

Rhode Island Family Court

Administrative Order No. 2020-03

SPECIAL REMOTE PRE-TRIAL CALENDAR FOR DIVORCE MATTERS

In accordance with the administrative and supervisory responsibilities conferred on the Chief Judge of the Family Court under R.I. Gen Laws § 8-10-14 and in light of the severe risk of person-to-person transmission of the 2019 novel Coronavirus “COVID-19”, which has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization and which has occasioned the declaration of a State of Emergency in the State of Rhode Island, it is hereby ordered that a mandatory pre-trial divorce calendar will be called remotely using the WebEx platform during the weeks of May 18th and May 25th, 2020.

1. Notices will be forwarded by e-mail to all parties during the week of May 11th, 2020 which will include the “invitation” needed to join the remote pre-trial conference.
2. Attorneys for parties to the matter and self-represented litigants who are registered-users must file a pre-trial memorandum through file and serve at least two days before the scheduled pre-trial hearing. Non-registered users must arrange for the pre-trial memorandum to be forwarded to the clerk’s office in the appropriate county and the opposing party by e-mail, facsimile transmission or regular mail to arrive at least two days before the scheduled pre-trial hearing.
3. The pre-trial memorandum must include the following.
 - a. For matters that are uncontested:
 - i. a statement that the matter is ready to be heard as a nominal and that all issues have been resolved;

- ii. a request for entry of default if the defendant has not answered;
 - iii. an affidavit that defendant is not in the military service as defined by the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 USC § 3901 *et seq.* and is not a member of the national guard on state active duty for a continuous period exceeding ninety (90) days as defined by RI Gen Laws §30-7-10.
- b. For matters that are contested,
- i. a statement of issues that are resolved;
 - ii. a statement of issues which remain unresolved and outstanding;
 - iii. a statement of any legal issues;
 - iv. a statement of the expected length of trial;
 - v. a certificate that counsel or the self-represented litigant has made a diligent, good faith effort to confer with opposing counsel or opposing self-represented litigant to settle the case.
4. Cases that are uncontested or become uncontested may be disposed of at the pre-trial calendar or given an expedited date certain for disposition.
5. Cases that remain contested will be scheduled for a date certain in June of 2020.
6. If an uncontested matter assigned to the pre-trial calendar is ready for disposition, a party may request that the matter be removed from the pre-trial calendar and assigned a date certain for hearing by contacting the clerks' office in the appropriate county.

This Order is effective as of May 1st, 2020.

Date: May 1, 2020

_____/s/_____
Michael B. Forte
Chief Judge