United States District Court
Southern District of Texas
ENTERED
October 15, 2026
Nathan Ochsner, Clerk of Court
By Deputy Clerk

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

IN THE MATTER OF DIVISION OF WORK ORDER FOR 2026 § § § GENERAL ORDER NO. 2026-13

Third Amended Division of Work Order

Adjustments to Division of Work Order No. 2026-11 have been made to reflect the appointment of United States District Judge Angela V. Colmenero.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 137, these assignments are made, and these procedures are adopted, effective upon the signing of Judge Colmenero's Commission and her being administered the oath of office.

Additional adjustments are necessary to establish College Station, Texas as a Place of Holding Court for the Houston Division. For civil and criminal case filing purposes, the Houston Division is made up of the following places of holding court.

A. The Houston Place of Holding Court consists of the counties of Colorado, Fort Bend, Harris, Montgomery, San Jacinto, and Wharton.

B. The College Station Place of Holding Court consists of the counties of Austin, Brazos, Fayette, Grimes, Madison, Walker, and Waller.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 137, these assignments are made, and these procedures are adopted, effective, October 15, 2026.

1. Chief Judge Randy Crane

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket.

B. Receives 33% of all civil cases filed in the McAllen Division.

C. Receives 25% of all civil cases filed in the College Station Place of Holding Court.

D. Is the liaison judge to all court units, including the U.S. District Clerk's Office, the U.S. Probation Office, the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, the Federal Public Defender's Office, the U.S. Marshals Service, and the U.S. Attorney's Office.

E. Is the liaison judge for the McAllen Division.

2. Judge Keith P. Ellison

   A. Retains the cases presently on his docket, except those transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

   B. Receives 9.90% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court.

   C. Is the liaison judge to the staff attorneys in the Houston Place of Holding Court.

   D. Is the liaison judge for the Houston Place of Holding Court.

3. Judge Diana Saldaña

   A. Retains the cases presently on her docket.

   B. Receives 33.33% of all cases filed in the Laredo Division.

   C. Is the liaison judge for the Laredo Division.

4. Judge Nelva Gonzales Ramos

   A. Retains the cases presently on her docket.

   B. Receives 50% of all cases filed in the Corpus Christi and Victoria Divisions.

   C. Is the liaison judge for jury utilization.

   D. Is the liaison judge for the Corpus Christi and Victoria Divisions.

5. Judge Marina Garcia Marmolejo

   A. Retains the cases presently on her docket.

   B. Receives 33.33% of all cases filed in the Laredo Division.

6. Judge Alfred H. Bennett

   A. Retains the cases presently on his docket, except those transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

   B. Receives 9.90% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court.

   C. Is the liaison judge for the Houston-Galveston Divisions' panel of private attorneys under the Criminal Justice Act and Chair of the Houston-Galveston CJA Panel Selection Committee.

7. Judge George C. Hanks, Jr.

   A. Retains the cases presently on his docket, except those transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

   B. Receives 9.90% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court.

   C. Is the liaison judge to the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Houston Place of Holding Court.

8. Judge Rolando Olvera

   A. Retains the cases presently on his docket.

   B. Receives 50% of all cases filed in the Brownsville Division.

   C. Is the liaison judge for the Brownsville Division.

9. Judge Fernando Rodriguez, Jr.

   A. Retains the cases presently on his docket.

   B. Receives 50% of all cases filed in the Brownsville Division.

10. Judge David S. Morales

   A. Retains the cases presently on his docket.

   B. Receives 50% of all cases filed in the Corpus Christi and Victoria Divisions.

11. Judge Jeffrey V. Brown

   A. Retains the cases presently on his docket.

   B. Receives all cases filed in the Galveston Division.

   C. Is the liaison judge for the Galveston Division.

12. Judge Charles R. Eskridge III

   A. Retains the cases presently on his docket, except those transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

   B. Receives 9.90% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court.

   C. Is the liaison judge to the Magistrate Judges in the Houston Place of Holding Court.

13. Judge Drew B. Tipton

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket

B. Receives the civil cases transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

C. Receives 75% of all civil cases filed in the College Station Place of Holding Court.

D. Receives 100% of all criminal cases filed in the College Station Place of Holding Court.

E. Receives 4.94% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court.

F. Is the liaison judge for the College Station Place of Holding Court.

14. Judge John A. Kazen

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket.

B. Receives 33.33% of all cases filed in the Laredo Division.

C. Is the liaison judge for the interpreters in the district.

15. Judge Nicholas J. Ganjei

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket, except those transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

B. Receives 9.90% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court.

16. Judge John G.E. Marck

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket.

B. Receives 33% of all civil cases filed in the McAllen Division.

C. Receives 50% of all criminal cases filed in the McAllen Division.

17. Judge Arthur R, Jones

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket.

B. Receives 33% of all civil cases filed in the McAllen Division.

C. Receives 50% of all criminal cases filed in the McAllen Division.

18. Judge Angela V. Colmenero

A. Receives cases transferred to her pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

B. Receives 9.90% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court.

19. Senior Judge David Hittner

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket, except those transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

B. Receives 4.94% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court, except:

(1) Alien Detainee (Nature of Suit 463);
(2) Bankruptcy Appeals (Nature of Suit 422);
(3) Bankruptcy Withdrawal of Reference (Nature of Suit 423);
(4) Civil Cases Arising from State Death Penalty Convictions;
(5) Class Action (Requested in Complaint);
(6) ERISA (Nature of Suit 791);
(7) Federal Death Penalty Criminal Cases;
(8) Patent (Nature of Suit 830); and
(9) Student Loan (Nature of Suit 152).

20. Senior Judge Kenneth M. Hoyt

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket, except those transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

B. Receives 5% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court, except:

(1) Bankruptcy Appeals (Nature of Suit 422);
(2) Bankruptcy Withdrawals of Reference (Nature of Suit 423);
(3) Copyright (Nature of Suit 820);
(4) Patent (Nature of Suit 830);
(5) Social Security (Nature of Suit 861 - 865); and
(6) Trademark (Nature of Suit 840).

21. Senior Judge Sim Lake

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket, except those transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

B. Receives 4.94% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court, except:

(1) Bankruptcy Appeals (Nature of Suit 422);
(2) Bankruptcy Withdrawal of Reference (Nature of Suit 423);
(3) Other Civil Rights (Nature of Suit 440);
(4) Patent (Nature of Suit 830);
(5) Racketeering (RICO) (Nature of Suit 470); and
(6) Social Security (Nature of Suit 863 - 865).

C. Is the liaison judge to the Houston Place of Holding Court Probation Office.

22. Senior Judge John D. Rainey

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket.

B. Assists other judges with criminal sentencings by agreement of the judges.

23. Senior Judge Ewing Werlein, Jr.

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket, except those transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

B. Receives 2.47% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court, except:

(1) Bankruptcy Appeals (Nature of Suit 422);
(2) Bankruptcy Withdrawal of Reference (Nature of Suit 423);
(3) Civil Cases Arising from State Death Penalty Convictions;
(4) Fair Labor Standards Act (Nature of Suit 710);
(5) Federal Death Penalty Criminal Cases; and
(6) Patent (Nature of Suit 830).

24. Senior Judge Lee H. Rosenthal

A. Retains the cases presently on her docket, except those transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

B. Receives 9.90% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court, except:

(1) Foreclosure (Nature of Suit 220).

C. Is the liaison judge for the district's local rules.

25. Senior Judge Andrew S. Hanen

A. Retains the cases presently on his docket, except those transferred pursuant to Special Order H-2026-2.

B. Receives 8.41% of all cases filed in the Houston Place of Holding Court, except:

(1) Bankruptcy Appeals (Nature of Suit 422)
(2) Civil Cases Arising from State Death Penalty Convictions;
(3) Federal Death Penalty Criminal Cases; and
(4) Patent (Nature of Suit 832).

C. Is the liaison judge to the Federal Public Defender's Office and the U.S. Marshals Service in the Houston Place of Holding Court.

26. Houston Miscellaneous Docket

A. The miscellaneous docket in the Houston Place of Holding Court consists of those matters that arise before a civil or criminal proceeding is filed and assigned to a judge, like naturalization ceremonies and grants of immunity to witnesses.

B. The miscellaneous docket judge summons and empanels grand and petit juries.

C. Applications for restraining orders, preliminary injunctions, and similar emergency matters are to be handled by the judge to whom the matter is assigned. If that judge is not available and if the application requires immediate action, the assigned judge's staff will take it to the judge in charge of the miscellaneous docket.

D. The miscellaneous docket duties may be exchanged by consent with notice to the clerk and the chief judge.

E. The schedule for the Houston Place of Holding Court miscellaneous docket is Appendix A.

27. Attorney Admissions

A. The Clerk will present any attorney admission exemption requests (e.g., renewal after expiration, substitution of references, etc.) to the judge assigned to the miscellaneous docket. That judge may either decide the admission question or submit the issue to the Attorney Admission Committee.

B. Applications for reinstatement due to prior disciplinary action will be submitted to the Attorney Admission Committee for recommendation and then forwarded to the chief judge for consideration by the full Court.

28. Bankruptcy Matters

A. "Bankruptcy matters" are: (1) appeals from decisions of bankruptcy judges, (2) motions to withdraw the reference of bankruptcy cases or of adversary proceedings, (3) reports and recommendations by the bankruptcy judges, and (4) applications for writ of mandamus to a bankruptcy judge.

B. The initial bankruptcy matter associated with a particular bankruptcy case will be randomly assigned to a district Judge the same as any other civil matter.

C. All later bankruptcy matters associated with that bankruptcy case will be assigned to the district judge who handled the initial bankruptcy matter, whether the initial matter is open or closed.

29. Assignment of Magistrate Judges

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. If a magistrate judge is disqualified, recused or otherwise unable to preside over the action, a different magistrate judge will be randomly assigned in the same manner as district judges are assigned in such circumstances. (see Paragraph 30.A.) Magistrate judges will continue to be randomly assigned to misdemeanor criminal cases and preside over all other criminal matters during their duty weeks as determined by the district judges of each division.

30. General

A. Whenever a judge is disqualified or recused in a case, the case initially will be reassigned to another judge stationed in that division, according to the customary assignment procedure in that division. If all judges in a division are recused or disqualified, the case will be reassigned as follows: a case in the Corpus Christi, Galveston, or Victoria Divisions will be randomly assigned to a judge in the Houston Place of Holding Court; a case in the Houston Place of Holding Court will be randomly assigned to a judge in the Corpus Christi Division; a case in the College Station Place of Holding Court will be randomly assigned to a judge in the Houston Place of Holding Court; a case in either the Brownsville, Laredo, or McAllen Divisions will be randomly assigned to a judge within one of those three divisions. Any reassignment otherwise required will be done by the chief judge.

B. Nothing in this order deprives a judge of jurisdiction in a matter. A judge may handle matters for another judge by consent.

C. Matters affecting a liaison assignment should be brought first to the attention of the liaison judge, who may handle routine administrative matters. Emergency questions involving court policies will be discussed with the chief judge and may be resolved by the liaison judge and chief judge. The chief judge will report the emergency to the full court for discussion as promptly as practical.

D. Judge Saldaña is appointed Chair of the Attorney Admission Fund Committee, and Judge Hanks is assigned as a member of that committee.

E. Judge Morales is appointed Chair of the Committee on Court Portraits, and Judge Kazen and Senior Judge Hittner are assigned as members of that committee.

F. Judge Tipton is appointed Chair of the Court Information Technology Committee, and Judge Eskridge, Chief Bankruptcy Judge Rodriguez, and Magistrate Judge Hampton are assigned as the judicial officer members of that committee. Judge Tipton also Chairs the AI Subcommittee, and Judge Rodriguez, Chief Bankruptcy Judge Rodriguez, and Magistrate Judge Ho are assigned as the judicial officer members of that subcommittee.

G. Judge Rodriguez is appointed Chair of the Court Reporter Committee, and Judge Bennett and Judge Brown are assigned as members of that committee.

H. Judge Hanen is appointed Chair of the Court Security Committee, and Chief Judge Crane, Chief Circuit Judge Elrod, Judge Gonzales Ramos, Chief Bankruptcy Judge Rodriguez, and Magistrate Judge Palermo are assigned as the judicial officer members of that committee.

I. Magistrate Judge Bray is appointed Chair of the Magistrate Judge Committee, and Magistrate Judge Song Quiroga and Magistrate Judge Libby are assigned to that committee.

J. Chief Judge Crane is appointed Chair of the Space and Facilities Committee, and Judge Hanks, Judge Morales, and Magistrate Judge Torteya are assigned as the judicial officer members of that committee.

K. The chief judge will call meetings of the full court as needed and will select the time and place of the meetings.

ORDERED this the 15th day of October, 2026.

RANDY CRANE
CHIEF JUDGE

Appendix A
2026 Miscellaneous Docket-Houston Division

January	Judge George C. Hanks, Jr.
February	Judge Charles R. Eskridge III
March	Judge Alfred H. Bennett
April	Judge Keith P. Ellison
May	Judge George C. Hanks, Jr.
June	Judge Nicholas J. Ganjei
July	Judge Charles R. Eskridge
August	Judge Alfred H. Bennett
September	Judge Keith P. Ellison
October	Judge Nichloas J. Ganjei
November	Judge George C. Hanks, Jr.
December	Judge Charles R. Eskridge

Appendix B
Magistrate Judges by Division and Place of Holding Court

Brownsville	Judge Ignacio Torteya III Judge Karen L. Betancourt
College Station	Judge Mitchel Neurock
Corpus Christi and Victoria	Judge Jason B. Libby Judge Julie K. Hampton Judge Mitchel Neurock
Galveston	Judge Andrew M. Edison
Houston	Judge Dena Hanovice Palermo Judge Christina Bryan Judge Peter Bray Judge Yvonne Y. Ho Judge Richard W. Bennett
Laredo	Judge Diana Song Quiroga Judge Christopher A. dos Santos Judge Brian C. Bajew
McAllen	Judge James Scott Hacker Judge Juan F. Alanis Judge Nadia S. Medrano