

CIVIL CLERK 850-606-4110
MISDEMEANOR CLERK- 850-606-4130
TRAFFIC CLERK-850-606-4100

Communicating with Judge Newlin's Office about Pending (open or closed) Cases

Judge Newlin is restricted by principles of judicial ethics from communicating about pending cases outside of hearings **or documents filed in the court file and served on all parties**. This restriction also applies to Judge Newlin's Judicial Assistant, Christy Campbell.

Impartiality is the most basic principle of judicial ethics. It means that all parties to a pending case are included in all communications with the court regarding that matter-no party has special or secret access to the judge. Communication to the judge without prior notice to the opponent is "ex parte" and improper except in extreme circumstances and as specifically provided by applicable law. If the litigant does not know of any applicable law permitting a particular ex parte communication, it is improper.

Judge Newlin will not discuss her cases with any party outside of a hearing. Ms. Campbell cannot take a message from a litigant or other person to Judge Newlin.

Communication with Judge Newlin regarding cases assigned to her can take two forms:

- 1. Written documents filed in the court file and served on all parties; and**
- 2. Hearings (including final hearings and trials).**

Ms. Campbell's responsibility is to schedule hearings and maintain Judge Newlin's calendar. **Once a motion is filed** or the matter is ready to be set for a final hearing or trial, the lawyer or litigant may call, 850-606-4317, or email Ms. Campbell, campbellch@leoncountyfl.gov, to schedule a hearing. Ms. Campbell may discuss potential dates and times for hearings. Ms. Campbell is not permitted to discuss anything regarding disputes pending before Judge Newlin with anyone for any purpose.

Since Ms. Campbell cannot make decisions on disputed matters and cannot communicate to Judge Newlin regarding things litigants say about disputed matters, no purpose is served by telling her about disputes.

Neither Judge Newlin nor Ms. Campbell are permitted to give legal advice. "Legal advice" means suggesting things that might be filed, evaluating the sufficiency of information on a form, interpretation of any document, evaluating the conduct of an opposing party or lawyer, and giving an opinion about the likelihood of success of an action in litigation. Judge Newlin decides cases and motions. Judge Newlin does not give legal advice. Ms. Campbell does not decide cases or motions and does not give legal advice.

For pro se litigants, Ms. Campbell is authorized to provide contact information for Legal Services of North Florida and the Tallahassee Bar Association Legal Aid Foundation. Forms are available from the Leon County Clerk of Court's Office on the first floor of the courthouse. Forms are designed for use by everyone, however, are especially helpful to individuals who wish to represent themselves (pro se) in court matters. Please go to <https://www.flcourts.org/Resources-Services/Court-Improvement/Self-Help-Information> for forms and more information.

Legal Services of North Florida, Inc.
Phone: 850-385-9007

Legal Aid Foundation
Phone: 850-222-3292