

## **HELPFUL PRACTICE TIPS TO LAWYERS REGARDING SPECIAL MASTER'S HEARINGS**

1. SETTLE THE CASE IF YOU CAN.
2. As a matter of good practice and courtesy inform the Clerk and Master's Office (even if it is a Circuit Court Case) when you settle or continue a case before the morning of your hearing.
3. Be sure that the Order Appointing Special Master is lodged, signed, and entered.
4. Be sure that you have decided whether to have a court reporter or to proceed without one. If you proceed without a court reporter, be sure to that you have the Waiver of Filing a Transcript filed or ready to file when your case is called.
5. Have answer and counter-claim filed.
6. Have 12.01 form completed and filed. If you cannot comply with the two-day rule, have it with you when you come to court.
7. Don't bring the whole dog and pony show to the Pendente Lite hearing. The Special Master will limit you to two hours and your two best witnesses.
8. Get to the point in your direct and cross-examination. Don't waste your time.
9. Get your Special Master's Report done and in within five days. Do not worry about getting the other side's approval. You are the one who will look bad if the other side sits on it.
10. If your Special Master's Report is not lodged, signed and filed, you will not have a comprehensive order upon which to file contempt or modification motions.
11. Be sure to include the Special Master's Findings of Fact in the Special Master's Report. This will help you if there is an objection.
12. If you agree to continue a case, then file an agreed Notice to Reset.
13. If the Special Master, at the request of either party continues a case, then the party who asked for the continuance should file a Notice to Reset and send a copy with a certificate of service to the other side.
14. Notify the Docketing Clerk in Room 5-101, immediately when a matter is re-set in Court.
15. Docketing Clerk – Raechelle Wilson – direct line 615-217-0063.
16. John A. W. Bratcher, Special Master, hears all pre-divorce matters, with the exception of contempt matters requesting incarceration.
17. Only the attorney who sets a hearing may remove it from the docket.
18. Submit an Order Approving Master's Report with the Master's Report.
19. Lodge the Order Appointing Special Master simultaneously when filing the case, if a Pendente Lite Hearing will be scheduled.

20. Filing fee for Counter-claim is \$100.00. there are children involved, bring a blank Temporary Parenting Plan with you. The Temporary Parenting Plan will be signed by the Special Master and entered that day.