

By Senator Brandes

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to felony settlement conferences;
3 creating s. 26.58, F.S.; authorizing circuit courts to
4 establish settlement conferences in felony matters;
5 specifying the purpose of settlement conferences;
6 requiring settlement conferences to be presided over
7 by a settlement conference judge; specifying
8 requirements for settlement conference judges;
9 prohibiting the trial judge presiding over the pending
10 matter from presiding over the felony settlement
11 conference; authorizing circuit courts using felony
12 settlement conferences to adopt procedures; providing
13 an effective date.

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15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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17 Section 1. Section 26.58, Florida Statutes, is created to
18 read:

19 26.58 Felony settlement conferences.—A circuit court may
20 establish procedures for felony settlement conferences to
21 facilitate further negotiation of settlements between parties to
22 a pending felony criminal case if such parties have previously
23 failed to reach a negotiated disposition. Such conferences must
24 be presided over by a settlement conference judge, who must
25 assist the parties in reaching a negotiated disposition over the
26 pending matter. A settlement conference judge must be a retired
27 judge or an attorney who had no involvement with the pending
28 matter outside of the felony settlement conference process. The
29 trial judge presiding over the pending matter may not preside

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30 over the felony settlement conference. A circuit court using
31 felony settlement conferences may adopt any other procedures to
32 administer this section.

33 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.