

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF FULTON COUNTY
ATLANTA JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

24-EX-000528

FILED IN OFFICE

STANDING TRIAL MANAGEMENT
ORDER FOR CIVIL CASES IN
JUDGE MELYNNE LEFRIDGE'S DIVISION

2024EX _____

MAY 13 2024

CHÉ ALEXANDER
Clerk of Superior Court

SAW

Fulton County, Georgia

The following terms govern counsel and parties connected to civil litigation before this Court and their preparation for presentation of civil trials to come before this Court.

1. **Contacting the Court**

Sarah Thomas, Senior Staff Attorney, is your principal contact on all trial matters. She can be reached at Sarah.Thomas@fultoncountyga.gov and 404-612-2805.

2. **Conflicts/Continuances**

Counsel must submit all conflicts at least two weeks before the trial calendar begins and must comply with Uniform Superior Court Rule (U.S.C.R) 17.1 in proposing a resolution. **The mere act of filing a conflict letter does not release counsel from appearing at trial, nor does it automatically result in a continuance.** Should a matter that takes precedence over the trial of a case in this Division resolve before or during the trial calendar in this Division, the case in this Division is subject to being called to trial.

The Court will grant continuances from trial calendars sparingly and only on the basis of clearly articulated exceptional circumstances. Requests to mediate cases, to engage in additional discovery or to await the resolution of some other related case will typically not result in a trial continuance being granted.

3. **Consolidated Pretrial Order**

Unless the parties otherwise agree, Plaintiff/Petitioner shall be responsible for consolidating the pre-trial order. All other parties shall provide their portions of the consolidated pre-trial

order to the Plaintiff/Petitioner no later than two business days prior to the due date. ***Failure to submit a pre-trial order will be deemed an election to proceed with a non-jury trial.***

4. **Court Reporter**

The parties must provide their own court reporter should they desire to have the trial “taken down”; the Court does not supply a court reporter for civil trials. Attorneys have an affirmative duty to notify their clients that failure to have the trial reported may have an adverse effect on any appeal.

5. **Courtroom Technology**

It is trial counsel’s duty to ascertain whether the equipment in the courtroom to be used for the trial will meet his/her needs. While the Court’s staff may opt to assist in demonstrating the equipment, neither the Court nor its staff are experts in its operation. The parties are advised to familiarize themselves with this equipment **before trial**, to avoid embarrassment and delay. Parties are also free to import their own equipment, although this will require the issuance of an order pursuant to U.S.C.R. 22. Any party seeking such an order must provide a proposed order to Ms. Thomas at least one day before trial.

6. **Voir Dire**

General *Voir Dire* questions shall be submitted to the Court by way of the Court’s Senior Staff Attorney, Sarah Thomas.

7. **Motions in limine**

Unless otherwise specified by the Court, counsel must file motions *in limine* no later than **one week before the beginning of the trial calendar** with a courtesy copy of same email to the Court’s Senior Staff Attorney Ms. Sarah Thomas at: Sarah.Thomas@fultoncountyga.gov. If a party filing a motion *in limine* believes the motion will require a hearing lasting more than an hour, the party must alert the Court, so that the Court might properly manage the prospective jurors’ schedule.

8. Depositions used at trial

If a party intends to rely on deposition testimony, that party must confer with all other parties **prior to trial** and attempt to agree on testimony to be presented. If the parties cannot agree on what portions of the deposition testimony, if any, should be excluded, the objecting party must prepare a list of page and line numbers at issue and provide it to the Court **at the time it files its motion *in limine*** – along with the relevant text from the deposition(s). Failure to comply with this requirement will constitute a waiver of objection to the challenged deposition testimony.

9. Exhibits

Before jury selection begins, each party shall provide the Court with an exhibit list. The exhibit list should include for each exhibit both the exhibit number/letter and a brief description of what the exhibit purports to be.

All exhibits and demonstrative evidence must be marked and exchanged **prior to the start of the trial**. The parties must confer before trial concerning any issues of authenticity. Counsel shall bring to the Court's attention any disagreement about the admissibility of exhibits before trial begins.

10. Witnesses

Any party intending to call witnesses (or present deposition testimony) must provide two copies of a witness list to the Court and one copy to each opposing party prior to jury selection.

If a party calls a party-opponent for cross-examination during its case-in-chief, counsel for that party-opponent (and counsel for the other party) will be permitted to examine the party-opponent immediately following the cross-examination. TGM Ashley Lakes, Inc. v Jennings, 264 Ga. App. 456, 467 (2003).

11. Interpreters

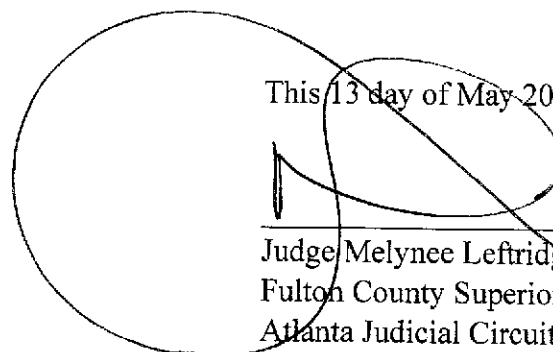
Pursuant to U.S.C.R. 7.3, any party needing an interpreter for a trial witness must notify Ms. Thomas *at least five business days before trial* that an interpreter is needed (and the specific language skills required) such that the Court might timely arrange for proper services.

12. Jury Charges/Verdict Form

Counsel must submit to the Court any proposed jury charges in accordance with deadlines set forth by the Court. In addition to e-filing proposed charges, the parties must also e-mail a copy, in Microsoft Word format, to Ms. Thomas by this deadline. All **Pattern** jury charges shall be listed *and numbered* on a single cover page identifying each charge by name and paragraph number. Counsel **SHALL NOT** include the text of such **Pattern** jury charges. Each party is limited to 15 **NON-pattern** jury charges, unless leave to file additional **NON-pattern** jury charges is sought (and obtained in writing) from the Court. All **NON-pattern** jury charges must include the text of each charge and the case/statute citation which supports the respective charge. Each **NON-pattern** jury charge shall be listed one to a page and each page must be numbered. Jury charges must be submitted to the Court's Senior Staff Attorney in **WORD FORMAT**.

The parties must also submit their proposed verdict forms to Ms. Thomas *via* e-mail in **WORD FORMAT**, prior to jury selection.

Let it be **SO ORDERED**.

This 13 day of May 2024.

5-13-2024

Judge Melynee Leftridge
Fulton County Superior Court
Atlanta Judicial Circuit