

RULE 215.4            APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT OF A JUDGE FOR ALL  
PRETRIAL MATTERS AND TRIAL

After service of the complaint, any party may file with the Prothonotary an original and copy of an Application for Appointment of a Judge for All Pretrial Matters and Trial. The Application shall identify the parties, the causes of action, the nature of any cross or counterclaims and a brief summary of the perceived discovery issues and any other pretrial or trial complexities. The Application shall aver whether all other parties concur with the request. If not all parties concur, a Rule to Show Cause shall be attached to the Application. The original Application shall be forwarded to the Court Administrator's Office for assignment to the Civil Calendar Judge who will, if deemed warranted, assign the case to a judge for all pretrial matters and trial.

A denial by the Civil Calendar Judge shall be without prejudice to refile another Application after the pleadings are closed.

COMMENT: The Court is seeing an increased number of cases that will benefit from the early involvement of a judge, such as complicated commercial and medical malpractice cases, multiple motor vehicle/fatality cases, and novel product liability cases. This rule allows counsel to bring to the attention of the Court those cases that may require early judicial attention. The assigned judge can provide sustained and consistent pretrial management and preside at trial with a thorough understanding of the case, presumably expediting its conclusion through mediation or trial.