

ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

Pursuant to Administrative Order Number 14, the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit submits the following Administrative Plan for Circuit Court Administration which becomes effective January 1, 2026:

1. Cases filed in the Circuit Court of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit shall be designated by the clerks of the various courts according to the following subject division: Criminal, Civil, Juvenile, Probate and Domestic Relations.
2. The Fifteenth Judicial Circuit is made up of four counties: Conway, Logan, Scott and Yell Counties. The Conway County Courthouse is located in Morrilton, Arkansas. Logan County has dual county seats with courthouses located in Paris and Booneville, Arkansas. The Scott County Courthouse is located in Waldron, Arkansas. Yell County has dual county seats with courthouses located in Dardanelle and Danville, Arkansas.
3. The present Administrative Plan will break down division assignments by courthouse.
4. Circuit Court Division 1 is currently held by Circuit Judge Jerry Don Ramey and shall have the following case assignments:
 - a. 100% of all criminal cases, civil property forfeitures and adult civil commitment matters in Morrilton, Paris, Booneville, Waldron, Dardanelle and Danville, including criminal appeals from the District Courts within the 15th Judicial District;
 - b. 33% of the civil matters in Morrilton.
5. Circuit Court Division 2 is currently held by Circuit Judge David H. McCormick and shall have the following case assignments:
 - a. 100% of the domestic relations cases in Morrilton, Dardanelle, Booneville and Waldron;

- b. 67% of the domestic relations cases in Danville and Paris;
 - c. 67% of the Office of Child Support Enforcement cases in Danville and Paris;
 - d. 67% of all general civil matters in Morrilton, Dardanelle, Danville, Paris, Booneville and Waldron; and
 - e. 67% of the probate matters in Morrilton, Dardanelle, Danville, Paris, Booneville and Waldron.
6. Circuit Court Division 3 is currently held by Circuit Judge Terry M. Sullivan and shall have the following assignments:
- a. 100% of all juvenile cases in Morrilton, Dardanelle, Danville, Paris, Booneville and Waldron;
 - b. 33% of the domestic relations cases in Danville and Paris;
 - c. 100% of the Office of Child Support Enforcement cases in Dardanelle, Booneville and Morrilton;
 - d. 33% of the Office of Child Support Enforcement cases in Danville and Paris;
 - e. 33% of the probate cases in Morrilton, Dardanelle, Paris, Booneville and Waldron;
 - f. 100% of the Adult Protective Services cases in Morrilton, Dardanelle, Danville, Paris, Booneville and Waldron;
 - g. 33% of all general civil cases in Dardanelle, Danville, Paris, Booneville and Waldron.

7. All categories that have a percentage of the total number of cases divided between divisions shall be randomly assigned. The random assignments shall comply with the method and regulations set out by the appropriate authority at the time of assignment.

8. Pursuant to A.C.A. 16-98-302, Division 1, of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, which encompasses all criminal cases, shall maintain a Drug Court Program and a Veteran's Court Program for qualified participants. Entry into the Drug Court/Veteran's Court Programs shall be accessed through designated screening guidelines, with entry into the Drug Court/Veteran Court Programs discretionary. Admission into the Drug Court/Veteran Court Programs shall be considered based upon the individual characteristics of the applicant, the statutory guidelines and acceptance by the presiding judge. The intent of the Drug Court/Veteran's Court Programs is to provide judicial intervention and support for effective treatment programs that reduce the incidence of drug use, drug addiction, and family separation due to parental substance abuse and drug related crimes. The Fifteenth Judicial Drug Court/Veteran's Court Programs shall be supported by Arkansas Community Correction with services provided in Booneville, Danville and Morrilton. The Booneville Drug Court/Veteran's Court Programs will also provide services to Scott County and the Paris District of Logan County. The Danville Drug Court/Veteran's Court Programs will also provide services to the Dardanelle District of Yell County. Veteran's Court Program participants will also be supported by the Veteran's Administration. Each Arkansas Community Correction team shall consist of a Supervision Officer, a Counselor and an Administrative Assistant. Monthly review shall be conducted in the respective jurisdiction by a team consisting of such participants, as the prosecuting attorney, or a designated representative, a public defender or private voluntary attorney, the Arkansas Community Correction staff listed above, a representative of the Veteran's Administration team and other such individuals that may provide constructive/positive assistance to the Drug Court/Veteran's Court Programs. Funding for the Drug Court/Veteran's Court Programs shall include state designated funds, grants, contributions and any other such funds that may be provided to each individual program. Supervision of the Fifteenth

Judicial Circuit Drug/Veteran's Court Programs shall be provided by the presiding judge of Division 1, of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit.

9. The process for judicial recusal was modified via Administrative Order 1 and Administrative Order 16 to set forth that starting January 27, 2025 it is no longer necessary for judicial administrative plans to provide for the process of handling judicial recusal, the reassignment of a case or requests for assignment of a judge by the Supreme Court. As such, the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit does hereby acknowledge the procedure that judicial recusals will initiate with a general recusal by the recusing judge. Upon receiving the general recusal, the circuit/county clerk for that county shall contact the circuit judge of the next numerical division to ascertain whether the contacted circuit judge also has a conflict. If not, that circuit judge shall be assigned the matter. If that circuit judge does have a conflict, the circuit/county clerk shall contact the remaining circuit judge and assign the case to that circuit judge, if there is no conflict. If all three circuit judges have a conflict with the case, the circuit/county clerk shall complete the attached Form Requesting A Special Judge and email it to specialjudge@arcourts.gov for the Supreme Court to assign a special judge. In order to comply with the intent that recused cases remain independent, the Arkansas Administrative Office of the Court's Trial Administration Assistant shall be responsible for assigning a court reporter and scheduling future hearings and trials on the recused case.

10. The Fifteenth Judicial Circuit is served by two full time state district courts, the Twelfth Judicial District Court and the Twenty-Fourth Judicial District Court. The Twelfth Judicial District Court consists of Conway County District Court, Yell County District Court (Dardanelle and Danville Divisions) and Logan County District Court (Booneville and Paris Divisions) Each District Court is served by District Judge Brian Mueller. (See attached Twelfth Judicial District Court Plan.) The Twenty-Fourth Judicial District consists of Montgomery County, Polk County, and Scott Counties District Courts. It is served by District Judge Danny Thrailkill (See attached Twenty-Fourth District Court Plan).

11. Caseload Estimate. Application of the case plan will result in approximately the following case numbers by division:

Division I – 1,345

Division II – 1,709

Division III – 1,225

The above stated District Courts may have primary responsibility to preside over the following cases including scheduling and related administrative duties:

- a. Pro Se uncontested divorces.
- b. Forcible Entry and Detainers and Unlawful Detainers.
- c. Search Warrants pursuant to ArRCrimP, Rule 13.2.
- d. Arrest Warrants pursuant to ArRCrimP, Rule 7.1.
- e. Collection Cases - uncontested default judgment motions, uncontested garnishments, post judgment contempt hearings for debtor failure to file financial schedules, motions for extension of time for service of process, uncontested motions for summary judgment or judgment on the pleadings.
- f. Orders of Protection, with the exception that Orders of Protection for Yell County and Conway County shall remain assigned to Circuit Court as set forth in the present Administrative Plan.
- g. Civil, domestic relations and probate cases upon the consent of all parties pursuant to Administrative Order No. 18(d.)
- h. Criminal First Appearances pursuant to ArRCrimP, Rules 8.1-8.4 and bond hearings.

The above stated District Courts will not be primarily responsible for, but will be authorized to handle, the following matters when the Circuit Judge is unavailable:

- a. Requests for ex-parte mental commitment orders;
- b. Requests for ex parte drug/alcohol commitment orders; and
- c. Transport orders for incarcerated litigants or witnesses.

11. It is agreed that judicial expediency and consistency is better achieved with only one judge presiding over the criminal subject cases and one judge presiding over the juvenile subject matter cases in the Fifteenth Judicial District. Therefore, this plan provides that Circuit Court Division 1 is assigned all criminal cases and Circuit Court Division 3 is assigned all juvenile cases. This plan will allow the Prosecuting Attorney to be present at criminal jury


jury trials and related matters.

12. This plan takes into consideration that this district is made up of four (4) counties with six (6) separate courthouses. Each of the six (6) courthouses only provide one courtroom that will accommodate a jury trial. One (1) courthouse also has a bench trial accessible courtroom inside the courthouse with a separate courthouse providing a remote bench trial accessible courtroom inside the Detention Center. Each of these courtrooms are shared by three (3) Circuit Court Judges and two (2) State Court District Judges.
13. This plan also takes into consideration the individual experiences of the caseload of each judge.
14. It has been and will continue to be the policy of each judge in the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit to exercise jurisdiction over all matters, regardless of the subject matter division, and to act for, on behalf, and in substitution of the other judges when exigent circumstances warrant, when it is appropriate for the convenience of the litigants, attorneys, witnesses and at all other times when not to act may likely cause justifiable criticism of the judiciary of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit.
15. All judges of the Circuit Court of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit shall at all times have the authority to hear the matters within the jurisdiction of the Circuit Court. This administrative policy does not affect the right nor power of the Circuit Judges to, by agreement, temporarily amend or modify any provision of this policy when, in his judgment, it is necessary for the fair administration of justice.
16. This plan does hereby take into consideration Senate Bill 159 of the 90th General Assembly which amends A.C.A. 5-73-122(a)(1) regarding carrying a firearm in a publicly owned building or facility. However, the authority of each Circuit Judge is reserved by each Circuit Judge to set individual policies of handguns/firearms in his individual courtroom.

17. Each of the three (3) Circuit Court Judges do hereby unanimously vote that Circuit Court Judge David McCormick shall be designated as the Administrative Judge for the Fifteenth Judicial District Circuit Court. The period of office shall be recognized as from August 1, 2025 until November 30, 2026. Each of the three (3) Circuit Court Judges do hereby unanimously vote that Circuit Judge Jerry Don Ramey shall be designated as the Administrative Judge from December 1, 2026, until the end of the then existing term.

18. We believe that this plan provides a process which shall apportion the business of the Circuit/District Courts equally among each Judge and Division within the Fifteenth Judicial District.

IT IS SO AGREED:

 9-24-2025

CIRCUIT JUDGE JERRY DON RAMEY, DIVISION 1 (DATE)

 9/29/25

CIRCUIT JUDGE DAVID H. MCCORMICK, DIVISION 2 (DATE)

 9-26-2025

CIRCUIT JUDGE TERRY M. SULLIVAN, DIVISION 3 (DATE)