

SUPREME COURT OF ARKANSAS

IN RE ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
NO. 14 — ADMINISTRATIVE PLANS

Opinion Delivered October 6, 2011

PER CURIAM

Pursuant to Administrative Order No. 14, administrative plans have been submitted by the various judicial circuits. The administrative plans are approved and shall be effective January 1, 2012, unless otherwise noted.

We have reviewed plans for approximately ten years and want to highlight two things that we observed in this year's plans. A linchpin of Administrative Order No. 14 is the random assignment of unrelated cases. "[R]andom selection means that cases assigned to a particular subject-matter division shall be randomly distributed among the judges assigned to hear those types of cases." *Id.* We find that the circuits are following this tenet, but we believe that it is important that the plans explicitly state this requirement, where applicable, especially for the benefit of the attorneys, litigants, and others who rely on the plan. In our future reviews of plans, this will be a point of emphasis.

Administrative Order No. 14 was recently amended to require that recusal be addressed in the plans. We find that each circuit has complied with this new requirement; however, there is confusion or misunderstanding among some circuits as to the process when

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a circuit must request that a judge be assigned pursuant to Administrative Order No. 16. Both administrative orders specify that the letter in which the request is made is to be directed to the Chief Justice—not the Administrative Office of the Courts. When plans are submitted in the future, they should correctly state the process.