of-town parties and military personnel.
Motions for Continuance	Contact Coordinator regarding Rule 11 Agreements to reset trial dates; if not agreed, set motion for hearing.
Amicus Appointments	Case-by-case.
Other	No late calls on Trial date.

1. **COURTESY IS THE NUMBER ONE RULE IN THE 308TH.** That means the attorneys, the parties, and the court staff are expected to be courteous to each other.
2. **UNCONTESTED matters** are heard every day from 8:00 through 8:45 a.m., or at any other time if arranged with the court.
3. **TRIAL DOCKET** is on Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m.
 - a. **Mediation is required** before all final trials, although exceptions may be made in certain cases.
 - b. Trials will generally be held on the day scheduled, and if not, during the week scheduled. If the court cannot reach the case that week, the trial will be reset.
 - c. If the court resets the trial, the discovery and scheduling deadlines are not extended and there will be no new scheduling order issued. However, the duty to supplement discovery continues per the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure.
4. **TEMPORARY ORDERS** hearings are set on Mondays and Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m.
 - a. **Mediation is required** before all *Temporary Orders* hearings, although exceptions may be made in certain cases.
 - b. *Temporary Orders* hearings will generally be limited to 45 minutes per party, including cross-examination.
 - c. A request for a *Temporary Orders* hearing on a modification case or for additional Temporary Orders must be supported by *Affidavit* and approved by the Associate Judge.
5. **ANCILLARY hearings (LAW DAY DOCKET)** are set on Mondays and Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. (*Motions to Withdraw, Summary Judgments, jurisdiction/venue issues, discovery disputes, etc.*). A *Certificate of Conference* is required for contested motions, except *Summary Judgments*.
6. **CPS hearings** are set on Wednesdays at 8:00 a.m. and Thursdays at 1:30 p.m.

7. **ENFORCEMENT hearings** are set on Thursdays at 9:00 a.m.
8. **ENTRIES** are generally set on Fridays at 9:00 a.m.
9. **PRO SE** (no attorneys for any party) orders must be reviewed and approved by the Houston Volunteer Lawyers Program (HVLP). If not finalized on or before their first trial setting, Pro Se cases will be set for trial on Fridays at 9:00 a.m. with the Associate Judge.
10. **PRE-TRIAL CONFERENCES** are required for all jury trials and will generally be scheduled on the Wednesday before the trial. At the Pre-Trial Conference, all exhibits should be pre-marked and exchanged, any objections to the exhibits should be made, the *Proposed Jury Charge* should be submitted, *Motions in Limine* will be heard, any visual aids (Power Points, videos, a day in the life, etc.) to be used at trial should be disclosed, and requests for proposed relief and proposed property divisions should be filed and exchanged. All supplemental production must be exchanged on or before the Friday before trial.
11. **Attorneys** who plan to be **late for docket call** must call the clerk before docket call and state their expected time of arrival, the reason for their delay, and the other court(s) where they are appearing. **Cases are subject to being dismissed or reset** if the attorney for the moving party **does not arrive in the courtroom by 9:30 a.m.**
12. **TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDERS** should be mutual, although exceptions may be made if supported by an *Affidavit*. The court may edit a proposed TRO to make it mutual before signing it. The court may also strike certain non-standard proposed injunctions if they are not supported by an *Affidavit*. A TRO on a counterclaim must contain a *Certificate of Conference*. Alternatively, counter-petitioners should notice the other side of a hearing for Temporary Orders instead of having the petitioner served with a TRO.
13. **For children under 3**, competent parents may have frequent and regular visitation, including overnights. Exceptions may be made if appropriate, including cases involving drugs or family violence.

14. An **Attorney Ad Litem** will be appointed to represent a party served by publication, although exceptions may be made in cases with no children and no property. Parties seeking such an exception should approach the Associate Judge.
15. The **court may deviate from presumptions in the Texas Family Code**, such as child support guidelines or the *Standard Possession Order*, if there is sufficient evidence to support the relief requested.
16. An **Amicus Attorney** will be appointed in most contested custody and SAPCR cases. The parties' income will be taken into consideration when setting and allocating amicus fees. Parties may choose their own Amicus Attorney subject to the court's approval.
17. **Cell phones and laptops** must be in silent mode or turned off in the courtroom, and no **food or chewing gum** should be brought into the courtroom.
18. **Children** should not be brought to the courthouse and may not be brought into the courtroom without consent of the court, except for children being adopted, who may be brought to the courthouse and will be invited into the courtroom at the appropriate time.
19. **These rules are subject to change. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis.**