

CLERK OF THE
DISTRICT COURT
TERRY HALPIN

2025 FEB 11 A 11:17

FILED

BY _____
DEPUTY

(H)

MONTANA THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
YELLOWSTONE COUNTY, MONTANA

IN RE APPOINTMENT OF
ATTORNEY-ELECTED JUSTICES
OF PEACE, YELLOWSTONE
COUNTY, AS SPECIAL MASTERS
FOR PRESIDING OVER
ARRAINGMENT COURT

Cause No: SB 25-1

WHEREAS, the District Court Judges of the Thirteenth Judicial District, Yellowstone County, Montana, seek to address court efficiency, case processing and jail overcrowding to the benefit of all parties and participate in an Arraignment Court;


WHEREAS, the District Court Judges of the Thirteenth Judicial District, Yellowstone County, Montana, recognize the need to address all felony and lower court arraignments, initial appearances, and other substantive and procedural matters effectively, authorize the attorney-elected Justices of Peace to act as Special Masters in accordance with *Charter Order in re District Standing Master*

1 *Establishment & Procedure* effective August 28, 2015 (Cause NO. SB 2015-001),
2 as well as all subsequent order(s) allowing for the Standing Masters to conduct
3 arraignments and initial appearances for all criminal felony matters in all
4 departments in the Thirteenth Judicial District;
5

6
7 **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

- 8 1. That the attorney-elected Justices of the Peace for Yellowstone
9 County shall be sworn in as Special Masters pursuant to Mont.
10 Code Ann. §§ 33-5-122 and 3-5-113(2) for one hundred and twenty
11 (120) calendar days without compensation; and
- 12 2. When a District Court Judge is unable to conduct arraignment
13 hearings pursuant to the Arraignment Court schedule, they shall
14 notify the appointed Special Masters who will be responsible for
15 conducting said arraignment hearings as a Special Master. *See* Mont.
16 Code Ann. §3-5-113(2)(c). These duties include, but are not limited:
 - 17 a. Reviewing the information and determining if there is
18 probable cause to grant leave to file the information;
 - 19 b. Determining whether the Defendant is under any
20 disability that would prevent him/her from being
21 able to proceed, (*See* Mont. Code Ann. §46-12-
22 201(3));
 - 23 c. Advising the Defendant of charges and possible penalties;
 - 24 d. Entering Defendant's plea;
 - 25 e. Setting bond conditions;
 - f. Issuing warrants.

1 Dated: February 11, 2025

2
3 

4
5 Donald L. Harris, Chief Judge
6 Thirteenth Judicial District
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25