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**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER # 2006-00-04**

**IN RE: JUDICIAL LEAVE POLICY**

**WHEREAS**, Judges are considered to be available for duty twenty-four hours a day and are often required to serve on weekends and after hours without compensatory time;

**WHEREAS**, Judges, unlike state employees, cannot accumulate annual and sick leave for which they are compensated at the termination of service;

**WHEREAS**, judicial annual leave assures that judges have sufficient time away from the bench to maintain good health and effectiveness and to permit time for rejuvenation and renewal;

**WHEREAS**, establishment of the following judicial annual leave policy ensures that judges are accountable for the time they are away from the bench while simultaneously emphasizing that some leave time is in the best interests of a properly functioning judiciary;

**WHEREAS**, judicial annual leave does not encompass sick leave, educational leave, military leave, leave to serve on court committees or other leave in the furtherance of justice;

**WHEREAS**, all judges are expected to participate - as both faculty and students - in approved continuing judicial education programs; and

**WHEREAS**, judges are also encouraged as part of their regular judicial responsibilities to participate in professional meetings and conferences that advance the administration of justice or the public's understanding of the judicial system; to serve on commissions and committees of state and national organizations that contribute to the improvement of the law or the administration of justice; and to serve on Supreme Court-appointed or intra-circuit assignments or committees;

**WHEREAS**, the Judicial Administration Section of the Conference of Circuit Judges has reviewed the leave practices in existence in other judicial branches throughout the United States and several states ensure at least 30 working days of leave to their elected officials;

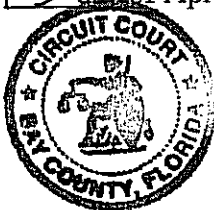
**WHEREAS**, a judicial office is a public office rather than an employment status, and therefore the establishment of a judicial annual leave policy cannot be required by law and is entirely voluntary on the part of the State Court System;

**WHEREAS**, this administrative order is entered in accordance with the chief judge's duties and responsibilities as set forth in Article V, section 2, Florida Constitution; Rule of Judicial Administration 2.050; and section 26.37, Florida Statutes.

**Now Therefore, it is ORDERED AND ADJUDGED** that the following shall be the policy of the Judges of the Fourteenth Judicial Circuit concerning their annual leave:

1. Circuit court and county court judges are expected to take no more than 30 working days of annual leave. For the purposes of this administrative order, "annual leave" means scheduled, planned time off wherein a judge is completely unavailable to perform judicial duties. Annual leave does not encompass sick leave, educational leave, military leave, leave to serve on court committees, or other leave in the furtherance of justice. The taking of annual leave shall not interfere with the efficient administration of a judge's docket.
2. Each county and circuit judge shall report to the chief judge or the chief judge's designee in writing by January 10 of each calendar year the total number of annual leave days taken during the previous calendar year.
3. The chief judge or the chief judge's designee shall maintain records of such leave reports submitted by the county and circuit judges within the circuit.
4. Unused judicial annual leave does not accrue from year to year. No judge shall be entitled to be paid for those hours of judicial annual leave not taken within a calendar year.
5. Nothing herein prevents a chief judge, upon good cause shown on a case by case basis, allowing judicial annual leave in excess of 30 working days.

**DONE and ORDERED** in Chambers at Panama City, Bay County, Florida this 13 day of April, 2006.



A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY  
MANOLD BAZZEL CLERK  
OF THE CIRCUIT COURT  
By Nanda Maddy  
Deputy Clerk

Handwritten signature of William L. Wright in black ink.

WILLIAM L. WRIGHT, CHIEF JUDGE