IN THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT, SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

AMENDED SUPERVISORY ORDER	**)**	
	)	**MISC. NO. _____**
FOR MANDATORY SETTLEMENT	**)**	
	)	
CONFERENCES IN CIVIL CASES.	**)**	

The district judges of the Sixth Judicial District recognize the need to dispose of civil cases in a more timely fashion for litigants whose cases are ready for trial but cannot be reached due to the lack of resources and the need to better utilize judges who do not have a court reporter available to them to conduct a trial. The judges have concluded that mandatory settlement conferences in civil cases are an effective way to address these needs. Accordingly, the undersigned, with the unanimous consent of the judges of the Sixth Judicial District, now ORDERS:

Beginning on September 19, 2011, the Sixth Judicial District will require parties in civil and family law cases in Linn and Johnson Counties to attend a mandatory settlement conference conducted by a judge when their case can't be reached for trial and judicial resources are available. Initially, the mandated settlement conference will be limited to cases scheduled on the first day of jury trials, but may be expanded to other days if judges are available.

The protocol for the mandatory settlement conferences in civil and family law cases will be as follows:

1. All cases scheduled for trial will be tried or the parties will be required to attend a settlement conference on the day of trial unless court administration notifies the parties the day before trial that their case will be rescheduled. Thus, parties should show up on the day of trial prepared to try the case or to participate in a settlement conference.

2. All parties involved in the settlement conference must have the authority to settle or have immediate access to the person with authority to settle the case to facilitate the reaching of an agreement during the settlement conference.

3. A senior judge or district court judge will conduct the settlement conference and will take an active part in facilitating a settlement among the parties. The judge who conducts the settlement conference will not be assigned to try the case if settlement is not reached at the settlement conference.

4. The judge conducting the settlement conference will report the results of the conference to court administration. Court administration will reschedule all cases which are not settled for trial. The parties will not be required to attend another mandatory settlement conference but may choose to do so with the same or a different judge.

5. Parties who settle their cases during a settlement conference must finalize the terms of the settlement agreement and file a dismissal or stipulation and decree with the court within 30 days of the settlement conference. If parties fail to timely file a dismissal or stipulation and decree, court administration will schedule a status conference before a judge to determine when the dismissal will be filed, whether the case should be reset for trial, or whether to set a hearing on enforcement of the settlement if requested by a party.

It is the ultimate goal of the district to extend settlement conferences to all six counties in the district and to utilize them on days other than jury trial days when judges are available to conduct them.

Parties are also encouraged to request settlement conferences on their own initiatives before their trial dates. When parties have agreed to participate in a settlement conference, they should contact court administration to arrange for a settlement conference at a mutually agreeable date and time. They should not contact a judge directly. For Linn County cases and cases in Benton, Iowa, Jones and Tama County, Assistant District Court Administrator Kellee Cortez will make the arrangements for the settlement conference with an available judge. In Johnson County Case Coordinator Erica Benson will make the arrangements for the settlement conference with an available judge.

The Clerks of Court shall post the order at their offices.

Clerk to notify. E-mail copies provided to all district court judges.

Dated this 19th day of October, 2012.

/S/

PATRICK R. GRADY, CHIEF JUDGE
SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF IOWA