

July 19 2023

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA

Clerk, U.S. District Court
District of Montana
Missoula Division

IN RE: ASSIGNMENT OF CASES

STANDING ORDER No. BMM-25

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that effective August 1, 2023, Standing Order BMM-23, which has governed case assignments in the District of Montana, is withdrawn, and this Standing Order shall govern all case assignments for all matters filed in the divisions of this district:

1) Assignment of Cases Relating to Certain Voting, Electoral, and Constitutional Matters: Regardless of the division of filing, any civil case involving reapportionment, voting rights, campaign finance or disclosure laws, or otherwise relating to elections is to be assigned by random draw from among the following judicial officers: Chief District Judge Brian Morris, District Judge Dana L. Christensen, District Judge Susan P. Watters, and Senior District Judge Donald W. Molloy.

2) Assignment of cases to United States Magistrate Judges: Unless the parties consent to the jurisdiction of a magistrate judge pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(c), in any instance in which a United States magistrate judge is assigned a case

under any paragraph of this Standing Order, the following district judges shall preside: District Judge Susan P. Watters shall be the presiding district judge for cases venued in the Billings Division, Chief District Judge Brian Morris shall be the presiding district judge for cases venued in the Great Falls, Butte, or Helena Divisions, and District Judge Dana L. Christensen shall be the presiding district judge for cases venued in the Missoula Division.

3) Billings Division: Excepting those cases described in Paragraph 1, civil cases filed in the Billings Division shall be assigned to District Judge Susan P. Watters and Magistrate Judge Timothy J. Cavan in accordance with the Local Rules of Procedure. The random assignment of such cases, except as otherwise provided by statute, shall be done such that one fourth (1/4) of the civil cases filed shall be assigned to Judge Watters and three fourths (3/4) to Judge Cavan.

Criminal cases filed in the Billings Division shall be assigned to District Judge Susan P. Watters.

4) Butte Division: Excepting those cases described in Paragraph 1, civil cases filed in the Butte Division shall be assigned to Chief District Judge Brian Morris and Magistrate Judge John T. Johnston in accordance with the Local Rules of Procedure. The random assignment of such cases, except as otherwise provided by statute, shall be done such that one half (1/2) of the civil cases filed shall be assigned to Chief Judge Morris and one half (1/2) to Judge Johnston.

Criminal cases filed in the Butte Division shall be assigned to District Judge Dana L. Christensen.

5) Great Falls Division: Excepting those cases described in Paragraph 1, civil cases filed in the Great Falls Division shall be assigned to Chief District Judge Brian Morris and Magistrate Judge John T. Johnston in accordance with the Local Rules of Procedure. The random assignment of such cases, except as otherwise provided by statute, shall be done such that two fifths ($2/5$) of the civil cases filed shall be assigned to Chief Judge Morris and three fifths ($3/5$) to Judge Johnston.

Criminal cases filed in the Great Falls Division shall be assigned to Chief District Judge Brian Morris.

6) Helena Division: Excepting those cases described in Paragraph 1, civil cases filed in the Helena Division shall be assigned to Magistrate Judge Kathleen L. DeSoto and Magistrate Judge John T. Johnston in accordance with the Local Rules of Procedure. The random assignment of such cases, except as otherwise provided by statute, shall be done such that three quarters ($3/4$) of the civil cases filed shall be assigned to Judge DeSoto and one quarter ($1/4$) to Judge Johnston.

Criminal cases filed in the Helena Division shall be assigned to Chief District Judge Brian Morris.

7) Missoula Division: Excepting those cases described in Paragraph 1,

civil cases filed in the Missoula Division shall be assigned to District Judge Dana L. Christensen, Senior District Judge Donald W. Molloy, and Magistrate Judge Kathleen L. DeSoto in accordance with the Local Rules of Procedure. The random assignment of such cases, except as otherwise provided by statute, shall be done such that three tenths (3/10) of the civil cases filed shall be assigned to Judge Christensen, three tenths (3/10) to Judge Molloy, and two fifths (2/5) to Judge DeSoto.

Criminal cases filed in the Missoula Division shall be assigned to District Judge Dana L. Christensen and Senior District Judge Donald W. Molloy on a random basis, such that one half (1/2) of the criminal cases filed shall be assigned to Judge Christensen and one half (1/2) to Judge Molloy.

The clerk shall immediately inform all divisional offices, the judicial officers of this district, and the United States Probation Office of the entry of this Standing Order.

DATED this 19th day of July, 2023.



Brian Morris, Chief Judge
United States District Court