



SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
16TH DIVISION

KAREN D. WHATLEY
Circuit Judge

PULASKI AND PERRY
COUNTIES

PULASKI COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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June 5, 2025

Chief Justice Karen Baker
Arkansas Supreme Court
625 Marshall Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

Re: Administrative Plan

Dear Chief Justice Baker:

Enclosed please find the proposed Case Assignment Plan for 2026 and 2027 for the Sixth Judicial Circuit. All seventeen (17) Circuit Court Judges signed the plan. Attached to the plan is the Administrative Plan for the 31st Judicial District for the District Courts of Perry and Pulaski Counties.

The proposed plan makes no caseload reallocations for 2026. For 2027, the proposal is to allow Judge Reif to take over a civil docket and to change 3rd Division to a domestic relations/probate division.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen D. Whatley".

Karen D. Whatley
Administrative Judge
Sixth Judicial Circuit

ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN
SIXTH CIRCUIT
Composed of Perry and Pulaski Counties

1. JUDGES.

The Sixth Judicial Circuit is served by seventeen (17) judges.

Judge	Division Number
Judge Leon Johnson	Division 1
Judge Lucas Rowan	Division 2
Judge Cathleen Compton	Division 3
Judge Hugh Finkelstein	Division 4
Judge LaTonya Honorable	Division 5
Judge Tim Fox	Division 6
Judge Melanie Martin	Division 7
Judge Tjuana Byrd-Manning	Division 8
Judge Andrew Gill	Division 9
Judge Shanice Johnson	Division 10
Judge Patricia James	Division 11
Judge Cara Connors	Division 12
Judge Mike Reif	Division 13
Judge Shawn Johnson	Division 14
Judge Amy Moore	Division 15
Judge Karen Whatley	Division 16
Judge Brent Eubanks	Division 17

2. Case Assignment and Allocation

Check all that apply for case assignment method:

- ☒ Random selection by electronic method (i.e. ARCourts/Context)
- ☒ All matters connected with a pending or supplemental proceeding will be heard by the judge to whom the matter was originally assigned
- ☐ There exists good cause for use of a different method of assignment (If checked, please describe)

Pulaski County 2026

Circuit Court Division

1st Leon Johnson
 2nd Rowan
 3rd Compton
 4th Finkelstein
 5th Honorable
 6th Fox
 7th Martin
 8th Byrd-Manning
 9th Gill
 10th Shanice Johnson
 11th James
 12th Connors
 13th Reif
 14th Shawn Johnson
 15th Moore
 16th Whatley
 17th Eubanks

Percentage of Case Division

22% criminal
 18% domestic; 18% probate
 20% civil
 18% domestic; 18% probate (100% civil com ct)
 13% criminal; 10% domestic; 10% probate
 20% civil
 22% criminal
 50% juvenile
 21% criminal
 50% juvenile
 100% Specialty Court; 20% civil
 20% civil
 18% domestic; 18% probate
 20% civil
 18% domestic; 18% probate
 22% criminal
 18% domestic; 18% probate

Pulaski County 2027

Circuit Court Division

1st Leon Johnson
 2nd Rowan
 3rd New Judge
 4th Finkelstein
 5th Honorable
 6th Fox
 7th Martin
 8th Byrd-Manning
 9th Gill
 10th Shanice Johnson
 11th James
 12th Connors
 13th Reif
 14th Shawn Johnson
 15th Moore
 16th Whatley
 17th Eubanks

Percentage of Case Division

22% criminal
 18% domestic; 18% probate
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 18% domestic; 18% probate
 13% criminal; 10% domestic; 10% probate
 20% civil
 22% criminal
 50% juvenile
 21% criminal
 50% juvenile
 100% Specialty Court; 20% civil
 20% civil
 20% civil
 20% civil
 18% domestic; 18% probate
 22% criminal
 18% domestic; 18% probate

Perry County 2026 and 2027**Circuit Court Division****Percentage of Case Division**

2 nd	Rowan	14% domestic; 13% probate; 15% civil
4 th	Finkelstein	25% domestic; 25% probate
8 th	Byrd-Manning	50% juvenile
9 th	Gill	100% criminal
10 th	Shanice Johnson	50% juvenile
12 th	Connors	10% domestic; 11% probate; 20% civil
13 th	Reif	14% domestic; 13% probate; 15% civil
14 th	Shawn Johnson	10% domestic; 11% probate; 20% civil
15 th	Moore	14% domestic; 13% probate; 15% civil
17 th	Eubanks	13% domestic; 14% probate; 15% civil

3. Caseload Estimate

Pursuant to information found in Tableau, the anticipated Pulaski County caseloads for each division, based on filings in 2024, are as follows:

1 st	Leon Johnson	1,737 (criminal)
2 nd	Rowan	1,140 (domestic); 660 (probate) 1800 total
3 rd	Compton	2,417 (civil)
4 th	Finkelstein	1,140 (domestic); 660 (probate) 1800 total
5 th	Honorable	1,026 (CR); 633 (DR); 367 (PR) 2026 total
6 th	Fox	2,417 (civil)
7 th	Martin	1,737 (criminal)
8 th	Byrd-Manning	750 (juvenile)
9 th	Gill	1,658 (criminal)
10 th	Shanice Johnson	750 (juvenile)
11 th	James	2,417 (civil) 100 (specialty court)
12 th	Connors	2,417 (civil)
13 th	Reif	1,140 (domestic); 660 (probate) 1800 total
14 th	Shawn Johnson	2,417 (civil)
15 th	Moore	1,140 (domestic); 660 (probate) 1800 total
16 th	Whatley	1,737 (criminal)
17 th	Eubanks	1,140 (domestic); 660 (probate) 1800 total

Pursuant to information found in Tableau, case filings by type (new and reopens) for 2022-2024 in Pulaski County were:

Type	2022	2023	2024
Civil	8,881	9,890	12,083
Criminal	6,324	6,736	7,896
Domestic	5,853	6,226	6,331
Juvenile	1,390	1,554	1,499
Probate	3,474	3,487	3,668

2 nd	Rowan	18 domestic; 8 probate; 21 civil	47 total
4 th	Finkelstein	33 domestic; 15 probate	48 total
8 th	Byrd-Manning	11 juvenile	
9 th	Gill	104 criminal	
10 th	Shanice Johnson	11 juvenile	
12 th	Connors	13 domestic; 7 probate; 29 civil	49 total
13 th	Reif	18 domestic; 8 probate; 21 civil	47 total
14 th	Shawn Johnson	13 domestic; 7 probate; 29 civil	49 total
15 th	Moore	18 domestic; 8 probate; 21 civil	47 total
17 th	Eubanks	17 domestic; 9 probate; 21 civil	47 total

Type	2022	2023	2024
Civil	98	117	143
Criminal	97	127	104
Domestic	95	121	130
Juvenile	17	9	22
Probate	70	69	61

The following specialty courts are conducted:

A. Adult Drug Court **Pulaski County**

- Specialty Court Team Members include the circuit judge, court staff, treatment providers counselors from ACC, public defenders, Clinical supervisor, Law Enforcement liaison, Mentors, Prosecutors, and probation officers. Team

members participate in staffing and in hearings to ensure that all available resources are used in a timely manner to meet individualized needs. Treatment is provided by a contract agency through the Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Division.

- e. Sources of funding: Adult Drug Court is funded by monthly fees paid by each participant and federal and state grants. Drug treatment is paid for by the Arkansas Community Correction. The Administrative Office of the Courts assists with payment for transitional housing. There are sufficient resources for the operation of the program, as required by A.C.A. §16-98-305.
- f. Does a district court judge preside over the specialty court program?
☐ Yes
☒ No

B. Adult Drug Court

Perry County

- a. Type of specialty docket and description of its operation: Adult Drug Court
- b. Statutory or legal authority on which it is based: § 16-98-301 et seq.
- c. Certification of compliance with all laws:
☒ By his signature below, Judge Andrew Gill hereby certifies that the specialty court complies with all laws, including sentencing, transfer, assessment, collection and remittance of fines, fees, court costs, and probation fees.
- d. Use of court resources.

Specialty Court Team Members includes (1) Circuit Court Judge, (1) Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, (1) Deputy Public Defender, (1) Court Coordinator, (1) Treatment Provider, (1) Probation Officer, and (1) Law Enforcement Representative. All Adult Drug Court team members meet weekly for staffing and court review hearings.
- e. Sources of funding: Perry County Adult Drug Court receives funding and support from Perry County, the Public Defender Commission, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Department of Community Corrections, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and federal and state grant opportunities as they arise and become available. There are sufficient resources for the operation of the program, as required by A.C.A. §16-98-305.
- f. Does a district court judge preside over the specialty court program?
☐ Yes
☒ No

C. Veteran's Court**Pulaski County**

- a. Type of specialty docket and description of its operation: Veterans Treatment Court
- b. Statutory or legal authority on which it is based: § 16-101-101 et seq.
- c. Certification of compliance with all laws:
 - ☒ By her signature below, Judge Patricia James hereby certifies that the specialty court complies with all laws, including sentencing, transfer, assessment, collection and remittance of fines, fees, court costs, and probation fees.
- d. Use of court resources.

Specialty Court Team Members include the circuit judge, judicial staff, probation officers, VA Liaison and Vet's Judicial Outreach Officer(s). Team members participate in meetings and in hearings to ensure that all available resources are used in a timely manner to meet the needs of the veterans.
- e. Sources of funding: VTC is funded by monthly fees assessed to each of the participants and federal and state grants. Also, the cost of treatment is covered by the VA Hospital.
- f. Does a district court judge preside over the specialty court program?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☒ No

D. Mental Health Court**Pulaski County**

- a. Type of specialty docket and description of its operation: Mental Health Court
- b. Statutory or legal authority on which it is based: § 16-100-201 et seq.
- c. Use of court resources.

The Pulaski County Mental Health Court-Little Rock team includes one (1) full-time District Judge, (1) full-time Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, (1) full-time Deputy Public Defender, (1) Probation Officer, (1) Law Enforcement Officer, (1) Coordinator, and (4) Representatives from community treatment providers, including Centers for Youth and Family Services, Professional Counseling Associates, Department of Human Services, and Veterans Affairs.
- d. Sources of funding: Pulaski County Mental Health Court-Little Rock receives support from the City of Little Rock, the Public Defender Commission, the Pulaski County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, and Federal Providers.
- e. Does a district court judge preside over the specialty court program?
 - ☒ Yes
 - ☐ No

6. Referral of Circuit Court Matters to State District Judges

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:

Name	District Court Judicial District	Assignment and Allocation of Cases
Milas Hale	Sherwood	12.5%
Rita Bailey	Jacksonville/Maumelle	12.5%
Chip Welch	Pulaski County	12.5%
Randy Morley	North Little Rock	12.5%
Paula Juels Jones	North Little Rock	12.5%
Jill Kamps	Little Rock	12.5%
Mark Leverett	Little Rock	12.5%
Herb Wright	Little Rock	12.5%

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 the district court:

☒ **Consent Jurisdiction.** Upon the consent of all parties and approval by 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.**

☒ **Child Support Enforcement cases**

The State District Court will hear cases Monday through Thursday of each week. A courtroom in the Juvenile Justice Center has been created and used by the State District Judges. The Circuit Court has arranged for staffing including a case coordinator and bailiff.

☒ **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
- ☒ Reasonable Cause Determinations Pursuant to Rule 4.1 (e)
- ☒ 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 Mental Disease or Defect"
- ☒ Conduct Pretrial Release Inquiry Pursuant to Rules 8.4 and 8.5
- ☒ Release Defendant from Custody Pursuant to Rules 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3
- ☒ Conduct Preliminary Hearing Pursuant to A.C.A. §16-93-307

Digital Audio Recording Equipment
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Is digital audio recording equipment utilized to make a verbatim record of matters referred from the circuit court?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No


Effective Date

This Administrative Plan is effective January 1, 2026.

The Case Assignment Plan for the Sixth Judicial Circuit is submitted for approval on this 3rd day of June, 2025.

Approved:


Judge Leon Johnson Division 1


Judge Cathleen Compton Division 3


Judge LaTonya Honorable Division 5


Judge Melanie Martin Division 7


Judge Andy Gill Division 9


Judge Patricia James Division 11


Judge Mike Reif Division 13


Judge Amy Moore Division 15

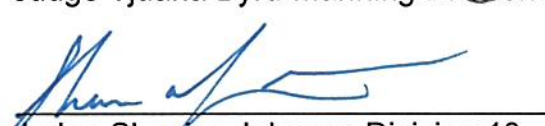

Judge Brent Eubanks Division 17


Judge Lucas Rowan Division 2


Judge Hugh Finkelstein Division 4


Judge Tim Fox Division 6


Judge Tjuana Byrd-Manning Division 8


Judge Shanice Johnson Division 10


Judge Cara Connors Division 12


Judge Shawn Johnson Division 14


Judge Karen Whatley Division 16
Administrative Judge