

254th COURT POLICIES:

(Please read local rules in addition to these policies)

1. **APPEAL OF THE ASSOCIATE JUDGE'S REPORT:** The Associate Judge's report will be enforced, whether reduced to a Temporary Order or not, where the language and contents allow. Further, it will be enforced pending appeal unless a motion to stay is filed for and granted.
2. **APPOINTMENTS BY COURT:** The Court invites agreed appointments. If no agreement, the court will make an appointment per Texas Government Code 37.
3. **ATTORNEY WITHDRAW:** Please follow Local Rule 9.01 and TRCP 10. Please be aware we may not grant a Motion to Withdraw within 30 days of trial.
4. **CHILD SUPPORT:** All child support orders shall be payable to the Texas Child Support Disbursement Unit. Child support order requires a wage withholding order (see T.F.C. §154.001).
5. **CONTEMPT:** No motion for contempt requesting jail time punishment will be heard without a proposed Contempt Order and Order of Commitment being presented prior to any hearings.
6. **CONTINUANCES:** No continuance or pass of any matter will be granted without a Motion and Agreed order to the court. No case will be withdrawn from the docket without the specific granting of a continuance by the Court.
7. **DEFAULT:** The court requires a Military/Soldiers affidavit and a Certificate of Last Known Address to be file prior to the prove up.
8. **DISMISSAL DOCKET:** All cases will be put on a dismissal docket (for 120 days hence) at the time of filing. Court Coordinator will handle this docket. Request for continuance on dismissal docket can be made by e-mail to Court Coordinator. No telephone requests. There will be a limit on the number of resets.
9. **FINAL ORDER:** Must be submitted within 30 days of trial, or case will be dismissed. "Family Violence" language must appear in any case with children.
10. **INTERVIEWING CHILDREN:** The Court will interview children in accordance with T.F.C. §153.009, the interview will be set after testimony or trial by the judge.
11. **MEDIATION:** Mediation is highly recommended for all cases is not Madatory. The Court welcomes agreement of parties on a mediator.
12. **NAME CHANGE:** Either live testimony or an affidavit is required. The affidavit is not required if the testimony is provided by the party requesting the name change. Fingerprint card is not required if done as part of the divorce.
13. **PARENTING CLASSES:** Not require unless ordered. **No On-line classes.** Any approved divorce education/family stabilization course is acceptable. A certificate must be on file before a decree is signed.

14. **PRO SE DIVORCES:** All pro se orders must be approved in advance by an Associate Judge and the proponent should have at least 2 copies at the time of prove up.
15. **RESIDENCY RESTRICTION:** Decided on a case-by-case basis. It is the policy of this state to encourage frequent contact between a child and each parent for periods of possession that optimizes the development of a close and continuing relationship between each parent and child. See T.F.C. §153.251-252. If there is no restriction, allocation of expenses will be determined pursuant to T.F.C. §156.103.
16. **SOCIAL STUDIES:** Social Studies are not mandatory.
17. **STIPULATION DIVORCES:** May be granted upon prior motion/application on extenuating circumstances.
18. **TRIAL SETTINGS:** Trial settings are obtained by email with the court coordinator. A request for a pretrial raises a presumption that the requesting party will be ready for trial on the trial date. Pretrials are held a few weeks prior to the trial setting. In property matters, sworn inventories and proposed division must be filed before trial. There is no required form for inventories, except in complex property matters, a consolidated (spreadsheet) inventory is required. Attorneys and pro se litigants should appear at the pretrial to discuss all issues. Failure to appear at pretrial hearing or Trial may result in dismissal for want of prosecution or default judgment entered (Local Rule 5.03).