

THE CHICKASAW NATION DISTRICT COURT COURT RULES

WAYNEJOPLIN, COURT CLERK
DEPUTY

The following rules are hereby adopted by the Chickasaw Nation District Court pursuant to Chickasaw Nation Code § 5-202.6(1), and made effective the 3rd day of January, 2013.

DUSTIN P. ROWE, DISTRICT JUDGE

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CHAPTER I - GENERAL

RULE 1.1 – ENTRY OF APPEARANCE

No attorney may appear in a case without first having filed a written Entry of Appearance with the Court Clerk. An exception to this rule is that an attorney need not file an Entry of Appearance if an attorney has been appointed by the Court to represent one of the parties involved in the case.

RULE 1.2 – BEHAVIOR AND ATTIRE OF ATTORNEYS

Attorneys are officers of the Court. As such, their behavior towards the Court sets the example for the public. Their responsibility is, at a minimum, to be courteous and civil. Attorneys must use the appropriate courtroom decorum at all times. Attorneys must wear business attire for all courtroom appearances – men a dress coat and tie, and women – a business dress, dress trousers and coat, or business skirt and blouse. Good manners and decorum require the following:

- An attorney shall address all arguments to the Court, not to opposing counsel.
- An attorney shall stand when addressing the Court.
- An attorney shall stand where the Court, the witness, the jury and the court reporter can hear when the attorney is examining a witness. Attorneys may sit at counsel table to address a witness with permission from the judge presiding (if there is a legitimate reason to do so).
- An attorney shall not sit on counsel table.
- An attorney shall not hold conferences in the courtroom when the Court is in session, and an attorney shall not engage in loud conversations with clients, witnesses or other attorneys when the Court is in session.
- An attorney should advise his or her clients as to the impropriety of discussing any aspect of a pending case with the judge.

RULE 1.3 – PUNCTUALITY OF ATTORNEYS

Attorneys must be punctual in arriving for a scheduled hearing. At times it is unavoidable to be late for a setting or a docket. However, to be consistently late demonstrates a lack of courtesy to the Court, and to other parties, witnesses and attorneys. An attorney who finds it impossible to be on time should immediately inform the Court and give the reason for the delay. An attorney who is consistently tardy, may in those instances where such behavior causes financial hardship, be assessed attorney fees and expenses for those affected. Opposing counsel may apply to the Court, in appropriate circumstances, for sanctions under this rule. An attorney who arrives late or who does not appear before the Court without any explanation or without informing the Court may be assessed sanctions by the Court sua sponte.

RULE 1.4 – COURTROOM ACTIVITIES

Eating, drinking, chewing gum, use of tobacco in any form, is forbidden in the courtroom. The use of a cellular telephone or pager is allowed only when turned to silent, whether Court is in session or not.

Any activity or noise in or near the courtroom which disrupts or disturbs the proceedings is prohibited. A courtroom may not be used for any other purpose other than a judicial function without the permission of the judge assigned to such courtroom.

RULE 1.5 - DRESS CODE FOR PARTIES, WITNESSES AND SPECTATORS

Any party, witness or spectator, who enters the courtroom must be dressed appropriately. Hats and sunglasses are not allowed in the courtroom. No clothing with any potentially offensive wording or depictions on it is permitted in the courtroom by anyone.

RULE 1.6 - COURT FILES

Original records on file in the Court Clerk's office may not be removed from the Courthouse.

1. Copies of the file may be obtained by advance request to the Court Clerk's office and by paying \$0.25 per page.

Confidential and sealed records may not be removed from the Court Clerk's office. Confidential and sealed records may not be examined by any person except an attorney of record in the case under the supervision of the Court Clerk or a party to the case under the same supervision.

RULE 1.7 – COURTROOM ACTIVITIES AND CONDUCT

No gun, knife, or other potentially dangerous weapon is permitted in the courtroom. Further, anyone entering the courtroom is subject to having their person and/or belongings thoroughly searched by a bailiff and/or a law enforcement officer.

Everyone entering the courtroom is advised of the following courtroom rules:

- Bringing small children into the courtroom is prohibited.
- Gum chewing is prohibited in the courtroom.
- Eating and/or drinking anything is prohibited in the courtroom (an exception to this rule is that an attorney, a party or a witness may have bottled water).
- Tobacco use of any kind is prohibited in the courtroom, and smoking is prohibited in the courthouse.
- Wearing sunglasses is prohibited in the courtroom.
- Wearing a hat is prohibited in the courtroom.
- Cell phones or other electronic devices are prohibited in the courtroom (except that attorneys may have a cell phone or other electric device that is turned to silent).

RULE 1.8 – WITHDRAWAL OF COUNSEL

Counsel must obtain leave of Court to withdraw from any case. Leave will be freely granted unless the matter is set for trial within fourteen (14) days. A request to withdraw within thirty (30) days of a criminal trial will only be granted under compelling circumstances. A request to withdraw must state the client's last known mailing address and whether or not a pending hearing is scheduled.

CHAPTER II – PLEADINGS AND MOTIONS

RULE 2.1 – MOTIONS

All parties and/or their counsel are entitled to notice of hearings and/or trial in every case. The Court does not operate motion dockets and accordingly all motions in this Court must be specially set for hearing. Attorneys filing a motion shall request a court date from the Court Clerk and prepare an Order setting hearing. A written notice of a hearing or trial shall contain a certification by the judge, court personnel or attorney identifying those parties and/or their counsel to whom the notice has been served and in what matter. Except in those instances in which the law requires a notice to be signed by a judge, a clerk may sign a notice of a hearing. A notice signed by a clerk, if properly served, will be a sufficient basis for a finding and decision by default. The notice shall contain a statement of that which is to be heard, the date and time of the hearing and any other information necessary to give adequate notice of the hearing.

RULE 2.2 – DISCOVERY

The parties shall not tender to the Clerk for filing the following discovery instruments:

- Written interrogatories or responses thereto.
- Demands for production of documents or other things.
- Requests for permission to enter upon land of a party.
- Requests for admissions or responses thereto.
- Requests for physical or mental examinations of a party or person in custody or under legal control of a party.

Motions for an order compelling discovery must contain a statement by counsel for the moving party that after personal consultation with opposing counsel and reasonable efforts to do so, counsel for the moving party has been unable to obtain discovery of the matter in question by agreement with opposing counsel.

RULE 2.3 – JOURNAL ENTRY

In all contested matters, the Journal Entry presented for signature of the Court must contain the attorneys' or pro se parties' signature of approval as to form for all interested parties to the proceedings.

The Journal Entry must be submitted to the assigned judge and filed within thirty (30) days of the Court's ruling, unless waived by the assigned judge. If counsel do not agree as to the form of the Journal Entry, a Motion to Settle Journal Entry must be filed and a proposed Journal Entry attached to said motion. Said motion should be set for hearing on the Court's docket by the attorney filing the motion to settle.

RULE 2.4 – DISMISSAL OF INACTIVE CASES

The Court shall dismiss, without prejudice, any action on its docket in which no pleading has been filed or no action taken for one (1) year. The Court shall give notice to the parties and/or their counsel of record before any such dismissal. If an action be commenced, but no summons issued within six (6) months, or if issued and not served within six (6) months, the Court may dismiss such action on its own motion and without notice. All inactive civil, divorce, adoption and criminal cases will be, by the Court Clerk, placed on a disposition docket annually. The Court may, for good cause shown, allow the action to remain open by issuing an order setting forth the specific action required by the party requesting the case to remain open and the date by which the action is taken. The District Judge may set the disposition docket or assign that responsibility.

RULE 2.5 – TRANSCRIPTS

The Court does not provide the services of a Court Reporter except in the following cases:

• Jury trials pertaining to criminal matters and termination of parental rights.

Parties seeking a Court Reporter to any other case are entitled to provide a Court Reporter at their own expense. Other matters may be recorded by counsel and transcribed at a later date. Notice of the recording shall be given to the assigned Judge prior to the beginning of the matter.

The Court does provide a recording device for its own purposes and use, however, the parties may not rely upon the Court's own recording device for their use or to obtain a transcript of a hearing or a portion of a hearing.

CHAPTER III – DOMESTIC RELATIONS

RULE 3.1 – ASSIGNMENT TO A PARTICULAR JUDGE

All divorce and paternity cases will be assigned to a particular judge by the Court Clerk in the manner proscribed by the District Judge.

If the judge assigned disqualifies himself/herself, then the parties must immediately notify the District Judge so that the matter can be assigned to a different judge.

RULE 3.2 – TEMPORARY ORDERS

Generally, all divorce and paternity proceedings involving minor children shall be set for a temporary order hearing. The Court will conduct an abbreviated hearing and receive evidence to allow the issuance of a temporary order to govern until the final divorce or paternity hearing. It is the duty of counsel to advise the parties of the nature of the hearing and to not attempt to address the merits of the final hearing.

RULE 3.3 – PRE-TRIAL DISCLOSURE

In all contested cases, unless waived by the Court, each attorney shall file and serve on opposing counsel a Pre-Trial Disclosure at least ten (10) days in advance of the scheduled trial on the merits. The disclosure must contain the following information:

- Each asset of significant value, together with the following;
 - a. Fair market value;
 - b. Encumbrances, if any;
 - c. Status of acquisition (jointly or separately acquired);
- Outstanding liabilities, together with the following as to each:
 - a. Balance owed;
 - b. Amount of periodic payments;
- Source and amount of all income;
- A list of witnesses expected to be called at trial, along with a synopsis of the testimony of each, contact information of each, unless previously furnished at the Pre-Trial Conference.

Failure to timely comply with the Pre-Trial Disclosure requirement will be considered as cause for continuance of the trial, with the taxing of expenses as costs, exclusion of witnesses or testimony, or in setting of attorney fees as is appropriate.

RULE 3.4 – MEDIATION

The Court does not require the parties to a domestic case to attend mediation. However, the Court does offer a Peacemaking Circle on a voluntary basis to parties wishing to participate. Parties wishing to participate must request the assigned judge to order Peacemaking upon which the assigned judge will issue its order and assign Peacemakers to the case. Peacemaking is completely voluntary and both parties must agree to participate before the matter will be assigned to Peacemaking Court.

RULE 3.5 – STANDARD VISITATION SCHEDULE

A copy of the Court's standard visitation schedule is available in the Court Clerk's office. The parties may vary the standard schedule if it is agreed to by all parties, and if the judge presiding finds it would be in the best interest of any child who would be affected by the agreement. Said visitation schedule is set out and attached with this docket as Appendix 1.

RULE 3.6 - JUDICIAL ORDER OF PROPER PARENTAL CONDUCT

A copy of this Court's Judicial Order of Proper Parental Conduct is available in the Court Clerk's office. Said Order is to be included in each Decree/Order concerning minor children. Said Order is set out and attached with this docket as Appendix II.

CHAPTER IV - DECREES

RULE 4.1 – DECREES

Decrees should be presented for approval of the Court within fourteen (14) days of the granting of the divorce where uncontested.

If the case was contested, the decree should be submitted to the trial judge and filed within thirty (30) days of the judge's ruling.

Pro se litigants shall schedule an appointment with the Court Advocate to have their decree prepared as soon as practical after their final court hearing. It is the duty of both parties to meet with the advocate to make certain the decree is prepared in conformance with the Court's order and presented to the Court for signature.

RULE 4.2 – MOTIONS TO MODIFY

Any motion to modify a decree in a divorce or paternity case should be specially set by the party seeking the modification. If there is opposing counsel, the party seeking modification shall coordinate with that attorney's schedule in setting a motion to modify a decree in a divorce or paternity case. The Court requires motions to modify be served upon the opposing side, unless opposing counsel waives service, just as in the manner set forth by serving a new action (without the requirement of a summons).

RULE 4.3 – COURT ADVOCATES

The Court provides services of a Court Advocate for pro se litigants. Court Advocates do not represent litigants in the Court nor do they provide legal advice, per se. The job and role of the Court Advocate is to prepare pleadings and to assist parties in filing the pleadings and instructing as to how to perfect service on the opposing side. Appointments to see a Court Advocate shall be made through the Court Clerk's office. Parties represented by counsel are not entitled to the services of a Court Advocate. Parties represented by counsel should not be sent to a Court Advocate to prepare a Journal Entry or Decree in any case.



RULE 5.1 – COURT APPOINTED LIST

Attorneys licensed before this Court wishing to serve on the Court's court appointed list shall notify the Court Clerk's office to place their name on the court appointed roster.

RULE 5.2 – ATTORNEYS APPOINTED

The hourly billable rate for a court appointed attorney is \$75.00 per hour. The fee for court appointed attorneys is capped at \$1,250.00 per case. Attorneys shall submit their billing statements within thirty (30) days of services rendered. Failure to do so may result in denial of the claim. Billable claims are limited to attorney time only and do not include: paralegal time, mileage, office expenses including postage, copying, etc. In special circumstances requiring the attorney to exceed \$1,250.00 in total billable time, the attorney may request leave of court to exceed the cap. In such cases, the judge may at his or her discretion extend the billable cap.



RULE 6.1 – INCARCERATION WITHOUT FORMAL CHARGES

No Defendant accused of any public offense may be jailed longer than the code allows without being formally charged and/or arraigned.

RULE 6.2 – INITIAL ARRAIGNMENT

Due process requires that an accused person be brought before a judge without unnecessary delay. If court is not in session, then the Defendant will be arraigned telephonically by the assigned judge. At arraignment, whether in person or telephonically, the Defendant will be advised of the charges brought against him or her and bond will be set. It is the duty of the tribal prosecutor to notify the judge if a person is being held in custody if the Court is not in session.

RULE 6.3 – INITIAL APPEARANCES

The Court holds an initial appearance docket each Thursday morning at 9:00 a.m. Persons arrested and released are directed to appear the following Thursday at 9:00 a.m. in the District Court for arraignment. Likewise, persons who are arrested and post bail are ordered to appear the following Thursday at 9:00 a.m. for arraignment. Persons arrested for the crime of public intoxication only may be released on their own recognizance from jail after being held for eight (8) hours and are directed to appear the following Thursday at 9:00 a.m.

RULE 6.4 – WITHDRAWAL OF COUNSEL

The attorney for the Defendant in a criminal case may not withdraw, except for good cause shown, within thirty (30) days of trial.

CHAPTER VII - TRIAL

RULE 7.1 – PARTIES OR THEIR COUNSEL

Parties or their counsel may communicate with jurors after a verdict has been returned so long as the entire jury has been finally discharged from service. Parties and/or counsel shall cease attempts to communicate with a juror if that particular juror has expressed a desire not to communicate about the case.

CHAPTER VIII - SANCTIONS

RULE 8.1 – PENALTIES

Any violation of a court rule may subject the party and/or attorney involved to a sanction, contempt proceedings, censure or other appropriate remedial action. Sanctions may include, but not be limited to, any of the following:

- 1. Dismissal of the action;
- 2. Imposition of court costs;
- 3. Taxing attorney fees incurred by opposing party;
- 4. Assessing or other expenses or costs, including mileage expense, of any party financially harmed by such acts;
- 5. A fine representing the jury fees and/or other direct costs to the Court for any aborted or delayed trial; and/or
- 6. Mistrial.

RULE 8.2 – WAIVER

On a finding by the Court that any rule herein will work an injustice, the same may be waived for that particular instance by the assigned judge.

APPENDIX I

UNIFORM VISITATION SCHEDULE

The non-custodial parent shall have visitation with the minor child(ren) of the parties as follows:

I. REGULAR VISITATION:

- a) The non-custodial parent shall have visitation every other weekend from 6:00 p.m. Friday until 6:00 p.m. Sunday.
- b) All visitation weekends that include a Federal, State or school holiday adjacent to the weekend shall be part of the regularly weekend. For Friday holidays, the weekend shall begin at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday evening. For Monday holidays, the weekend shall end with the child(ren) being returned at 6:00 p.m. on Monday.
- c) Regular visitation shall not occur during the months of June and July to allow for Summer visitation as set forth in Section III below.

II. HOLIDAY VISITATION:

Holiday:	Even years	Odd Years
Fall Break (from 6:00 p.m. on the day school lets out until	Non-custodial	Custodial Parent
6:00 p.m. on the day before school resumes)	Parent	
Thanksgiving Break:		
First Half (from 6:00 p.m. on the day school lets out until	Custodial Parent	Non-custodial
Thursday at 6:00 p.m.)		Parent
Second Half from 6:00 p.m. on Thursday until the day	Non-custodial	Custodial Parent
before school resumes)	Parent	
Christmas Break:		
First Half (from 6:00 p.m. on the day school lets out for	Non-custodial	Custodial Parent
Christmas Break until 12:00 p.m. on December 25 th)	Parent	
Second Half (from 12:00 p.m. on December 25 th until 6:00	Custodial Parent	Non-custodial
p.m. on January 1 st)		Parent

Until the youngest child completes first grade, the non-custodial parent shall exercise visitation during the Second Half of Christmas Break (as stated above) and the custodial parent shall have the First Half of Christmas Break.

Spring Break:		
First Half: (from 6:00 p.m. on the day school lets out until	Custodial Parent	Non-custodial
12:00 p.m. the following Wednesday)		Parent
Second Half: (from 12:00 p.m. Wednesday until 6:00 p.m.	Non-custodial	Custodial Parent
on the day before school resumes)	Parent	
Easter (from 6:00 p.m. on the day school lets out until	Non-custodial	Custodial Parent
12:00 p.m. on the day before school resumes):	Parent	
Memorial Day (Friday at 6:00 p.m. to Monday at 6:00	Custodial Parent	Non-custodial
p.m.)		Parent
July 4 th (from 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m.)	Custodial Parent	Non-custodial
		Parent
Labor Day (Friday at 6:00 p.m. to Monday at 6:00 p.m.)	Non-custodial	Custodial Parent
	Parent	

All Mother's Day weekends shall be spent with the Mother and all Father's Day weekends shall be spent with the Father. Father's Day and Mother's Day shall supersede all regular or summer visitation. The weekend shall begin at 6:00 p.m. Friday before Mother's Day or Father's Day and conclude on the following Monday morning at the return time for regular weekend visitation.

THE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE SUPERSEDES ALL REGULARLY SCHEDULED VISITATION. The Holiday Schedule shall be governed by the school the child attends or would attend if not of school age. If a child not yet attending school has an older sibling who attends

school, holiday visitation with the child not attending school shall be governed by the schedule for the school which the older sibling attends and shall begin from the afternoon when school is out until it resumes. Holiday Visitation shall supersede all Regular and Summer Visitation.

III. SUMMER VISITATION:

- a) The non-custodial Parent shall have summer visitation from 6:00 p.m. on June 1st until 6:00 p.m. on June 15th; from 6:00 p.m. on July 1st until 6:00 p.m. on July 15th, and from August 1st through August 8th.
- b) The Regular Visitation, as set forth in Section I above, shall not occur during the months of June or July to insure that each parent receives uninterrupted summer visitation. The holiday schedule, as set forth in Section II above, shall prevail.

IV. <u>TRAVEL</u>:

Unless otherwise agreed by the parties or expressly provided for herein, the Non-custodial parent shall pickup the child(ren) at the beginning of visitation and the custodial parent shall pickup the child(ren) at the non-custodial parent's home at the end of the non-custodial parent's visitation. The parties are encouraged to work together to meet to exchange the child(ren) at an agreeable place in the event that the parties do not live in the same town. Both parents are ORDERED to exchange current addresses, telephone and cell phone numbers and make every effort to notify the other, as soon as possible, in the event that he or she will be late picking up or exchanging the child(ren).

V. <u>OTHER PROVISIO</u>NS:

- a) Toys and clothes belonging to the child(ren) should travel freely between households and shall be returned with the child(ren) in a clean and orderly manner.
- b) Parents are not only allowed but encouraged to deviate from this schedule. However, both parents must agree before any deviation to this schedule can be made.
- c) Special consideration should be given to each parent to make the child(ren) available to attend family functions, including funerals, weddings, family reunions, religious holidays, important ceremonies and other significant events in the life of the child or in the life of either parent which may inadvertently conflict with this visitation schedule.
- d) It is important to be aware that this visitation schedule is for the purpose of providing assured minimum amounts of visitation between non-custodial parent and child(ren). Visitation should exceed the number of occasions set out herein.
- e) In addition, liberal telephone communications between the non-custodial parent and child(ren) are encouraged and should occur. Unless otherwise agreed upon by the parties, "liberal telephone communications" is defined as twice a week between Monday and Friday and once during the weekend. If a parent uses an answering machine, messages left on the machine for the child(ren) should be returned within 24 hours. Parents should agree on a specified time for calls to the child(ren) so that the child(ren) will be made available. Telephone communications are also encouraged and should occur between the child(ren) and the custodial parent during the non-custodial parent's visitation.
- f) If the parents live within thirty (30) minutes of each other, the parent who has physical custody of the children (the non-custodial parent during periods of visitation and the custodial parent during all other times) must allow the other parent the first right to babysit the child(ren). Parents should notify the other of their work schedules one month in advance, if possible, and discuss dates which the other may be willing and available to babysit.

APPENDIX II

JUDICIAL ORDER FOR PROPER PARENTAL CONDUCT

This Judicial Order for the proper conduct of separated or divorced parents is directed equally to both the Petitioner and Respondent herein. The word "children" means one or more children.

Children normally suffer when parents separate or divorce. The children are deprived of the proper, full-time guidance that two parents can give that is so essential to moral and spiritual growth. If there is bitterness between the parents, it should not be inflicted upon the children. In every child's mind there MUST and should always be an image of TWO GOOD PARENTS. The future of the parents with the children and with this Court will be enhanced if the parents will follow these directions:

THE PARENTS ARE DIRECTED AS FOLLOWS:

- (1) Do not poison your children's minds against the other parent by discussing the other parent's shortcomings. Do not attempt to buy your children's favor with presents or special treatment.
- (2) Do not expose your children to another person with whom you may be sexually involved, except in a lawful marriage relationship, during overnight periods.
- (3) Do not use your visitation to continue argument with the other parent. Never quarrel in the presence of the children.
- (4) Do not *visit or transport* the children if you have been drinking or using drugs (whether they be prescription or illegal) which may impair your ability to drive. Do not expose the children to anyone who may be intoxicated or using alcohol or illegal drugs while the children are in their physical custody.
- (5) Be prompt in paying child support exactly as ordered. You will not be credited with presents, clothes, etc., as a part of child support. The parent who has a duty of paying support must always maintain proof of payment and be in a position to prove the payment: (e.g. receipts, cancelled checks, etc.).
- (6) Do not fail to notify the other parent as soon as possible if you are unable to keep your scheduled visitation. It is unfair to your children to keep them waiting and even worse to disappoint them by not coming at all.
- (7) Make your visitation as pleasant as possible for your children by NOT questioning them regarding the activities of the other parent.
- (8) The parent with whom the children live must prepare them both physically and mentally for the visitation. The children and necessities for their care should be available at the time mutually agreed upon or the time set by the Court.
- (9) The parents must realize that visitation takes precedence over other plans for the children; however, infrequently there may be conflicts between visitation and plans which are in the best interest of the children. Both parents are required to work through their conflicts as mature adults.
- (10) IN DEALING WITH ISSUES INVOLVING VISITATION, BE AS REASONABLE WITH THE OTHER PARENT AS YOU EXPECT THE OTHER PARENT TO BE WITH YOU and share the children as much as is practical and reasonable. Do not attempt to visit or telephone your children at unreasonable hours.

- (11) Parents must remember that the Court's visitation schedule is a minimum schedule, not a maximum schedule.
- (12) Always inform the other parent of your address and telephone number. Always inform the other parent of the children's address and telephone number at all times. Any change in the address or telephone number of either parent or of the children must be reported to the other parent immediately. You are required to inform the other parent at once of any sickness of the children, or of any injury to the children. If the children are sick or injured, their condition and progress will be reasonably reported.
- (13) Do not burden your children with the worries and troubles of adults. Remember that they are children.
- (14) Each parent must realize that the most important job is to carry out the responsibilities of raising the children in a proper, cooperative way. Always work for the spiritual well-being, health, happiness and safety of your children. Use good judgment and your best example to achieve these goals. Schedule regular dental and medical examinations. When driving, secure your children in seat belts or a safety chair. Never subject the children to dangerous, immoral or illegal situations or circumstances.
- (15) Give your children all the love you have. Remember, one day they will be grown and will move away.
- (16) Do not accuse, blame or nag the other parent about things which have happened in the past. Remember, others will treat you as you treat them so always use the same degree of consideration, respect and kindness toward the other parent that you expect in return.

Failure to follow these directions may result in violation of the Orders of this Court and may be punished by contempt of court with a fine, imprisonment, or both and/or modification of custody. There might also be additional expense of attorney fees and court costs, all of which can be better used for the benefit of your children.

DATED this 3rd day of January, 2013.

JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT