UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

In the matter of

DIVISION OF COURT BUSINESS

GENERAL ORDER NO. 07-03

Pursuant to the provisions of Title 28, United States Code, Section 137, it is hereby agreed and ordered by the active judges of this court that the division of this court's business among said judges shall be as hereinafter stated:

1. As used herein:

   A. Civil cases include bankruptcy appeals, habeas corpus petitions, and contested miscellaneous matters, but excludes Section 2255 motions and other similar cases described in paragraph 8.

   B. Criminal cases include appeals from Magistrate Judges and all proceedings under Rules 7, 20 and 40 FRCrP.

2. All civil cases filed in this district shall be assigned as follows:

   – All civil cases at Tacoma equally to the active district judges.

   – All civil cases at Seattle equally to the active district judges.

   – Civil cases may also be assigned to a senior district judge.

3. All criminal cases filed in this district shall be assigned as follows:

   – All criminal cases at Tacoma equally to the active district judges.

   – All criminal cases at Seattle equally to the active district judges.

   – Criminal cases may also be assigned to a senior district judge.

4. All naturalization proceedings at Tacoma, including contested petitions, shall be handled by Judge Benjamin H. Settle. Judge Richard A. Jones shall be responsible for all naturalization proceedings at Seattle, including contested petitions.

5. Judge Ricardo S. Martinez shall be responsible for the call and discharge of grand juries, the return of indictments, the review of wire tap applications, and all other matters related to the functions of the grand juries. Judge James L. Robart will serve as backup for the presentation of wire tap applications. Judge Ronald B. Leighton will handle all wire tap applications for Tacoma.

6. Judge Marsha J. Pechman shall be responsible for all issues involving the jury selection process and the call and qualification of petit jurors in Seattle. Judge Benjamin H. Settle shall be responsible for the call and qualification of petit jurors and the jury selection process in Tacoma.

7. Judge Marsha J. Pechman shall be responsible for all claims for wages and effects of deceased and deserting seamen; and unassigned ex parte matters involving requests for post judgment execution arising in Seattle. Judge James L. Robart will be responsible for all other miscellaneous matters in Seattle. Judge Ronald B. Leighton shall be responsible for all claims for wages and effects of deceased and deserting seamen; and unassigned ex parte matters in Tacoma.

8. Proceedings under Section 2255, Title 28, United States Code, shall be assigned to and handled by the Judge who imposed the sentence involved.

9. If immediate action is necessary in any case or proceeding assigned to a particular Judge and that Judge is unavailable for any reason, any other Judge may hear and dispose of the matter requiring immediate attention, but such action shall not constitute reassignment of the case or proceeding.

10. A. When civil or criminal actions involving a common question of law and fact (but not necessarily the same parties) are assigned to different Judges and it appears to any Judge of this court that there may be good reason to assign all of said actions to one Judge, such may be assigned to the Judge to whom the case bearing the earliest filing date was assigned, at his or her option.

B. Motions to consolidate civil or criminal actions for trial, or otherwise, shall be heard by the Judge to whom the case bearing the earliest filing date has been assigned, and in the event consolidation is ordered, the consolidated cases shall be heard by said Judge.

11. The reassignment of a case necessitated by the disqualification of a Judge shall be to the Judge to whom the next case filed would have been assigned; the Judge who has disqualified himself/herself shall be assigned an additional case from the assignment wheel.

12. The assignment of all civil and criminal cases as above noted is made subject to such change or changes as may be established by the Chief Judge for the purposes of equalization of case assignments to all active Judges of the district.

13. The Clerk shall refer any matter or proceeding not provided for under this division of business order to the Chief Judge for assignment or disposition.

14. Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, each of the Judges of this court shall have and perform any and all acts of authority and duty otherwise by law conferred upon him or her to hear, try and dispose of any and all of the cases, matters and business of this court when he or she consents to do so.

15. All conflicting orders concerning the division of this court's business heretofore entered are vacated by this order. This order shall be effective immediately and remain in force until rescinded.

Dated this 14th day of November, 2007.

HONORABLE ROBERT S. LASNIK
CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE