

The Supreme Court of South Carolina

Re: Local Rule for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit—
Automatic Reference to the Master In Equity for Certain
Foreclosure Matters

ORDER

Pursuant to Article V, § 4 of the South Carolina Constitution, the attached local rule is approved for use in the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit.

This order is effective upon signing and remains in effect unless amended or rescinded by the Chief Justice.

s/ John W. Kittredge

John W. Kittredge
Chief Justice of South Carolina

March 26, 2026
Columbia, South Carolina



State of South Carolina
The Circuit Court of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit

B. Alex Hyman
Chief Administrative Judge

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In order to assure the efficient management of the Common Pleas jury/non-jury dockets for Horry and Georgetown County, the Chief Administrative Judge has enacted the following requirements.

**AUTOMATIC REFERENCE TO THE MASTER IN EQUITY FOR CERTAIN
FORECLOSURE MATTERS**

Any action filed in the Court of Common Pleas for the foreclosure of a homeowners' association lien or a mortgage that has been pending for six months from the date of filing without an existing order of reference shall be automatically referred to the Master in Equity for further proceedings, including the entry of final judgment where appropriate.

Actions to enforce mechanics' liens are expressly exempt from the automatic reference procedure established by this Order. Such actions shall proceed in the Court of Common Pleas absent a specific order of reference issued in the case.

PROCEDURE

On or after the six-month anniversary of filing, if no order of reference has been entered in an eligible homeowners' association lien foreclosure or mortgage foreclosure action, the Clerk of Court shall transmit the case file or electronic docket access to the Office of the Master in Equity and enter on the docket a notation of automatic reference pursuant to this Administrative Order.

Upon receipt, the Master in Equity shall assume jurisdiction consistent with the scope of reference for foreclosure matters and shall schedule and conduct further proceedings as warranted by the pleadings and the status of the case.

Any party who contends that automatic reference is improper due to case classification, settlement, dismissal, or other good cause may file a motion to rescind or modify the reference, which shall be addressed by the Master in Equity or returned to the Court of Common Pleas as appropriate.

EXISTING ORDERS OF REFERENCE

Nothing in this Order alters or affects any existing order of reference entered prior to the six-month anniversary of filing. Cases already referred to the Master in Equity shall continue under the existing reference.

UPDATES TO ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

This Administrative Order will be reviewed, and amended if necessary. The Chief Administrative Judge shall meet with the Georgetown County and Horry County Bar Association Officers periodically if needed to discuss any suggestions or changes to the administrative order. Failure to comply with this Order may result in sanctions.

s/B. Alex Hyman _____
Chief Administrative Judge
Fifteenth Judicial Circuit

March 6, 2026