

CIRCUIT COURT FOR HOWARD COUNTY CIVIL AND FAMILY LAW POSTPONEMENT POLICY

All requests for postponements (with the exception of scheduling conferences) shall be in the form of a motion, with documentation establishing the need for a postponement and a proposed order. Verbal or telephone requests will not be considered. The Clerk cannot accept faxed copies of postponement requests for filing. **Requests for postponements will be considered up to 10 calendar days prior to the scheduled event, or as specified below.** Exceptions to this are listed below. Included in the motion shall be a) the reason for the postponement, b) the position of all the parties, and c) a proposed re-set date provided by the Calendar Management Office that has been agreed to by all parties. The Calendar Management Office can be reached at 410-313-3057 or 3579. The motion and proposed order must be filed with the Clerk's Office. The Clerk will docket the original motion, attach it to the corresponding file(s) and send it to the chambers of the Administrative Judge or Master for review. Only those requests for postponements that adhere to this policy will be ruled upon. If a motion for postponement is denied, all proposed re-set dates will be vacated.

Requests for postponements of Family Law Scheduling Conferences must also be in writing. The request may be in letter form and can be faxed directly to the Family Law Coordinator at 410-313-2413. Requests must be filed at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the conference and should include three proposed reset dates. Family Law scheduling conferences are held on Fridays. The attorney or party requesting the postponement shall first contact all other participants to determine the available dates. Scheduling Conferences will be rescheduled within 30 days of the original date. If a postponement is granted, the provisions of the scheduling order shall remain in effect, except as may be amended by the terms of the postponement order.

"Good Cause" Postponement Policy

The policy for the Circuit Court for Howard County is to deny requests for postponements unless "good cause" is shown. Documents establishing good cause must be provided with all requests for postponements.

1. The following are examples of "good cause":
 - a. Trial date conflict: The first case set takes precedence (See Chief Judge Robert C. Murphy's Revised Administrative Order for Continuances for Conflicting Case Assignments or Legislative Duties effective May 15, 1995). **Requests for postponement must be made within 10 calendar days of notification of scheduled event.**
 - b. Death or Illness: Serious illness of, or death in the family of, a party, counsel, or necessary witness is usually a "good cause" for postponement.

- c. Conflicting vacation schedule: vacation scheduled before a hearing, motion, or trial date is set, is “good cause” for a postponement. **Requests for postponement must be made within ten (10) calendar days of notification of scheduled event.** Vacation scheduled after establishing a date is not “good cause” for postponement.
 - d. Trial/Hearing Carryover - If counsel is scheduled for a matter before this court, but becomes involved in a carryover matter in another court is usually a “good cause” for postponement.
2. The following are NOT “good cause” examples:
- a. No previous requests for postponement.
 - b. Agreed upon request for postponement.
 - c. Outstanding motions at date of hearing or trial.
 - d. Discovery is incomplete at date of hearing or trial.
 - e. Change of counsel.
 - f. Any matter known or which should have been known when the trial date became firm is not “good cause” for postponement.

Revised November 5, 2011

/s/
Lenore R. Gelfman
Howard County Administrative Judge