IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR PASCO AND PINELLAS COUNTIES, FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2026-048 PI-CIR

RE: TRAFFIC COURT AND ASSIGNMENT OF TRAFFIC CASES IN PINELLAS COUNTY – EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2027

To continue to provide for the efficient operation of the traffic and criminal sections of the County and Circuit Court in Pinellas County,

To continue to provide for the assignment of cases in the traffic division in Pinellas County, and

In accordance with Article V, section 2, Florida Constitution, Florida Rules of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215, and section 43.26, Florida Statutes, it is

ORDERED:

1. TRAFFIC COURT I, TRAFFIC COURT II, AND SECTION V

A. **Traffic Court I (Section TC-I).** Cases currently assigned to Traffic Court I will remain in Section TC-I. Section TC-I handles all non-DUI criminal traffic matters along with their related infractions, as well as all civil traffic matters that must be heard by a county court judge.

B. **Traffic Court II (Section TC-II).** Cases currently assigned to Traffic Court II will remain in Section TC-II. Section TC-II handles all non-DUI criminal traffic cases along with their related infractions, as well as all civil traffic matters that must be heard by a county court judge.

C. **Section V.** Section V remains a misdemeanor division, handling criminal cases and their related infractions.

2. ASSIGNMENT OF TRAFFIC CASES

The Pinellas County Clerk of the Circuit Court (Clerk) must assign all cases filed in the Traffic Division in Pinellas County in accordance with this Administrative Order and the Local Rules.

A. Criminal Traffic and Non-Criminal Traffic Infraction Cases

(1) Criminal traffic and non-criminal traffic infraction cases, excluding DUI cases, are to be assigned to Section TC-I or TC-II based upon the agency issuing the citation as provided in this Administrative Order. This assignment will include cases that cannot be heard by a hearing officer under Florida Rule of Traffic Court 6.630(c).

Traffic Court I	**Traffic Court II**
Pinellas County Sheriff's Office	Largo Police Department
Clearwater Police Department	St. Petersburg Police Department
Tarpon Springs Police Department	Pinellas Park Police Department

Belleair Police Department	Gulfport Police Department
Treasure Island Police Department	Indian Shores Police Department
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Florida Highway Patrol
Kenneth City Police Department	
Other	

(2) The Clerk's Office will set the case for arraignment within 20 days from the receipt of the citation. The Clerk will notify the Pinellas County Court Administrative Judge when cases cannot be scheduled within 20 days of the receipt of the citation in a traffic court section.

(3) Upon request, the Clerk will provide the Administrative Office of the Courts with a report that provides the percentage of cases that are assigned to TC-I and TC-II, or any other requested data.

(4) ***Case Transfers***

(a) Transferred cases from Section TC-I or TC-II to a criminal division will be assigned in accordance with section 2.B. herein.

(b) The judicial assistant will set the transferred case(s) on a pretrial docket to be scheduled within 20 days of the transfer unless already set for pretrial by the Court.

(c) When a judge has entered an order recusing him or herself from all cases of a named party or attorney, court administration will:

(1) Reassign all cases from that party or attorney to the other traffic section unless otherwise directed, and

(2) Assign future cases so that cases from that party or attorney are not assigned to the recused judge.

(d) When a judge has entered an order of disqualification in an individual case, the Clerk will reassign that case to the other traffic section, unless otherwise directed.

(5) A motion that re-opens a case from a former section that is now closed or inactivated is to be assigned in accordance with this Administrative Order. A motion to re-open a case from an open section is to be assigned to the former section unless the judge assigned to that section has entered an order of recusal.

(6) Non-criminal traffic infraction and parking cases will continue to be calendared pursuant to Administrative Order 2025-050 or subsequent Administrative Order and subject-matter memoranda. If a county court judge is required or requested in such a case, it will be calendared pursuant to this Administrative Order.

(7) ***Traffic Infractions Requiring Mandatory Court Appearance***

(a) Certain traffic infractions require a mandatory court appearance. The Clerk's Office will set all civil traffic citations that have a mandatory court appearance on a civil traffic arraignment calendar in Section TC-I or TC-II based on the law enforcement agency assignment. The Clerk's Office will issue a hearing notice to the defendant.

(b) If the defendant fails to appear (FTA) for these mandatory appearance citations, the Court will issue a D-6 to the defendant's license. After the suspension fee is satisfied, the case is to be scheduled for court by the designated judicial assistant.

(8) ***Traffic Infractions with a Requested Court Appearance***

(a) When a county judge is requested pursuant to Florida Rule of Traffic Court 6.630(k), cases will be set in Section TC-I or TC-II based on the law enforcement agency assignment.

(b) If the defendant fails to appear (FTA) for these requested hearings, the Court will hold the hearing in absentia and make a determination on the case.

B. Criminal DUI Traffic Cases

(1) New DUI criminal traffic cases, plus related non-DUI criminal and civil traffic infractions, for defendants with no prior county court history, will be assigned on an equal random blind basis to one of the county criminal sections—E, F, G, H, L, or V. The Clerk's Office will set the case for arraignment no later than 20 days from the receipt of the citation. If the defendant has current pending cases in a county criminal section, the new DUI criminal traffic case and all related cases will be assigned to the section with the most recent assignment as reflected in the Odyssey case management system. The Clerk will notify the Pinellas County Court Administrative Judge when cases cannot be scheduled within 20 days of the receipt of the citation in a criminal section.

(2) If the related criminal case is a felony, the DUI criminal traffic case and its related non-DUI criminal and civil traffic infractions will be assigned to the circuit court felony section **ONLY** when the felony information has been filed and it is stamped "encompassed" or "companion" or includes the traffic case as a count on the felony information. If the pending felony is not yet filed, the DUI criminal traffic case with its accompanying related non-DUI criminal and civil traffic infractions will be assigned in accordance with section 3(A) herein.

3. RESOLUTION OF UNRESOLVED COMPANION CASES

A. Criminal Companion Cases

(1) When a Pinellas Traffic Court Judge determines that a defendant assigned to his/her traffic section has other pending criminal charges, which appear to be based on the same acts/transactions or arise out of the same set of facts as the traffic offense(s), the Traffic Court Judge may, if the transfer is necessary for the expedient resolution

of both cases, order these related traffic matters be transferred and reassigned to a county or circuit criminal section judge.

(2) The traffic cases transferred must include criminal traffic offenses, as well as related infractions, which would necessarily be consolidated therewith under Florida Rule of Traffic Court 6.130 and cannot be heard by a civil traffic infraction hearing officer. Cases will also be transferred when the defendant has appointed counsel or files a demand for jury trial. Following entry of such a transfer order by the Traffic Judge, the Clerk must reassign the transferred traffic case(s) as follows:

(a) If the related misdemeanor or criminal charges are assigned to a county criminal section, the transferred traffic case(s) must be assigned to that same section.
(b) If the defendant has no pending cases in a county criminal section, the transferred case(s) must be assigned to the most recent section as reflected in the case management system.
(c) If the defendant has no prior cases in Odyssey, the case must be assigned on an equal random blind basis.
(d) A pretrial conference should be scheduled within 20 days of the transfer unless already set for pretrial by the Court.

(3) If the related criminal case is a felony, the non-DUI criminal traffic case will be assigned to the circuit court felony section **ONLY** when the felony information has been filed and it is stamped "encompassed" or "companion" or includes the traffic case as a count on the felony information. If the pending felony is not yet filed, the non-DUI criminal traffic case will be assigned to Section TC-I or TC-II.

B. Civil Traffic Infraction Companion Cases

(1) If a related criminal case is a felony, and the pending traffic matter is a civil infraction, the civil traffic infraction will remain in the Violations Bureau for disposition, irrespective of the status of the felony, unless all parties agree to the transfer of the civil traffic infraction to the assigned circuit felony section.

(2) If all companion criminal charges are resolved by the Court, but the civil traffic infraction remains unresolved, the infraction will be returned to the Clerk's Office for processing as soon as the Clerk's Office discovers that the unresolved traffic infraction is still pending. Any unresolved traffic infraction that requires a mandatory hearing will be set in Section TC-I or TC-II. The judicial assistant will use the traffic processing report to schedule the case accordingly. The Clerk will reassign any civil infractions that do not require a mandatory appearance to the Violations Bureau and give the defendant 30 days to pay. To the extent this paragraph conflicts with Administrative Order 2020-005, this paragraph controls in Pinellas County.

4. FAILURE TO APPEAR

Once the defendant is arrested or the warrant is executed on a failure to appear, all cases and related infractions will appear on the traffic processing report. The judicial assistant will then schedule the cases for pretrial hearing within 20 days of the arrest unless the matter is already set

for pretrial by the Court.

The Clerk and Pinellas County Business Technology Services will take the necessary actions to implement this Order. No changes to the Administrative Order or exceptions to the terms of this Administrative Order may be made unless authorized in writing by the Chief Judge.

Effective January 1, 2027, Administrative Order 2024-029 PI-CIR is hereby rescinded.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers at Clearwater, Pinellas County, Florida, this 4th day of November, 2026.

Original Signed by Shawn Crane, Chief Judge

cc: Email Distribution List
Available on Website at www.jud6.org