

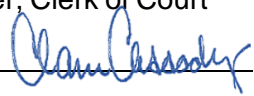
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

United States District Court
Southern District of Texas
ENTERED

July 12, 2024

Nathan Ochsner, Clerk of Court

By Deputy Clerk



IN THE MATTER OF
REFERRAL OF CIVIL
CASES AND MOTIONS TO
MAGISTRATE JUDGES

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GENERAL ORDER NO. 2024-8

ORDER

The following practices govern the referral of civil cases and motions to magistrate judges in accordance with the district-wide unpairing of district and magistrate judges, effective July 1, 2024. General Order 2024-7, Paragraph 29 states:


Upon the commencement of a civil action, a magistrate judge from the division in which the action was filed will be randomly assigned to such action. If the district judge chooses to refer any matter to a magistrate judge, it shall be referred to the magistrate judge assigned to that case.

Accordingly,

1. All magistrate judges in the Southern District of Texas are qualified to preside over cases filed in this Court. The magistrate judges will continue to be treated as generalists and referred a broad array of cases.
2. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636, a referral order must be entered before the assigned magistrate judge has authority to hear or determine any matter before the Court.
3. District judges should consider referring matters to the magistrate judge assigned to the case as early as possible. Referral for full pretrial management is strongly recommended. Upon referral for full pretrial management, the magistrate judge should be given full authority to modify the schedule.

4. Magistrate judges will manage their dockets according to their sound discretion. Absent exigencies, magistrate judges will address matters in the order they were referred.
5. Unless compelled by extenuating circumstances, district judges should refrain from referring cases or motions to a magistrate judge if the case or motion is already on the district judge's CJRA Report.
6. Matters such as mediations and settlement conferences, and guilty pleas in criminal cases, may be referred to any magistrate judge upon request from the district judge to the magistrate judge.
7. For cases filed before July 1, 2024: (a) all referrals to a magistrate judge existing as of June 30, 2024, will remain with that magistrate judge; (b) if any matter other than a Rule 16 conference was referred before July 1, 2024, to a magistrate judge, all future referrals in that case will be to that magistrate judge; and (c) if no matters, or only the Rule 16 conference, were referred to a magistrate judge, all future referrals in the case will be randomly assigned to a magistrate judge.

Signed the 12th day of July, 2024.



RANDY CRANE
CHIEF JUDGE