

# JUDGE LADEITRA ADKINS

## 303RD DISTRICT COURT COURT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. **APPEALS:** The Associate Judge's rulings on all temporary matters shall be reduced to a temporary order and signed by the Associate Judge. The Associate Judge's ruling will be in full force and effect pending an appeal, unless a stay is granted. A final order based on an Associate Judge's ruling shall not be signed pending appeal to the trial court; otherwise the appellant will lose their right to appeal to the trial court.
2. **AGREED ORDERS:** Agreed Orders can be finalized by affidavit. The order and affidavit should be e-filed with the District Clerk's Office and then submitted to the Court for signature.
3. **APPOINTMENTS OF THE COURT:** The Court maintains a list of attorneys who are eligible for appointment by the Court to serve as mediators, ad litem and amicus attorneys. Applications for appointments are accepted year-round.
4. **AUDIO VISUAL EQUIPMENT:** Anyone wishing to use audio/visual equipment during any hearing or trial should familiarize themselves on proper utilization of said equipment prior to the commencement of said proceeding.
5. **CHILD SUPPORT:** All orders containing provisions for child support shall specify that said payments shall be paid through the Texas Child Support Disbursement Unit and monitored by the Dallas County Child Support Office. Likewise, all child support modification orders shall specify that payments shall be paid through the Texas Child Support Disbursement Unit and monitored by the Dallas County Child Support Office. The Court will not sign any child support orders, including temporary orders, which are not accompanied by a wage withholding order.
6. **CONTEMPT:** Motions for contempt are heard on Monday mornings on the quarter hour. No motion for contempt seeking confinement will be heard without a proposed contempt order and order of commitment.
7. **CONTINUANCES:** Once a case has a trial setting, a continuance or pass on any matter can only occur upon approval of the Judge. No case will be withdrawn from the docket without the specific agreement of both sides communicating said agreement to the Court prior to the beginning of the hearing or the granting of a continuance by the Court.
8. **DEFAULT ORDERS:** All default orders must be scheduled for a prove up.
9. **DIVORCE CASES:** As of September 1, 2021, all orders must include the date of the marriage.

10. **DISMISSAL DOCKET:** All causes of action shall be maintained on a dismissal docket. Each case shall be set for dismissal six months from the filing date. After a notice of the dismissal date has been received, a party may write or e-mail the Court Coordinator to request that the case be retained on the docket, but will only be considered if said request is received prior to the Dismissal Docket date. The Court Coordinator will respond to all such requests in by e-mail or letter. All pleadings must contain an e-mail or other type of mailing address. The requesting party will be notified of either, (1) a new Dismissal Docket setting or (2) a setting for Dismissal Review before the District Judge. The requesting party must appear before the District Judge if the matter is set for Dismissal Review. If a pre-trial or trial setting is given after the case is set on the Dismissal Docket, the Court Coordinator will automatically remove the dismissal setting and reset the matter on the Dismissal Docket for a date after the pre-trial or trial setting.
11. **FINAL ORDERS:** Pursuant to Local Rule 8.02, within 30 days after the Court has rendered judgment or there has been an announcement by the parties that the case has settled, the ruling or settlement shall be reduced to writing. Upon the failure to furnish the Court with such a judgment or order finally disposing of the case, or to request an extension of the filing, or to set a motion for entry within the 30 day period, the Court shall enter an order of dismissal without prejudice with costs taxed at the Court's discretion.
12. **MEDIATION:** Mediation is mandatory in all contested cases unless waived by the Court. The Court will appoint a mediator if the attorneys/parties are unable to agree on a mediator. If the parties are unable to afford a private mediator, the Court may refer the matter to Family Court Services or DMS for mediation. Attorneys are required to attend court ordered mediation with Family Court Services unless, prior to mediation, a Rule 11 agreement is filed waiving the right to rescind the mediated settlement agreement for failure of the attorneys to appear, and/or failure to sign any agreement that is reached.
13. **NAME CHANGE:** A name change may be set on the prove up docket or may be granted upon the presentation of (1) testimony from the person seeking the name change or (2) a written affidavit from the person seeking a name change sufficient to satisfy Tex. Fam. Code 45.103.
14. **PARENTING CLASSES:** To be determined on a case-by-case basis.
15. **PAY SHEETS:** Pay sheets should be emailed to [KSERRANO@dallascounty.org](mailto:KSERRANO@dallascounty.org).
16. **PROVE UPS:** Held every Friday at 9:30 in person or via zoom.
17. **PRO SE (SELF-REPRESENTED) PROVE-UPS:** Pro se parties may e-file or bring the original and 2 copies of the proposed order to the Associate Judge for review. After the order is approved by the Associate Judge, the party may be referred to the District Judge in order to prove up said matter or may obtain a prove up setting. Prove ups are heard by the District Court each Wednesday morning. Schedule with the clerks at 214-653-7611.

18. FAMILY VIOLENCE: All temporary and final orders which contain provisions regarding the possession or conservatorship of children shall contain a statement regarding whether there has been any family violence or child abuse in the 2 years prior to the filing of the action. If the parties cannot represent to the Court that there has been no family violence or child abuse as required, the parties are then required to present testimony such that the Court is able to determine whether the agreement reached is in the best interest of the children.
19. RESIDENCY RESTRICTION: To be determined on a case-by-case basis.
20. SOCIAL STUDIES: To be determined on a case-by-case basis.
21. TRIAL: All trial settings are provided at a pre-trial hearing. A party may request a pre-trial setting from the Court Coordinator. All attorneys and pro se litigants shall appear for the pre-trial setting with their calendars and shall be prepared to discuss the issues. Failure to appear at the pre-trial setting may result in dismissal for want of prosecution and a default judgment being entered. In all contested custody matters, social studies and mediation are to be completed prior to the trial date. In all contested property matters, mediation must occur before the trial date. In addition, the parties must file a sworn inventory, a proposed property division, and a summary of requested relief before trial. If the matter is to be tried to a jury, the parties must submit a proposed jury charge to the Court and the other parties prior to trial. The jury charge shall be submitted to the Court electronically and in writing.
22. WITHDRAWALS: Must be filed and approved by the Court 30 days before a final trial setting.