

IN THE
INDIANA SUPREME COURT

IN THE MATTER OF
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL
OF LOCAL RULES FOR
COURTS OF RECORD IN
HOWARD COUNTY

**SUPPLEMENTAL NOTICE CONCERNING COMMENTS
FOR PROPOSED AMENDED LOCAL RULES TO MODIFY CASELOAD
ALLOCATION FOR HOWARD COUNTY COURTS**

On February 16, 2018, a majority of the judges of Howard County submitted a request to the Indiana Supreme Court through the Indiana Office of Court Services to approve proposed amended local rules to modify caseload allocation for Howard County Courts, effective April 1, 2018.

As of February 19, 2018, notice of the proposed rules as been posted for public comment on the state website <http://www.in.gov/judiciary/2937.htm>. Comments by the bar and the public concerning the proposed amendments to the Howard County caseload allocation plan should be made in writing and mailed or emailed to: Hon. Lynn Murray, Judge Howard Circuit Court, Attn: Public Comment on Local Rules, 104 N. Buckeye Street, #310, Kokomo, IN 46901-9004, or by email to: judgelhm@aol.com. Comments will be received until March 20, 2018.

A paper copy of the proposed amended local rules are available for viewing in the office of the Clerk of Howard County, 104 N. Buckeye Street, #114, Kokomo, IN 46901-9004 during normal business hours, and on the Howard County website at <http://www.howardcountyin.gov>.

FEBRUARY 26, 2018

Lynn Murray, Judge
Howard Circuit Court

IN THE
INDIANA SUPREME COURT

IN THE MATTER OF
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL
OF LOCAL RULES FOR
COURTS OF RECORD IN
HOWARD COUNTY

Supreme Court Case No.

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AMENDED LOCAL RULES
TO MODIFY CASELOAD ALLOCATION FOR
HOWARD COUNTY COURTS**

Pursuant to Indiana Administrative Rule 1 (E), the judges of Howard County request the Indiana Supreme Court approve amended local rules LR34-AR1-2 and LR34-CR2.2-29 regarding the allocation of case filings, following the thirty (30) day public comment period, said amended local rules to take effect April 1, 2018. A copy of the proposed local rules are attached.

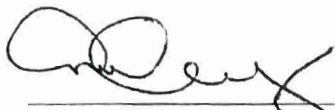
The judges of Howard County have met and reviewed the weighted caseload statistics of the courts of record, including from calendar year 2017, as well as considered other issues relative to the efficient administration of criminal, civil and juvenile cases in Howard County. Primarily due to the increase in criminal case filings related to illegal controlled substances, a majority of the judges find and conclude the existing caseload allocation which places all said cases in one court is not an effective use of judicial and court resources within Howard County.

A majority of judges have reached the consensus after having considered the applicable factors the county caseload allocation plans should be modified so to distribute all criminal cases, including those involving illegal controlled substances and domestic violence, among all five Howard County Courts per LR34-CR2.2-29 as follows: all misdemeanor cases shall be filed in Superior Court III; and all felony cases shall be filed in the other four courts subject to a weekly rotation schedule.

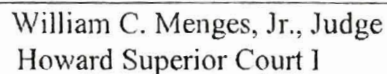
The majority of judges have also agreed that given the proposed redistribution of criminal cases, the caseload allocation of civil cases should also be modified so to achieve a relatively equal distribution of caseload overall among the Howard County courts. The proposed distribution of civil cases per LR34-AR1-2 is as follows: all small claim cases and petitions for specialized driving privileges are to be filed in Superior Court III; all juvenile, paternity, adoption, and tax sale cases are to be filed in Circuit Court; all mental health cases are to be filed randomly in Superior Courts II and 4; and all other civil cases shall be filed subject to a random distribution among Circuit, Superior Court I, Superior Court II, and Superior Court 4. The respective proportions of 19% for Circuit Court, and 27% for each of the other three designated courts have been determined based upon the projection of caseload weight using 2017 case filings statistics in an effort to achieve a relatively equal caseload weight overall.

Based upon the foregoing, the judges of Howard County as evidenced by his or her signatures below, request the Supreme Court approve the proposed local rules for Howard County LR34-AR1-2 and LR34-CR2.2-29, effective April 1, 2018.

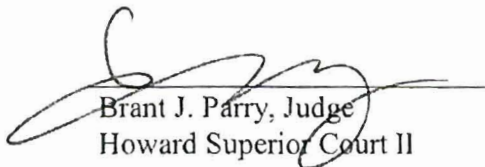
Submitted this 15 day of February, 2018.



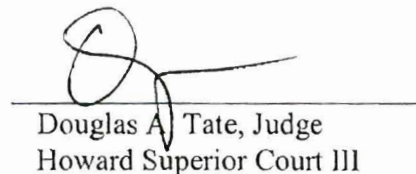
Lynn Murray, Judge
Howard Circuit Court



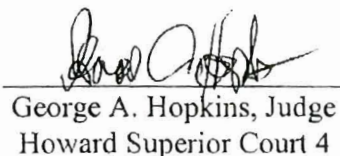
William C. Menges, Jr., Judge
Howard Superior Court I



Brant J. Parry, Judge
Howard Superior Court II



Douglas A. Tate, Judge
Howard Superior Court III



George A. Hopkins, Judge
Howard Superior Court 4

LR34-AR1-2
ASSIGNMENT OF CASE FILINGS

A. HOWARD CIRCUIT COURT: All juvenile matters, paternity cases, adoptions, county tax sale matters, and other cases required by law to be filed in the Howard Circuit Court shall be filed in the Howard Circuit Court.

B. HOWARD SUPERIOR COURTS II AND IV: Mental health matters shall be filed in the Howard Superior Court II or the Howard Superior Court IV. The court of filing shall be determined by random selection made by the Clerk.

C. HOWARD SUPERIOR COURT III: Small Claims and Petitions for Specialized Driving Privileges pursuant to IC 9-30-16 shall be filed in the Howard Superior Court III. The Court shall also maintain a Plenary Docket for the purpose of accepting transfer cases. This shall include any civil case transferred from the other Howard County Courts or cases in which the Judge of Howard Superior Court III has been selected as a special judge pursuant to Sections (D)(H) or (K) of Trial Rule 79. All small claims which are transferred to the Plenary Docket as a result of a jury request or because a party seeks to pursue a claim that exceeds the jurisdictional amount allowed shall be transferred to the Plenary Docket of Howard Superior Court III.

D. OTHER CIVIL FILINGS: All other civil cases shall be filed in Howard Circuit Court, Howard Superior Court I, Howard Superior Court II, or Howard Superior Court IV. The court of filing shall be determined by random selection made by the Clerk, using a method which will result in nineteen percent (19%) being filed in Howard Circuit Court, twenty-seven percent (27%) being filed in Howard Superior Court I, twenty-seven percent (27%) being filed in Howard Superior Court II, and twenty-seven percent (27%) being filed in Howard Superior Court IV.

E. CRIMINAL CASES: All criminal cases shall be filed pursuant to LR34-CR2.2-29.

LR34-CR2.2-29
FILING CRIMINAL CASES

A. WEEKLY ROTATION: Beginning April 1, 2018, weekly rotation will be as follows:

1. Week#1 - Howard Circuit Court
2. Week#2 - Howard Superior Court I
3. Week#3 - Howard Superior Court II
4. Week#4 - Howard Superior Court IV

Weekly rotation thereafter will be from 12:01 a.m. Monday until twelve o'clock midnight Sunday each week.

The Clerk shall maintain a projected calendar for one year in advance showing the weekly rotation and shall in retrospect project a calendar for the previous one year and beyond if necessary for weekly rotation.

The weekly rotation calendar shall be public and posted in the Clerk's office and in each court participating in the weekly rotation.

B. FELONIES: The court in which all felony criminal charges shall be filed will be the court on a weekly rotation on the day on which the offense alleged in the charging document occurred with the following guidelines:

1. Where multiple offenses are filed, the date of the earliest offense alleged in the charging document shall control the rotation date.

2. In other cases where the date of the case is ambiguous, or covers a period of time, or is not otherwise specifically alleged, the controlling date will be the date that the Prosecutor's Office logged in the original complaint, case, report, or other notification of the alleged offense. The Prosecutor shall maintain a system of logging in cases which shall be open for reasonable inspection by the courts and members of the Bar.

3. In case where the accused has a previously filed and pending felony charge(s), and is charged with one or more subsequent felony charge(s), the subsequent case shall be filed in the court in which the previously filed case is pending. If the previous charge(s) is no longer pending at the time the subsequent charge(s) is filed, the subsequent charge(s) shall be filed in the court as designated by the weekly rotation schedule in section A. The previous charge(s) will be considered pending if the State filed the charge(s) and the court has not entered a dismissal or judgment of conviction or acquittal of the pending charge(s).

C. MISDEMEANORS, INFRACTIONS, AND ORDINANCE VIOLATIONS: The Howard Superior Court III is the court in which all misdemeanors, infractions, and ordinance violations are filed, with the following qualifications:

1. A misdemeanor charge which is filed contemporaneous with a felony charge against the same individual will be filed in the court where the felony charge is filed;
2. Where a defendant has a pending misdemeanor charge and a subsequent felony charge is filed, the misdemeanor charge will remain in Superior Court III, or with the consent of the accused, the Prosecutor, and the Judge of Superior Court III, may be transferred to the court having the felony case under Transfer of Action, Local Civil Rule 3.

D. CHANGE OF JUDGE: Where there has been a change of venue granted, or an order of disqualification or recusal entered, the Clerk shall select a successor judge by random selection from the other four (4) Howard County Courts.

If this process does not result in the selection of a Special Judge, the Clerk shall select a Special Judge in rotating order from the Judges of the following Courts, comprising courts contiguous to, or within the same administrative district as Howard County:

Miami Circuit
Miami Superior 1
Miami Superior 2
Cass Circuit
Cass Superior 1
Cass Superior 2
Carroll Circuit
Carroll Superior
Clinton Circuit
Clinton Superior
Tipton Circuit
Grant Circuit
Grant Superior 1
Grant Superior 2
Grant Superior 3
Fulton Circuit
Fulton Superior

The Clerk shall maintain the list of Special Judges, and shall select from the list on a rotating basis when appointment under this local rule is required. If a judge is skipped in the rotation because of ineligibility or disqualification, he or she shall be selected first for the next eligible cause.

E. TIME FOR OBJECTION: Any party may file a written objection to an alleged violation of this rule. Upon a finding that the charge(s) were improperly filed, the court where the charge(s) were originally filed shall transfer the charge(s) to the proper court without the necessity of obtaining consent from the receiving court. Any such objection shall be deemed waived unless filed on or before thirty (30) days after Omnibus Date; however, upon a showing of good cause and in the interest of justice, the court may permit the filing of the objection any time before the commencement of trial.

(Amended effective April 1, 2018)