



Berrien County Trial Court

Gary J. Bruce Chief Judge ~ Carrie Smietanka-Haney, Administrator
Courthouse – 811 Port Street, St. Joseph, MI 49085
(269) 983-7111; FAX (269) 982-8643
www.berriencounty.org

Administrative Order 2018-03

APPOINTMENT OF JUVENILE AND DOMESTIC RELATIONS ATTORNEY REFEREE

This administrative order is issued in accordance with Michigan Supreme Court Administrative Order 2009-6, effective January 1, 2010. In accordance with MCL 712A.10 MCR 3.913, MCL 552.507(1) and MCR 3.215(A), and upon approval of the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO),

IT IS ORDERED:

1. The chief judge of the Berrien County Trial Court appoints Richard G. Sammis as attorney referee. The referee's contact information is:

Name	Richard G. Sammis
Bar Number	P-30597
Court Address	811 Port Street
	St. Joseph, Michigan 49085
Phone Number	269-983-7111 ext. 8401
E-mail Address	rsammis@berriencounty.org

It is the responsibility of the referee to notify the State Court Administrative Office of changes in the individual's contact information during the course of the appointment.

2. Richard G. Sammis:
 - A. Will serve at the pleasure of the chief judge of the circuit court.
 - B. Will take the constitutional oath of office.
 - C. Is a member, in good standing, of the State Bar of Michigan, pursuant to MCR 3.215.
3. Referee Richard G. Sammis is authorized to perform the following duties pursuant to MCR 3.913 and MCL 712A.10:
 - a. Conduct a preliminary inquiry or preside at hearings under the Juvenile Code, MCL 712A.1, et. seq., and make recommended findings and

conclusions except for those hearings specified in MCR 3.912(A), which include the following:

1. a jury trial;
 2. a waiver proceeding under MCR 3.950;
 3. the preliminary examination, trial, and sentencing in a designated case; and
 4. a proceeding on the issuance, modification, or termination of a minor personal protection order.
- b. In conducting hearings, a referee shall do all of the following:
1. Administer oaths and examine witnesses;
 2. If a case requires a hearing and the taking of testimony, make a written signed report to the judge containing a summary of the testimony taken and a recommendation for the court's findings and disposition.
- c. In addition, an attorney referee may issue an interim ex parte placement order under MCR 3.963(B).
4. The following types of motions may be heard initially by Domestic Relations Referees. Referee Richard G. Sammis is authorized to perform the following duties pursuant to MCL 552.507(1) and MCR 3.215(A):
- Hear all domestic relations motions.
- Hear all domestic relations motions and any ancillary (related non-domestic relations) motions that the court determines to be related to a domestic relations case.
- Hear all domestic relations motions, with the exception of those listed below:
- Exceptions:
- A. Orders to Show Cause (support and parenting time)
 - B. Post-judgment spousal support modifications (MCL 552.507)
 - C. Pro confesso hearings (judgment of divorce entry)
 - D. Pre-judgment trials
- The following types of domestic relations motions shall be initially heard by a circuit court referee:
- A. Temporary relief motions (pre-judgment)
 - B. All post-judgment motions (w/exception of those hearing matters listed previously as exceptions)
5. The Domestic Relations Referee is authorized to conduct the following scheduling and settlement conferences in domestic relations cases in accordance with MCR 3.215:

[X] Scheduling conferences in domestic relations cases. The court must review and may either approve or modify the referee's scheduling.

[X] Settlement conferences in domestic relations cases.

6. Recommendations for certain orders by the Domestic Relations Referee shall be given interim effect pending a judicial hearing on a timely objection or pending the twenty-one (21) day waiting period as authorized by MCR 3.215(G):

[X] Orders establishing custody

[X] Orders establishing support

[X] Orders establishing parenting time

[X] Orders modifying support when custody does not change

[X] Orders implementing income withholding

[X] Orders establishing domicile

7. If a domestic relations referee's recommended order does not have interim effect pursuant to this order, the court may enter a case-specific order giving the recommended order interim effect pending the judicial hearing, unless interim effect is prohibited by MCR 3.215(G)(3).

Effective Date: April 2, 2018

Date: 3-26-18 Chief Judge Signature: 