

**LOCAL RULES OF THE COUNTY COURT AT LAW OF
CHAMBERS COUNTY, TEXAS**

PURPOSE

The Local Rules of the Chambers County Court at Law of Chambers County have as their primary purpose the management of the court dockets sensibly, efficiently and fairly. These rules are to be an aid to the just disposition of cases without unnecessary delay or expense.

RULE 1

APPLICATION, JURISDICTION AND FILING

Rule 1.1 Application

These rules apply to all cases, civil, criminal, contested probate, contested guardianship and family, of which heard by the County Court at Law, as well as all cases over which the County Court At Law has concurrent jurisdiction with the District Courts.

Rule 1.2 Jurisdiction

1.2.1 Exclusive Jurisdiction

Exclusive jurisdiction of the County Court at Law encompasses matters defined by statute, rules of court, case law, or these rules as the sole province of County Court at Law in general.

1.2.2. Concurrent Jurisdiction

Concurrent jurisdiction of the County Court at Law is set forth in Sections 25.0003 and 25.0382(a) of the Texas Government Code, as well as the exclusive jurisdiction of the County Court At Law.

Rule 1.3 Assignment of Cases

1.3.1 Unequal Assignment

The County Clerk shall assign criminal cases to the County Court at Law and County Court of Chambers County on a three-to-one docketing system unless specifically instructed otherwise by the Board of Judges.

1.3.2. Assignment of Exclusive Jurisdiction Cases

The County Clerk shall assign cases of exclusive jurisdiction to the County Court at Law. Examples of such cases include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Criminal Misdemeanors;
- b) Contested Probate;
- c) Contested Guardianship;
- d) Civil Cases within the jurisdiction of County Court At Law;

1.3.3 Assignment of Concurrent Jurisdiction Cases

The District Court shall assign/transfer the following type of cases involving concurrent jurisdiction to the County Court At Law:

- a) Any and all Family Law cases;
- b) Any and all Civil cases in which the matter in controversy exceeds \$500.00 but does not exceed \$250,000.00.

1.4 Transfer of Cases

A. Consolidation

A Motion to Consolidate Cases shall be heard in the court where the lowest numbered case is pending. If the motion is granted, the consolidated case will be given the number of the lowest numbered case. If the two cases being consolidated are in more than one court, the Board of Judges shall decide which court shall preside over the consolidated cases.

B. Severance

If a severance is granted, the new case will be assigned the court where the original case is pending; however, a new file date and a new cause number will be assigned the now severed case.

RULE 2

LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY COURT AT LAW JUDGE & RULES OF DECORUM

Rule 2.1 Powers and Duties of Local Administrative County Court at Law Judge

2.1.1. Election of the Administrative Judge

Pursuant to Section 74.091 of the Texas-Government Code, a majority of the County Court at Law Judge/s will elect a Local Administrative County Court at Law Judge for a term of not more than two years.

2.1.2. Duties

The Local Administrative County Court at Law Judge will have the duties and responsibilities provided in Rule 9 of the Rules of Judicial Administration.

2.1.3. Meetings of the County Court at Law Judge

The Local Administrative County Court at Law Judge may call meetings of the Judges as needed. The Local Administrative County Court at Law Judge shall preside over such meetings, or the Judge who called the meeting.

2.1.4 Rules of Decorum

The Judge of the County Court at Law of Chambers County, Texas has a duty to maintain order and proper decorum in the courtroom. The County Court at Law has adopted Rules of Decorum

set forth and posted on the Court's respective webpage. These rules shall apply to all attorneys and others appearing in the courtroom. The rules may be enforced by contempt or referral to the State Bar of Texas for grievance proceedings, or both, as the County Court at Law Judge deem proper.

**RULE 3
CIVIL CASES**

Rule 3.1 General

All civil cases in which the County Court at Law of Chambers County has concurrent jurisdiction shall be transferred or assigned by either the 344th Judicial District Court or 253rd Judicial District Court.

Rule 3.2 Time Standards for Civil Case Disposition

3.2.1. Civil Jury Case

All civil jury cases should be tried or dismissed within 18 months from appearance date.

3.2.2. Civil Non-Jury Cases

All civil non-jury cases should be tried or dismissed within 12 months from appearance date.

Rule 3.3 District Clerk & County Clerk

A. Telephone Requests

The court clerk shall limit response to telephone requests for the information of the following:

Whether or not a specific document has been filed (i.e. answer).

Existence of a case on file.

Return of service and date.

Correct style of case when correct cause number is supplied.

If an order has been signed.

Whether or not a jury fee has been paid and date of payment.

B. Pro Se

All pro se litigants upon filing any petition or responsive pleading should provide an email address for service via efile, as well as address and current phone number. Any party unable to provide such information above must file a pleading requesting an exception to this rule.

Rule 3.3 Transfer or Cases: Docket Exchange: Bench Exchange

3.3.1. Transfer

After assignment to the County Court at Law, a case may be transferred to another court of the Judge of the court in which the case is pending with the consent of the Judge of the court to which it is transferred. The Court to which a case is transferred shall have jurisdiction over that case and any companion case for all purposes.

3.3.2. Assign (presiding for another judge)

After assignment to the County Court at Law, a case may be assigned to another court by order of the Judge of the court in which the case is pending with the consent of the Judge of the court to which it is being assigned. Jurisdiction over a case assigned to another court shall remain with the originating court.

3.3.3. Recusal

All motions to recuse shall be governed by the provisions of Rule 18a and 18b of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure.

3.3.4. Removal to District Court

A case which has been assigned to a County Court at Law in error because the subject matter is within the exclusive jurisdiction of the District Courts will be returned to the District Clerk for reassignment.

Rule 3.5 Docket Settings

3.5.1. Court Coordinator/Administrator

The County Court at Law shall appoint a court coordinator/administration. It shall be the duty of the court coordinator/administrator to:

Establish procedures for setting cases for trial and hearings;

Provide the court, the clerk assigned to that particular court, and the general public with a printed docket sheet indicating the cases set for a hearing for each day of court;

Provide the court with a submission docket indicating the cases set for submission;

Notify all counsel of settings and rulings of the court as is provided by these rules or at the direction of the court;

Coordinate all setting requests; and

Coordinate with the District Clerk's office concerning jury trials and juror requirements.

3.5.2. Setting Requests

Requests for hearings should be made in writing to the court in which the matter is pending in accordance with these rules, and the attorneys making such request shall serve all counsel and parties appearing pro se with notice of the hearing.

3.5.3. Trial Settings

Cases should be set for trial by order of the court, upon request of a party, on the court's own motion, or by a docket control order.

Rule 3.6 Dismissal Docket; Involuntary Dismissals

3.6.1. Dismissal Docket

All cases not brought to trial or otherwise disposed of which have been on file for more than the specified time period as established by these rules should be placed on the dismissal docket the Court.

3.6.2. Notice

When a case has been placed on the dismissal docket, the District Clerk shall promptly send notice of the court's intention to dismiss for want of prosecution: to each attorney of record and pro se litigant whose address is shown in the clerk's file.

3.6.3. Motion to Retain

Unless a written Motion to Retain has been filed prior to the dismissal date as set forth in the notice of intention to dismiss, such case shall be dismissed; Notice of the signing of the order of dismissal shall be given as required by Rule 165a of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure. Failure to mail notices as set out above shall not affect any of the periods mentioned in Rule 306a of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure except as provided in that rule.

3.6.4. Motion for Reinstatement

A motion for reinstatement after dismissal shall follow the procedure and be governed by the provisions of Rule 165a of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure relating to reinstatement.

Rule 3.7 Continuances

Any motion for continuance of the trial setting shall be presented to the Court pursuant to the docket control order, or the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure. The order granting or denying such motion shall contain an order resetting the case for trial for a specific date and time.

Rule 3.8 Alternate Dispute Resolution and Mediation

3.8.1. Alternate Dispute Resolution

In order to encourage the early settlement of disputes and to carry out the responsibilities of the Court in Chapter 154 of the Texas Civil Practices and Remedies Code, appropriate alternative dispute resolution procedures will be encouraged and utilized.

3.8.2. Mediation

Mediation is encouraged in order to facilitate the settlement of disputes and litigation. Mediation is required the County Court at Law prior to a case being heard by Jury or the Court.

Rule 3.9 Settlements

All trial counsel are required to make a bona fide effort to settle cases at the earliest possible date before trial. The Court will expect counsel to confer with his/her client and with opposing counsel concerning settlement offers. When an attorney settles or dismisses a case which is set for trial, he/she shall give notice to the Court as soon as possible.

Rule 3.10 Guardians and Attorneys Ad Litem

When it is necessary for the court to appoint a guardian ad litem for minor or incompetent parties or an attorney ad litem for absent parties, independent counsel, not suggested by any of the parties or their counsel, will be appointed.

Rule 3.11 Entry of Interim Orders

In the event that the court renders an oral final order, the court shall require a party to prepare a written final order complying with the court's ruling. The party preparing the order shall obtain approval and signature as to form from the opposing counsel or pro se litigant. If signatures are not obtained, then a motion to enter the judgment or order should be set for oral hearing or by submission.

**RULE 4
FAMILY LAW CASES**

Rule 4.1 General

The filing, assignment, and transfer of cases under the Family Code shall be filed in accordance with Rule 1 of these rules. All cases filed pursuant to the Family Code with the exception of Title 3 of the Family Code shall be governed by Rule 3 of these rules.

Rule 4.2 Time Standards for Family Law Case Disposition

Cases should be tried or dismissed within 6 months from the appearance date or within 6 months from the expiration of the waiting period provided by the Family Code where such is required, whichever is later.

Rule 4.3 Ex Parte Restraining Orders, Protective Orders, and Temporary Orders

4.3.1. Ex Parte Restraining Orders and Protective Orders

Ex Parte Restraining Orders and Protective Orders should be presented to the court in which it has been assigned. Only the court coordinator/administrator of the court may set the hearing.

4.3.2 Temporary Orders Entry

All temporary orders should be presented to the court for entry within ten (10) days after the hearing or at the entry date set by the court.

Rule 4.4 Child Support Disbursement Unit

All child support payments will be made to State Disbursement Unit.

**RULE 5
CRIMINAL CASES**

Rule 5.1 Filings of Complaint and Information

5.1.1. Assignment of Cases after Complaint and Information

The County Clerk shall assign criminal cases to the County Court at Law and Court Court of Chambers County, Texas on a three-to-one docketing system unless specifically instructed otherwise by the Board of Judges.

5.2. New Criminal Cases filed After Assignment

After assignment, the clerk shall assign any new criminal cases against a defendant to the same court.

5.3. Cases Re-Filed by Complaint and Information

The clerk shall assign any case re-filed of the same defendant to the same court.

5.4. Co-Defendants

The clerk, after random assignment of a filed case to a court, shall assign any co-defendant to the same court in which the first co-defendant's case was assigned.

Rule 5.2 Time Standards for Criminal Cases

Disposition of Criminal Cases should be in conformity with those provisions set forth in Article 32A of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.

5.3 Bond Surrender

Sureties requesting a release on their liability on a Bail Bond must complete an Affidavit to Release Surety and present the completed affidavit along with an Order of Surrender to the Court in which the case of the defendant is currently pending.

5.4 Bond Forfeiture

Bonds will be forfeited on all defendants who do not appear in court when scheduled or otherwise ordered to appear in court. The name of the defendant will be called three times at the courtroom door by the Bailiff and if there is no answer the bond will be forfeited and a capias issued by the clerk for the defendant's arrest. It is the duty of the Clerk of the Court to prepare a Judgement NISI with the aid of the County Attorney. The Judgment NISI proceeding will be docketed as a civil matter in the court that ordered the forfeiture and the defendant and their sureties shall be served with citation. After the surety files an answer or defaults, the Clerk of the Court shall notify the proper court coordinator for a trial setting to be docketed. The sureties shall be given sixty days' advance notice of any trial setting.

**RULE 6
CONFLICTING ENGAGEMENTS OF ATTORNEYS**

A. Attorney already in trial in another court

When informed that an attorney is presently in trial, the court will determine where and when assigned. This information will be certified upon request of opposing counsel and/or the Court. The case will be placed on "hold" or reset, depending upon when the attorney will be released. If the attorney is not actually in trial as represented by the attorney or his agent, the case will be tried without further notice.

B. Attorney assigned to two courts for the same date

It is the duty of every attorney to call the affected judge's attention to all dual settings as soon as they are known. Insofar as is practicable, judges should attempt to agree on which case or county has priority, otherwise the following priorities shall be observed by the judges of the respective courts:

Criminal Cases

Cases given preference by statute

Preferentially set cases

Case set at earliest date

Case with earliest filing date

Cases in Metropolitan areas should yield to courts in rural areas

If the conflict cannot be resolved between the two judges, the Local Administrative Judge or the Regional Presiding Judge will resolve the conflict.

C. Designation of Attorney in Charge

Every case shall have an attorney in charge designated.

**RULE 7
ATTORNEY VACATIONS**

Each attorney who desires to assure himself/herself a vacation may do so automatically by complying with Rule 11 of the Second Administrative Region of Texas Regional Rules of Administration.

RULE 8

The Lawyer's Creed is applicable in all cases tried in the County Court at Law of Chambers County, Texas.

RULE 9

MEDIA PLAN AND RULES REGARDING RECORDING BY INDIVIDUALS

The attached Media Plan and Rules Regarding Recording by Individuals are in effect for the broadcasting, televising, photographing and recording of any courtroom activity related to the County Court at Law of Chambers County, Texas. These rules contain safeguards to ensure that media coverage and recording shall not detract from the dignity of the court proceedings or otherwise interfere with the achievement of a fair and impartial court proceeding.

RULE 10

ADOPTIONS, APPROVAL, AND NOTICE

Rule 8.1 Adoption

These rules are adopted by the Chambers County Court at Law Judge.

Rule 8.2

The District and County Clerk of Chambers County, Texas is directed to submit a copy of these rules to the Office of Court Administration pursuant to Rule 3a of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure and to record these Rules in Minutes of the County Court at Law.

Rule 8.3 Adoption of Judicial Administration Region 2

The County Court at Law adopts the Judicial Administration Rules of Region 2.

Adopted the 23 day of July, of the year 2025, to become effective upon publication on the Office of Court Administration's website.

Signed this the 23 day of July, 2025.

Chambers County Court at Law Judge
Honorable Cindy S. Price

THIS THE 23 FILED DAY OF July
A.D. 2025 AT 1:00 O'CLOCK P
PATTI L. HENRY
DISTRICT CLERK, CHAMBERS COUNTY, TEXAS
BY [Signature] DEPUTY