



1 counsel for eligible clients by informing the court. An agreement  
2 to accept cases generally or certain types of cases particularly  
3 may not prevent a panel attorney from declining an appointment in  
4 a specific case.

5 (b) In all cases where an attorney-at-law is required to be  
6 appointed for an eligible client, the appointment shall be made by  
7 the circuit judge: *Provided*, That in family court contempt cases,  
8 the family court judge shall appoint an attorney-at-law when  
9 required, in the following order of preference:

10 (1) In circuits where a public defender office is in  
11 operation, the judge shall appoint an attorney from the public  
12 defender office unless an appointment is not appropriate due to a  
13 conflict of interest or unless the public defender corporation  
14 board of directors or the public defender, with the approval of the  
15 board, has notified the court that the existing caseload cannot be  
16 increased without jeopardizing the ability of defenders to provide  
17 effective representation;

18 (2) If the public defender office is not available for  
19 appointment, the court shall appoint one or more panel attorneys  
20 from the local panel;

21 (3) If there is no local panel attorney available, the judge  
22 shall appoint one or more panel attorneys from the regional panel;

23 (4) If there is no regional panel attorney available, the

1 judge may appoint a public defender office from an adjoining  
2 circuit if such public defender office agrees to the appointment;

3 (5) If the adjoining public defender office does not accept  
4 the appointment, the judge may appoint a panel attorney from an  
5 adjoining circuit; or

6 (6) If a panel attorney from an adjoining circuit is  
7 unavailable, the judge may appoint a panel attorney from any  
8 circuit.

9 (c) In any given case, the appointing judge may alter the  
10 order in which attorneys are appointed if the case requires  
11 particular knowledge or experience on the part of the attorney to  
12 be appointed: *Provided*, That any time a court, in appointing  
13 counsel pursuant to the provisions of this section, alters the  
14 order of appointment as set forth herein, the order of appointment  
15 shall contain the court's reasons for doing so.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to clarify that an attorney from the public defender office shall be appointed by a judge in all cases where an attorney-at-law is required to be appointed for an eligible client.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.