

**LORRAINE M. KELLY  
COUNTY COURT JUDGE  
COUNTY CIVIL SECTION 39 / SMALL CLAIMS SECTION 45  
INSTRUCTIONS AND JUDICIAL PRACTICE PREFERENCES**

545 1<sup>ST</sup> Ave. N., Room 512  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
Phone (727)582-7822  
Fax (727) 582-7421

**HELP FOR PARTIES WITHOUT ATTORNEYS**

***The judicial assistant will not be able answer your legal questions. Under Florida law she could be prosecuted for a first degree misdemeanor, unlicensed practice of law, were she to give you legal advice. Please do not ask her to answer legal questions.***

***The judge can only visit with you about your case in the courtroom in the presence of all the parties involved with the case. Please do not call the judge and expect to have a conversation with her or attempt to relay message to her through the judicial assistant. If you want to bring a matter to the court's attention, put it in writing and file it with the Clerk of the Court under the case number you are calling about. Be sure to send a copy of the information to the opposing party.***

**HELPFUL LEGAL RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE WHO DO NOT HAVE ATTORNEYS:**

Pinellas Clerk of Court Self Help Program (Community Law Program):

<http://www.pinellasclerk.org/aspInclude2/ASPInclude.asp?pageName=selfhelp.htm> .

St Petersburg (727)582-7941 or Clearwater (727) 464-5150

Gulfcoast Legal Services: Clearwater (727)443-0657 or St. Petersburg (727)821-0726.

Bay Area Legal Services 1-800-625-2257.

**TO SCHEDULE HEARINGS:**

**Email your request to the judicial assistant, JoAn Caffentzis at [jcaffentzis@jud6.org](mailto:jcaffentzis@jud6.org)**

**Please put the case number and style of the case in the subject line**

In the body of the email, please include the following information:

- The title of the motion you would like to schedule for hearing.
- The amount of time you need to be heard and a range of times and dates you would like for the hearing to be scheduled.
- The names of the attorneys and the parties they represent and/or the names of the pro se parties.
- Whether the attorney would like to appear by phone or in person. For hearings where parties have permission to appear by phone, include the phone numbers where the parties may be reached. The judge initiates the call for telephonic hearings. No motion and order is required if the judge has given permission for a telephonic hearing. This pertinent information should also be included in the Notice of Hearing.

**HEARINGS SHALL BE NOTICED FOR THE ST. PETERSBURG COURTHOUSE:**

St. Petersburg Judicial Building  
545 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

**CROSS NOTICES:** Motions which are companion to or in opposition to motions set by the judicial assistant must be agreed to by the attorney who originally requested hearing time. Only then may the cross-noticing party contact the judge's office to request permission to add a motion to the calendar in a time slot reserved by the attorney who set the first motion.

**CANCELLATION OF HEARINGS:** If your case settles or needs to be re-set, please contact the judicial assistant to cancel the hearing and provide a succinct explanation for the cancellation. **PLEASE NOTE:** When a notice of cancellation is e-filed a copy does not automatically go to the judge.

**COURTESY COPIES:** It is not necessary to send courtesy copies of pleadings to the judge if they have already been e-filed, e.g. Notices of Hearing, Motions or Affidavits. Please bring a copy of any cases or exhibits you intend to use at the hearing for opposing counsel. If you intend to rely upon case law as part of your presentation, please provide the cases to the judge no less than 48 hours before the hearing. Five or fewer cases may be emailed to the judicial assistant. A hard copy of anything greater in scope should be submitted for the judge's review no less than 72 hours before the hearing date.

**PRETRIAL AND TRIAL PRACTICE & PROCEDURES**

**SCHEDULING JURY AND NON-JURY TRIALS:** When filing a notice to Set Cause for Trial please contact the judicial assistant to set up a case management conference. Parties may attend by phone.

**EVICITION HEARINGS:** Eviction cases are reviewed by the judge upon hard copy submission of the proposed Final Judgment. If a hearing is required, the judicial assistant will contact the parties to set the case for hearing.

**SMALL CLAIMS PRETRIALS:** Phone appearances will not be permitted. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis. Any motion for an exception must be presented in writing.

A Stipulation Invoking the Rules of Civil Procedure and Waiver of Pretrial Conference must be filed 48 hours prior to the Small Claims date.

All requests for continuances shall be done in the form of a written motion to the court. Please include your attempts to contact the opposing party and whether they agreed or objected to the continuance.

**SUBMITTING PROPOSED ORDERS:** Please submit proposed orders by regular mail with copies and postage provided return envelopes for each party. All envelopes must contain the return address of the firm submitting the Order.

If you are submitting an Agreed Order please make sure "Agreed" is in the title of the order and advise the court that there was no objection by opposing counsel in your cover letter.

**ALL MAIL SHALL BE SENT DIRECTLY TO:**

**(PLEASE DO NOT STAPLE ENVELOPES TO THE ORDERS)**

Judge Lorraine M. Kelly  
St. Petersburg Judicial Building  
545 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. N., **Room 512**  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701