



**TWENTY-THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
DOUGLAS, ELBERT, and LINCOLN COUNTIES
STATE OF COLORADO**

CHIEF JUDGE ORDER 2025-27

**ASSIGNING DISTRICT COURT AND QUALIFIED COUNTY COURT JUDGES TO SIT
INTERCHANGEABLY THROUGHOUT THE TWENTY-THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
EFFECTIVE: JANUARY 14, 2025**

Chief Justice Directive 95-01, “Authority and Responsibility of Chief Judges,” delegates certain authority to the chief judges regarding the assignment of judges. Section III of CJD 95-01 provides authority to the chief judges to “assign district court judges to any district or county court within the district when necessary” and “to assign qualified county court judges to any court in the district when necessary.” Pursuant to C.R.S. § 13-6-218, “[a]ny county judge or retired county judge who has been licensed to practice law in this state for five years may be assigned by the chief justice of the supreme court, pursuant to section 5(3) of article VI of the state constitution, to perform judicial duties in any district court.”

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority granted to chief judges of the judicial districts of the State of Colorado by CJD 95-01, the undersigned, in his capacity as Chief Judge of the 23rd Judicial District, enters the following Chief Judge Order (“CJO”). It is hereby ordered that:

1. District court judges of the 23rd Judicial District are assigned to any case in any district or county court within the District when necessary.

2. Qualified¹ county court judges of the 23rd Judicial District are assigned to any county court case in any county court within the District when necessary.
3. Qualified county court judges of the 23rd Judicial District are assigned to the below listed criminal cases in any district court within the District when necessary:
 - a. All qualified county court judges are appointed to accept pleas of guilty and impose sentences or grant deferred judgments and sentences in all class four felony, class five felony, class six felony, level three drug felony, and level four drug felony cases. Additionally, qualified county court judges may accept admissions of violations of probation and impose sentences on outstanding probation revocations when the original guilty plea was to a class four felony, class five felony, class six felony, level three drug felony, level four drug felony, or any misdemeanor offense. The qualified county court judge presiding over such pleas may decline to exercise this authority in his or her sole discretion. The qualified county court judge is not authorized to accept a plea of guilty and impose sentences on any crime of violence or felony sex offense.
 - b. A qualified county court judge shall bind the matter over to the district court and then assume the role of a district court judge prior to accepting a plea of guilty or granting a deferred judgment for a felony offense listed in above paragraph a. *See People v. Vargas-Reyes*, 434 P.3d 1198, 1201 (Colo. App. 2018).
4. Other than as ordered in above paragraph 3, qualified county court judges of the 23rd Judicial District may be assigned to additional

¹ Pursuant to C.R.S. § 13-6-218, a qualified county court judge is “[a]ny county judge or retired county judge who has been licensed to practice law in this state for five years.” This statutory definition of “qualified county court judge” applies throughout this CJO 25-27.

district court cases only upon written order of the Chief Judge or the Chief Judge's designee. All district court Judges assigned dockets in the 23rd Judicial District are hereby designated the authority to assign qualified county court judges to additional district court cases via written order when necessary.

Dated this 14th day of January 2025.

BY THE COURT:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan Stuart". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ryan J. Stuart
Chief Judge, 23rd Judicial District