

ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN OF CRAIGHEAD COUNTY DISTRICT COURT
Judges Keith Blackman and Curt Huckaby presiding

I. Introduction

The District Judges of the Craighead County District Court of the State Arkansas, Acting in compliance with Administrative Order No. 14 of the Supreme Court of Arkansas Adopted April 6, 2001, as amended, hereby adopt this Plan for submission to the Supreme Court for the effective administration of justice in the Craighead County District Court.

This county's jurisdiction boundaries include all of the area contained in Craighead County Arkansas.

Keith Blackman and Curt Huckaby are the regularly elected state court judges of the Court.

The Court is divided into four divisions, namely: criminal, traffic, civil and small claims. Keith Blackman administers a DWI Court and an addendum is attached.

II. Case assignment, allocation and administration

Regular court days are held on Monday through Friday each week at Jonesboro, Arkansas, and each Thursday at Lake City, Arkansas.

The judges also handle felony probable cause cases daily, along with warrants and other similar matters on an "as-needed" basis. The judges normally hold court for the Circuit Court in Jonesboro each Monday morning to handle uncontested matters and orders, which allows the Circuit Judges to expedite contested cases. The judge's alternate court days and court assignments to equalize the caseload as nearly as possible.

The case management and administrative procedure to be used within the Craighead County District Court to administer this plan and any subsequent plan will be determined by consensus of the judges of the court.

This Plan, if approved by the Supreme Court, will take effect January 1, 2014, and be effective until replaced by any subsequently approved plan.

III. Caseload Estimates

The total case number for 2012 exceeded 70,000 cases. Each judge will handle approximately one-half of all cases filed as circumstances may require.

IV. Other Provisions

- A. Recusals.** Consistent with the requirements of Administrative Order No. 16 the District judges for the Craighead County Court will notify the District Court Clerk and he/she shall seek a district judge from another court , a special judge election, or shall request the assignment of a judge by the Supreme Court as may be deemed appropriate.

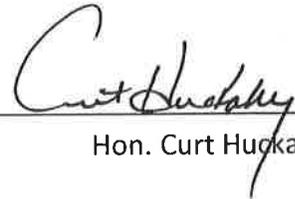
V. Conclusion

The Craighead County District Court covers all of Craighead County. Prior to 2013 it was served by only one judge. Now two judges serve the court. Previously it had the greatest caseload per judge in the state. Now, although the caseload is cut in half, it is believed that the judges of the court are still the district judges in the state with the heaviest caseloads. However, the second judge has greatly alleviated the problems which the single judge had in attempting to maintain such a huge docket. The plan now in place has greatly enhanced the ability of the court to provide better and timelier justice, and has allowed the Court to expand and provide greater service to the legal system in Craighead County.

Dated this 25th day of June, 2013



Hon. Keith Blackman



Hon. Curt Huckaby

fees. Participants are provided with intensive outpatient supervision. Referrals are made as necessary for short term and long term facilities for drug treatment.

d. Court is conducted after regular juvenile court one day a month on Wednesday. Court resources are fully utilized: Circuit Court courtroom used; prosecutors/defendant attorneys/public defenders attend sessions where dispositive action occurs-sentencing out, primarily, but other occasions as well.

e. No charge to court for courtroom or for services of prosecutors or defense attorneys

6. Craighead County DWI Court, Judge Keith Blackman

a. Potential participants are Craighead County District Court defendants who face DWI III charges. If it is determined that the person has an alcohol or a drug addiction or dependency that is treatable, then he/she will enter a plea in district court to the misdemeanors. Upon the entry of the plea, treatment begins immediately. There are intensive and daily group and/or individual counseling sessions. The participants must meet with their probation officers and submit to alcohol/drug screening as well. The team members assist with arranging benefits, acquiring housing, budgeting, employment, etc. The program is normally for one year. It could be longer or shorter depending on the progress of the participant. There are four (4) phases that must be completed before the person is eligible for graduation. The must remain drug free and alcohol free, pay fines, court costs and treatment costs (unless they have been waived), keep a curfew and call in regularly to their probation officer. Those who decide not to complete the program, or who are removed because of serious or repeated violations will be sentenced. They may be sentenced to jail, probation or suspended imposition of sentence.

b. I find the statutory authority for this program at Arkansas Code Annotated Sections 5-4-303 (a), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (j).

c. I certify that the program conforms to all applicable sentencing laws, including fines, court costs, and probation assessments to the very best of my knowledge and belief.

d. We have staffing sessions at 5:15 p.m. on Thursdays in the Jonesboro District Courtroom. These are held with the team members present,

which might consist of the mental health counselors, a prosecutor, defense counsel, a clerk, a probation officer, law enforcement officers, and the district judge. We discuss the progress of the participants, whether the court needs to address any infractions of the rules, or to give reminders as to what the rules require of them. We also discuss other referrals. Court begins immediately following staffing.

e. The program training was initially funded by a grant from the National Center for DWI Courts. We proceed now with the resources available to us.

C. State District Court Judges.

State District Court Judges in the Second Circuit preside over selected circuit court matters pursuant to the provisions of Administrative Order No. 18.

1. The cases or matters included in State District Court Judges' concurrent jurisdiction fall under the "Other Matters" section of Administrative Order No. 18, 6(b)(4): matters of an emergency or uncontested nature pending in the civil, domestic relations, or probate divisions of circuit court (including but not limited to *ex parte* emergency involuntary commitments, uncontested decedent estate administration, uncontested divorces, and defaults) within the territorial/geographic jurisdiction of the state district courts in their respective counties or judicial district of a county.

2. The participating judges are Judges Keith Blackman and Curt Huckaby in Craighead County; Judge Fred Thorne in Crittenden County; Judge Dan Stidham in Greene County; Judge Shannon Langston in the Chickasawba District of Mississippi County; and Judge Ron Hunter of Poinsett County. These judges do not have specific circuit court cases assigned or allocated to them under this Plan.

3. There is a DWI Court in Craighead County State District Court.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The 2nd Judicial Circuit consists of six (6) counties and nine (9) courthouses. It includes the larger cities of Jonesboro, West Memphis, Blytheville and