

FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS  
ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN  
EFFECTIVE January 1, 2026

The majority of Circuit Judges presiding in the Fourth Judicial Circuit of Arkansas have, in accordance with the provisions of Administrative Order Number 14 of the Supreme Court of Arkansas, approved an Administrative Plan effective January 1, 2026.

The Fourth Judicial District of Arkansas consists of Madison and Washington Counties. The circuit has eight divisions with the following Circuit Judges serving in each division:

Currently, the following Circuit Judges serve in each division:

Division 1 - Doug Martin  
Division 2 - John Threet  
Division 3 – Dawn Egan  
Division 4 - Cristi Beaumont  
Division 5 - Beth Storey Bryan  
Division 6 - Matt Durrett  
Division 7 - Joanna Taylor  
Division 8 - Diane Warren

Four separate buildings house the eight divisions as follows:

Main Court House, located at 280 N. College, Fayetteville: Divisions 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7

Historic Court House, located at 4 S. College, Fayetteville: Division 4, houses Drug Court, Drug Court Deputy Public Defender, Drug Court Case Manager, Drug Court Counselors, Drug Court Liaison and Drug Court Administrator (.3 miles from Main Court House)

Juvenile Justice Complex, located at 885 Clydesdale, Fayetteville: Division 3, houses Juvenile Court Division 3, Juvenile Officers and Staff serving Division 3, Teen Court Coordinator, Washington County Juvenile Detention Center with staff and 2 licensed Social Workers; and 2 Deputy Circuit Clerks who handle juvenile and domestic relations filings (2.9 miles from Main Court House)

Court House Annex, located at 123 N. College, Fayetteville: Division 8, houses Juvenile Court Division 8, Juvenile Officers and Staff serving Division 8 (.1 mile from Main Court House)

GOAL OF THE PLAN

The purpose of the Administrative Plan is to facilitate the best use of available judicial and support resources within the circuit in order that cases will be resolved in an efficient and prompt manner. The Administrative Plan represents a process that apportions the business of the circuit

courts among each of the judges on as equal basis as possible and for random distribution of cases to judges who hear the type of case set forth in the plan.

### EFFECTIVE DATE

The Second Amendment to the Administrative Plan is adopted by the undersigned judges and shall take effect January 1, 2026, or upon approval by the Supreme Court of Arkansas, and shall remain in effect until a subsequent plan is adapted and approved. The following are the amendments. All other provisions, not amended herein, shall remain in full force and effect.

### Juvenile Cases

#### Juveniles Charged as Adults

Juveniles charged as adults in criminal cases in both Washington and Madison Counties are assigned to Division 8 who also hears 50% of the juvenile docket. If the case is transferred to juvenile division, the case remains in Division 8.

#### Juvenile Detention Hearings /First Appearance

Juvenile detention hearings for juveniles arrested and cited for non-traffic and non-game and fish misdemeanors and all felonies in Washington and Madison Counties are heard by Division 8 and Division 3 on alternating weeks.

#### Felony 8.1 and Felony Arraignments for Adults

Pursuant to Administrative Order Number 18 of the Supreme Court, (A)(5)(iv) and (C), and by agreement of all Circuit and District Court Judges, Washington County District Judges shall hear felony 8.1 hearings and felony arraignments (in addition to misdemeanor first appearances and arraignments) on Mondays, Wednesdays and certain Fridays of each month. Circuit Judges for Divisions 4 and 6 shall hear felony 8.1 hearings and felony arraignments (in addition to misdemeanor first appearances and arraignments by agreement) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays. District Judge Graham Nations shall hear felony 8.1 hearings and felony arraignments (in addition to misdemeanor first appearances and arraignments by agreement) every Monday. District Judge Casey Jones shall hear felony 8.1 hearings and felony arraignments (in addition to misdemeanor first appearances and arraignments by agreement) every Wednesday. District Judge Terra Stephenson shall hear felony 8.1 hearings and felony arraignments (in addition to misdemeanor first appearances and arraignments by agreement) the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month, and District Judge Taylor Samples shall hear felony 8.1 hearings and felony arraignments (in addition to misdemeanor first appearances and arraignments by agreement) the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Fridays of each month. The proceedings shall be of record using the court reporter provided by Washington County.

Additionally, pursuant to Administrative Order Number 18, the state district judges may issue search warrants pursuant to Rule 13.1, issue arrest warrants pursuant to Rule 7.1 or §16-81-104, appoint counsel pursuant to Rule 8.2, inform Defendant pursuant to Rule 8.3, accept pleas of “Not Guilty” or “Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity” and conduct pretrial release inquiries pursuant to Rules 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3.

### CASELOAD ESTIMATES AND CASE ASSIGNMENTS

Annual new case filings per division are estimates based upon averages from new case filings from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024:

Division 1: 2229  
Division 2: 1671  
Division 3: 1206  
Division 4: 1200  
Division 5: 1969  
Division 6: 2241  
Division 7: 2863  
Division 8: 1180

Division 1	40% Probate (excluding Civil Commitments) 35% Civil
Division 2	20% Civil 15% Domestic Relations (excluding Petition for Order of Protection cases) 25% Probate (excluding Civil Commitments) 25% Civil Commitments
Division 3	100% Madison County FINS 100% Madison County Delinquency 50% Washington County Dependency Neglect 50% Washington County FINS 50% Washington County Delinquency 20% Domestic Relations (excluding Petition for Order of Protection cases) 33 1/3 Petition for Order of Protection 100% Probate cases which arise out of juvenile matters assigned to Division 3



- Division 4     25% Domestic Relations (excluding Orders of Protection)  
                     50% Civil Commitments  
                     Drug Court and Veteran's Court
- Division 5     15% Civil  
                     25% Washington County Criminal (including any reopens of Division 7 Criminal cases that were closed prior to January 1, 2025)  
                     25% Probate cases (excluding Civil Commitments)  
                     25% Civil Commitments
- Division 6     25% Domestic Relations (excluding Orders of Protection)  
                     33 1/3 Petition for Order of Protection cases  
                     30% Civil  
                     All reopened Domestic Relations cases previously filed in Divisions 5 and 7
- Division 7     75% Washington County Criminal (including any reopens of Division 6 Criminal cases)  
                     100% Madison County Criminal (including any reopens of Division 6 Criminal cases)
- Division 8     100% Madison County Dependency Neglect  
                     50% Washington County Dependency Neglect  
                     50% Washington County FINS  
                     50% Washington County Delinquency  
                     15% Domestic Relations (excluding Petition for Order of Protection cases)  
                     33 1/3 Petition for Order of Protection  
                     10% Probate (excluding Civil Commitments)  
                     100% Probate cases which arise out of juvenile matters assigned to Division 8  
                     100% Criminal cases where juvenile is tried as an adult

#### TRANSFERS POLICY

A judge may transfer a case to another Division for judicial economy to manage related cases or for the purposes of redistribution of cases to assist in case management provided the Judge receiving the case is in agreement. The Order of Transfer shall specify if the Clerk of the Court is to randomly assign a subsequently filed case to the transferring Division in order to maintain equal distribution of cases among the Divisions in effectuating the transfer. If the Order of Transfer specifies that there be no assignment of a subsequently filed case to the transferring Division, the Clerk of the Court shall take no action except to note the reassignment of the case.

## RANDOM ASSIGNMENT

The assignment of cases shall be random, based on case types as assigned to the various Divisions of Court as provided in Assignment of Cases section. The Clerk is directed not to assign a case to a Division until such time as the file-mark of the Clerk has been affixed. The Clerk is prohibited from making the Division assignment known until the number is affixed to the pleading initiating the case. The Clerk is to maintain Criminal, Civil, Domestic Relations, Probate and Juvenile docket for each of the respective numerical Divisions.

## SPECIALTY DOCKETS OR PROGRAMS

### Washington County Mental Health Court

Judge Terra Stephenson, Presiding

#### A. Type of Program and Description of Operations

The Washington County Mental Health Court is a voluntary, multi-phase intervention program for adult Washington County residents who have been accused of, or who have pleaded guilty to, felony or misdemeanor criminal charges and who also have a serious or persistent underlying mental health disorder (as defined in A.C.A. § 16-100-101) that contributed to their arrest. The program will accept participants on a pre-adjudication and post-adjudication basis. Participants must agree to a case duration of at least fourteen months with additional time added depending on each participant's progress through the program.

To be eligible, the defendant must not have a previous conviction for a serious felony involving violence as defined in A.C.A. § 5-4-501(c)(2) or a previous conviction that would require registration as a sex offender. The defendant must also be identified as high-risk/high-need as determined by a validated risk-needs assessment tool.

#### B. Statutory Authority

This specialty court program is authorized under A.C.A. §§ 16-100-201 through 209.

Pursuant to § 16-100-204(b)(2), the Circuit Court Judges of the Fourth Judicial Circuit have determined that the judicial circuit does not have a circuit judge who is available to administer the Washington County Mental Health Court program on a consistent basis and have designated District Court Judge Terra Stephenson to administer the mental health specialty court program.

#### C. Compliance with Sentencing Laws

The Washington County Mental Health Court shall operate in compliance with all applicable sentencing laws, including fines, fees, court costs, and probation assessments.

#### D. Use of Court Resources

The Washington County Mental Health Court will operate in the courthouse located at 10 South College Avenue in Fayetteville and will meet on Thursdays at 1 p.m. A court reporter and bailiff will be employed on an hourly basis and paid through a federal grant. Other staff will consist of a district court judge as no circuit judges are available for this new specialty court, a prosecuting attorney already employed with the Fourth Judicial Circuit Prosecuting Attorney's Office, a Court Services Officer acting as the case coordinator and probation officer who will be staffed through the Washington County Sheriff's Office, and a defense attorney who is donating their time on a pro bono basis unless we receive state funds for a public defender. Treatment is provided by the treatment partner, Arisa Health, and paid for by a sub award from the grant.

#### E. Source of Funding

The Washington County Mental Health Court will receive support through Washington County, the Fourth Judicial Circuit Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Washington County Sheriff's Office, and a federal grant through the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

#### Washington County Drug Court

1. The Washington/Madison County Drug Court program has been in operation since 1999. Court sessions are conducted in Washington County. In February 2019, Washington and Madison County drug courts were split, and we started having Madison County services and court in Madison County when possible. The program utilizes a pre-adjudication and post-adjudication process and is open to defendants with a felony charge, non-violent offenders.

Washington County Drug Court (WCDC) is held in the courtroom of the **4th Division** of Washington County Circuit Court. In order to be accepted into the program, the applicant must be charged with a felony. The applicant's attorney submits the request for admission to the Prosecuting Attorney. If the presiding Judge and Prosecuting Attorney approve, the case is transferred to the Fourth Division.

#### Graduation Requirements:

1. Have paid all financial obligations, including court-ordered and probation fines and fees and treatment program balance owed.
2. Have been actively involved in the program.
3. Verify abstinence (by urinalysis drug screens) during the last 180 days in the program.
4. Complete all treatment plan assignments/other assignments.
5. Complete application and get approval by Treatment Team for graduation.



2. The statutory authority for WDC is A.C.A. Section 16-98-301 to 16-98-307 et seq.
3. The WDC conforms to all applicable sentencing laws, including fines, fees, court costs, and probation assessments.
4. The program is conducted in conformance with state drug court statutes and complies with applicable laws involving the assessment of fines, fees, court costs, and probation fees. The program receives staff funding from the Public Defenders Commission, Department of Community Corrections, the Washington County Quorum Court, the State of Arkansas, and collection of court fees and grants.
5. The members of the drug court program team include the Judge, Prosecuting Attorney, Case Manager, Drug Court Liaison, Public Defender, Treatment Provider, Probation Officers, DCC Administrative Staff, Law Enforcement, and Coordinator. They have been consulted for purposes of scheduling, to ensure that the necessary resources are available and to avoid conflicts with other court programs and responsibilities in which team members may be required to participate.

#### Madison County Drug Court

1. In February of 2019, the Madison County Drug Court was established to allow participants in Madison County to have easier access to treatment and court. The program utilizes a pre-adjudication and post-adjudication process and is open to defendants with a felony charge, non-violent offenders.

Madison County Drug Court (MCDC) is held in the courtroom of the Madison County Courthouse in Huntsville, Arkansas once or twice a month. In order to be accepted into the program, the applicant must be charged with a felony. The applicant's attorney submits the request for admission to the Prosecuting Attorney. If the presiding Judge and Prosecuting Attorney approve, the case is transferred to the Fourth Division.

#### Graduation Requirements:

1. Have paid all financial obligations, including court-ordered and probation fines and fees and treatment program balance owed.
  2. Have been actively involved in the program for a minimum of 15 months.
  3. Verify abstinence (by urinalysis drug screens) during the last 180 days in the program.
  4. Complete all treatment plan assignments/other assignments.
  5. Complete application and get approval by Treatment Team for graduation.
2. The statutory authority for MCDC is A.C.A. Section 16-98-301 to 16-98-307 et seq.

3. The WCDC conforms to all applicable sentencing laws, including fines, fees, court costs, and probation assessments.
4. The program is conducted in conformance with state drug court statutes and complies with applicable laws involving the assessment of fines, fees, court costs, and probation fees. The program receives staff funding from the Public Defenders Commission, Department of Community Corrections, the Washington County Quorum Court, the State of Arkansas, and collection of court fees and grants.
5. The members of the drug court program team include the Judge, Prosecuting Attorney, Case Manager, Drug Court Liaison, Public Defender, Treatment Provider, Probation Officers, DCC Administrative Staff, Law Enforcement, and Coordinator. They have been consulted for purposes of scheduling, to ensure that the necessary resources are available and to avoid conflicts with other court programs and responsibilities in which team members may be required to participate.

#### Veterans' Treatment Court

1. The Veterans' Treatment Court is an accountability-based program designed to address addiction and the criminal behavior associated with it. Participants who choose to take part in VTC are willing to attend treatment meetings and a bi weekly or monthly court session in exchange to have their charges reduced or even dismissed from their records when they graduate.

VTC is held in the courtroom of the 4th Division of Washington County Circuit Court. In order to be accepted into the program, the applicant must be charged with a felony. The applicant's attorney submits the request for admission to the Prosecuting Attorney. If the presiding Judge and Prosecuting Attorney approve, the case is transferred to the Fourth Division.

The minimum amount of time it takes to finish VTC is 15 months. Each participant has an individualized treatment plan.

#### Graduation Requirements:

1. Have paid all financial obligations, including court-ordered and probation fines and fees and treatment program balance owed.
  2. Have been actively involved in the program for a minimum of 15 months.
  3. Verify abstinence (by urinalysis drug screens) during the last 180 days in the program.
  4. Complete all treatment plan assignments/other assignments.
  5. Complete application and get approval by Treatment Team for graduation.
2. The statutory authority for Veterans' Treatment Court is A.C.A. Section 16-101-101 et seq.



3. The Veterans' Treatment Court program conforms to all applicable sentencing laws, including fines, fees, court costs, and probation assessments.
4. The Veteran's Treatment Court uses the same Court resources as the existing drug court program. The prosecuting attorney, public defender, court reporter, drug court coordinator, case manager and law clerk employed for the existing drug court program perform their same duties for the veterans' program. The judge currently presiding over the drug court program also presides over the veterans' program. Treatment/counseling services are provided by the Veterans' Administration.
5. The program receives funding from the Public Defenders Commission, Department of Community Corrections, the Washington County Quorum Court, the State of Arkansas, the Federal government, and the collection of court fees. Some grant funds are also available. The Veterans' Administration provides its resources at no cost to Washington or Madison Counties.

## STATE DISTRICT COURT ADMINISTRATIVE PLANS

In accordance with the provisions of Administrative Orders Numbers 14 and 18, the State District Courts for Washington County, having multiple venues in the district, have submitted an Administrative Plan which is appended to the Circuit Court Administrative Plan and said plans are endorsed by the undersigned circuit judges.

The Administrative Plan for the Fourth Judicial Circuit of Arkansas is hereby submitted to the Arkansas Supreme Court for approval on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2025.

Approved:

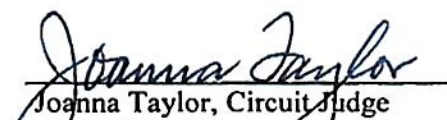
  
Doug Martin, Circuit Judge  
First Division


  
Beth Storey Bryan, Circuit Judge  
Fifth Division


  
John Threet, Circuit Judge  
Second Division

  
Matt Durrett, Circuit Judge  
Sixth Division

  
Dawn Egan, Circuit Judge  
Third Division

  
Joanna Taylor, Circuit Judge  
Seventh Division

  
Cristi Beaumont, Circuit Judge  
Fourth Division

  
Diane Warren, Circuit Judge  
Eighth Division

## STATE DISTRICT JUDGES

### ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 18 REFERRALS FROM CIRCUIT COURT

Has the circuit court referred matters pursuant to Administrative Order No. 18 to be heard by a state district judge?

☒ Yes

☐ No

### Participating State District Judges ----- Assignment and Allocation of Cases

The state district judges participating in referrals from the circuit court include:

<u>Name</u>	<u>District Court Judicial District</u>	<u>Assignment and Allocation of Cases</u>
Judge Taylor Samples Division 1	2 <sup>nd</sup> District	To be Determined
Judge Graham H. Nations Division 2	2 <sup>nd</sup> District	To be Determined
Judge Clinton K. (Casey) Jones Division 3	2 <sup>nd</sup> District	To be Determined
Judge Terra Stephenson Division 4	2 <sup>nd</sup> District	To be Determined
Judge Dale Ramsey	3 <sup>rd</sup> District	100% of Cases

### Matters Subject to Reference

The following matters are referred from circuit court to state district court and have been included in the administrative plan for the circuit court and the administrative plan for district court:

☐ **Consent Jurisdiction.** Upon the consent of all parties and approval of the circuit judge originally assigned, the following types of cases are referred from circuit court:

☐ Civil

☐ Domestic Relations

☐ Probate



☐ **Protective Orders.**

☐ **Forcible Entry and Detainers/Unlawful Detainer.**

☐ **Other Matters of an Emergency or Uncontested Nature Pending in Civil, Domestic Relations or Probate Division.** *Please provide detailed information regarding the types of matters that will be referred and where these matters will be heard below.*

☒ **Other Matters, if Justification for the Reference and Procedures to be Employed are Sufficiently Demonstrated in the Circuit Court Administrative Plan Pursuant to Administrative Order No. 14.** *Please provide detailed information regarding the types of matters that will be referred and where these matters will be heard below. [2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District Only]*

Types of Other Matters

Location

☒ **Criminal.** The following duties are referred with respect to an investigation or prosecution of an offense lying within the exclusive jurisdiction of the circuit court:

- ☒ Issue Search Warrant Pursuant to Rule 13.1
- ☒ Issue Arrest Warrant Pursuant to Rule 7.1 or A.C.A. §16-81-104
- ☒ Issue Summons Pursuant to Rule 6.1 [3<sup>rd</sup> District Only]
- ☒ Reasonable Cause Determinations Pursuant to Rule 4.1(e) [3<sup>rd</sup> District Only]
- ☒ Conduct First appearance Pursuant to rule 8.1
- ☒ Appoint Counsel Pursuant to Rule 8.2
- ☒ Inform Defendant Pursuant to Rule 8.3
- ☒ Accept Plea of “Not Guilty” or “Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity”
- ☒ Conduct a pretrial release inquiry pursuant to Rules 8.4 and 8.5 [3<sup>rd</sup> District Only]
- ☒ Conduct Pretrial Release Inquiry rules 9.1, 9.2, and 9.3
- ☒ Conduct Preliminary Hearing Pursuant to A.C.A. §16-93-307 [3<sup>rd</sup> District Only]

<b>Digital Recording Equipment</b>
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Is digital recording equipment utilized to make a verbatim record of matters referred from the circuit court?

☒ Yes [2<sup>nd</sup> District]

☒ No [3<sup>rd</sup> District]