

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA

**IN RE: AMENDMENTS TO FLORIDA
SMALL CLAIMS RULE 7.090**

CASE NO. SC 10-1227

**RESPONSE OF THE TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
TO THIS COURT'S ORDER OF JULY 1, 2010**

The Twentieth Judicial Circuit joins the Sixth Circuit in supporting a change to Rule 7.090, Small Claims Rules, to read:

The pretrial conference may be managed by non judicial personnel employed by or under contract with the court. Non judicial personnel must be subject to direct oversight by the court. A judge must be available to hear any motions or resolve any legal issues.

The foregoing change would be in lieu of the one presently being considered by this court, submitted by the Florida Bar.

The Twentieth Circuit is comprised of five counties: Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry and Glades. Lee County is Florida's 10' most populous, while Glades County is ranked 64. Lee County is served by 19 circuit judges and 8 county judges; by contrast, Hendry County and Glades County share a single circuit judge and each has but one county judge. To impose the identical rigid staffing requirement upon the Glades County Court as is required in the Lee County Court would hinder rather than enhance the administration of justice. Florida is blessed with geographic diversity, and each one of our county courts has adopted small claims procedures to address its particular needs. The Small Claims Rules should encourage that flexibility to meet the people's needs in the People's Court.

Respectfully Submitted

G. Keith Cary, Chief Judge Twentieth Judicial Circuit Lee County Justice Center
1700 Monroe Street Ft. Myers, F133901

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 1/ day of _____, 2010, a true and correct copy of the foregoing Response of the Twenty Judicial Circuit to This Court's Order of July 2, 2010 has been furnished by U.S. Mail to the individuals on the attached service list.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

Pursuant to Rule of Appellate Procedure 9.100(1), I certify that this computer-generated response is prepared in Times New Roman 14-point font and complies with the Rule's font requirements.

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