

**HONORABLE PETER M. FORMAN
ACTING SUPREME COURT JUSTICE**

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PART RULES

(Adopted January 26, 2012)
(Revised May 30, 2014)

APPEARANCES:

- (a) Pursuant to §130-2.1 of the Rules of the Chief Administrator of the Courts, the Court may impose financial sanctions and award costs and reasonable attorney's fees against any attorney who, without good cause, fails to appear at a time and place scheduled for an appearance in any action or proceeding.
- (b) Pursuant to §202.27 of the Uniform Civil Rules for the Supreme Court, upon the default of any party in appearing at a scheduled call of a calendar or at any conference, the Court may grant judgment by default against the non-appearing party.
- (c) At all scheduled appearances and conferences before the Court, only an attorney thoroughly familiar with the action and authorized to act on behalf of a party shall appear.

PRELIMINARY CONFERENCES:

- (a) A party may request a preliminary conference any time after issue has been joined. The Court will schedule a preliminary conference within forty-five (45) days after an RJI requesting a preliminary conference has been filed. The Court may also schedule a preliminary conference *sua sponte* at any time after an RJI has been filed.
- (b) Upon scheduling a preliminary conference, the Court will provide the parties with a form Stipulation and Order. The Stipulation and Order shall provide a date and time for the parties to appear at a compliance conference to ensure that discovery is proceeding as scheduled. The Stipulation and Order shall also identify the deadline selected by the Court for filing a note of issue and certificate of readiness. Counsel shall confer and fill out the Stipulation and Order to provide a timetable for discovery within the parameters set forth by the Court. The attorneys are encouraged to complete the Stipulation and to mail it back to the Court for review and approval in advance of the scheduled preliminary conference.

- (c) If counsel for all parties sign the Stipulation and return it to chambers prior to the scheduled conference, such form shall be “So Ordered” by the Court and, unless the Court orders otherwise, appearances will not be required at the preliminary conference. However, appearances are required in all matrimonial, products liability, and medical, dental and podiatric malpractice actions.
- (d) Once the stipulation has been “so ordered”, no modifications are permitted except by written order of the Court.

MATRIMONIAL ACTIONS:

- (a) Upon scheduling a preliminary conference in a matrimonial action, the Court will provide counsel for the parties with:
 - (i) a Matrimonial Order Directing Preliminary Conference; and
 - (ii) a Matrimonial Preliminary Conference Stipulation and Order.
- (b) The parties must be present for the preliminary conference.
- (c) No later than ten (10) days prior to the preliminary conference in any matrimonial action, each party shall also file the following documents with the Court:
 - 1. Retainer agreement and statement of client’s rights and responsibilities
 - 2. Statement of Net Worth
 - 3. Most recent paystub and income tax return.
- (d) At the preliminary conference, counsel shall be prepared to discuss all issues identified in the Matrimonial Order Directing Preliminary Conference. No later than ten (10) days prior to the preliminary conference, counsel shall also exchange all documents identified in that Order.
- (e) At the preliminary conference, the parties and their counsel shall fill out and execute the Matrimonial Preliminary Conference Stipulation and Order, for review and approval by the Court.
- (f) Any application regarding child support must be accompanied by a completed Child Support Worksheet.

DISCOVERY MATTERS

- (a) Counsel must confer with one another in a good faith effort to resolve all discovery disputes. 22 NYCRR 202.7
- (b) No discovery motion may be made without the permission of the Court.
- (c) It is the policy of this Court to make itself available to facilitate resolution of any discovery disputes without formal motion practice. In the event of a discovery dispute, the aggrieved party shall organize a conference call with counsel for all parties and the Court’s Principal Court Attorney. If the dispute cannot be resolved in that conference call, the parties will be provided with a prompt appearance date to address any unresolved discovery disputes with the Court.

PRETRIAL CONFERENCE:

- (a) Within 45 days of the filing of a note of issue, the Court shall schedule a pretrial conference.
- (b) At the pretrial conference, the Court shall schedule a date certain for trial of all outstanding issues. The Court will also explore referring the case to a referee, if appropriate.
- (c) At the pretrial conference, the Court shall establish a deadline for the exchange of expert witness information pursuant to CPLR §3101(d)(1) which shall, in no event, be later than ninety (90) days before trial for the party bearing the burden of proof on that issue. The opposing party must serve its disclosure within forty-five (45) days of trial. Any amended or supplemental expert disclosures shall be allowed only with leave of the Court on good cause shown. The statutory stay of disclosure upon the service of a dispositive motion (CPLR 3214[b]) shall not apply to the service of these expert responses. Unless the Court directs otherwise, a party who fails to comply with this rule will be precluded from offering the testimony and opinions of the expert for whom a timely response has not been given.
- (d) The Court will explore limitation of issues for trial, including any application that counsel anticipates making to limit or preclude testimony or other evidentiary matters. If an evidentiary issue cannot be resolved by the Court at the pretrial conference, a motion *in limine* briefing schedule shall be established. The return date of that briefing schedule, including any adjourned return dates, shall be at least thirty (30) days before the trial date. The intent of this rule is to avoid *in limine* applications on the eve of, or during, trial of a matter. Failure to bring an *in limine* application before the Court in a timely manner may result in summary denial of the application.
- (e) Counsel should be prepared to discuss settlement and should have full authority from their respective clients.

CHARGE CONFERENCE:

- (a) The Court will normally conduct a preliminary charge conference at 9:00 a.m. on the morning of the first day of jury selection. In complex matters, the Court reserves the right to schedule the preliminary conference for a date prior to trial.
- (b) At the preliminary charge conference, each attorney shall provide the Court and opposing counsel with a trial notebook containing:
 - (i) marked pleadings as required by CPLR 4012, including bill(s) of particular, and any exhibits incorporated by reference in the pleadings;
 - (ii) an exhibit list and copies of all proposed exhibits the party expects to offer at trial. Materials such as deposition transcripts that a party reasonably anticipates will only be used on cross-examination or to refresh the recollection of a witness do not need to be included;
 - (iii) a list of probable trial witnesses;
 - (iv) all relevant expert reports;

- (iv) a complete list of suggested jury charges. The charges will be drawn from the Pattern Jury Instructions (PJI). Unless counsel seeks a deviation from or an addition to the pattern charge, only the PJI numbers need be submitted. Where deviations or additions are requested, the full text of such requests must be submitted, together with any supporting legal precedents. Upon request, counsel shall promptly submit the proposed revision or addition to the pattern charge to the Court in an electronic format convertible to Word Perfect. Amendments to the suggested jury charges will be permitted at the final charge conference following the close of evidence;
 - (v) a proposed verdict sheet. The proposed verdict sheet shall be jointly prepared by counsel and presented to the Court in a typed final form for presentation to the jury. If agreement cannot be reached, then each side shall present a proposed verdict sheet. Upon request, counsel shall promptly submit the proposed verdict sheet to the Court in an electronic format convertible to Word Perfect;
 - (vi) in matrimonial actions, a statement of proposed disposition and an updated Statement of Net Worth, if circumstances have changed.
- (c) At the preliminary charge conference, counsel for all parties shall also be prepared and shall have the requisite authority:
- (i) to stipulate to undisputed facts and the admissibility of clearly admissible documents and records;
 - (ii) to discuss scheduling as well as the number of witnesses to be called at trial, and the estimated length of the trial;
 - (iii) to alert the Court as to any anticipated problems regarding the attendance at trial of parties, attorneys or essential witnesses, and any other practical problems which the Court should consider in scheduling;
 - (iv) to alert the Court to any anticipated requests for apportionment as to alleged culpable non-parties pursuant to CPLR Article 16.

MOTIONS:

- (a) MOTIONS FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT SHALL BE MADE WITHIN SIXTY (60) DAYS AFTER FILING THE NOTE OF ISSUE.
- (b) Motions are returnable on Wednesdays and Fridays. There will be no appearances unless specifically stated by the court.
- (c) Original initiating motion papers should be submitted directly to the County Clerk accompanied by an affidavit/affirmation of service and the required fees. All answering and reply papers should be submitted directly to chambers.
- (d) With the exception of e-filed motions, courtesy copies of motion papers are not necessary. For e-filed motions, a hard copy of the motion papers with exhibit tabs must be delivered to chambers by the motion return date, along with a copy of the filing confirmation notice received from the NYSCEF site.
- (e) All affirmations, affidavits and memoranda of law must contain numbered pages and exhibit tabs.

- (f) All documents required to decide the application must be attached to the motion. It is not sufficient that documents may be on file with the Clerk of the Court.
- (g) The Court does not accept sur-reply papers, whether submitted as formal motion papers or correspondence. The Court will not consider new issues that have been improperly raised for the first time in reply papers. If there has been a change in the law while the motion is pending that counsel believes will have a material impact on the Court's consideration of a fully-submitted motion, counsel may fax a two-page letter on notice to opposing counsel requesting a conference on that issue. Opposing counsel may file a response letter within three (3) business days. The Court will notify the parties whether a conference will be scheduled.
- (h) Counsel must provide an additional copy of any proposed order or judgment submitted to conform to the original. Orders and judgments must have at least one line of text on the signature page.
- (i) Motion papers, orders and judgments must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.
- (j) Motions *in limine* are also subject to the requirements of the "Pretrial Conference" section of these Part Rules.
- (k) Requests for adjournment of motions may be requested on consent of all counsel. Even if a requested adjournment is on consent of all counsel, the request must also be approved by the Court before it will be deemed granted. No adjournments will be granted for motions returnable within thirty (30) days of the trial date.
- (l) The party requesting an adjournment must fax the adjournment request to the Court, on notice to all counsel. Unless good cause is shown, no more than two adjournments of a motion date shall be permitted on any matter. A written adjournment request must:
 - (i) identify the current motion date;
 - (ii) identify the number of adjournments that have previously been requested, if any;
 - (iii) state whether the request is made on consent of all counsel; and
 - (iv) identify the proposed motion schedule.
- (m) Counsel shall immediately notify the Court whenever it becomes unnecessary to decide a motion.

TRIALS :

- (a) Once scheduled, a trial shall not be adjourned for any reason other than the actual engagement of counsel as provided for in §125.1 of the Rules of the Chief Administrator of the Courts, or upon good cause shown. Any application for an adjournment based upon actual engagement of counsel must be supported by an affirmation establishing the requisite grounds set forth in 22 NYCRR §125.1.
- (b) Counsel are directed to review the Court's "Procedures for Trial Counsel", which are incorporated by reference in these Part Rules.

VIDEOTAPING:

While the court strives for adherence to scheduled jury selection and commencement dates, the court’s trial calendar is such that exact days cannot always be guaranteed. Requests for a continuance or rescheduling due to an expert’s unavailability for testimony generally cannot be granted due to the large number of matters pending for trial. Counsel may use videotaping of experts when necessary.

EXPERT TESTIMONY PRECLUSION:

- (a) Any motion by a party to preclude or limit expert testimony under the expert disclosure part of this order or pursuant to CPLR 3101(d) must be made as soon as practicable.
- (b) Where a party seeks summary judgment based in whole or in part upon a motion to preclude or limit expert testimony, both the motion to preclude or limit and the motion for summary judgment shall have the same return date.

ADJOURNMENTS:

- (a) Requests for adjournments of a scheduled trial or hearing will be reviewed under the “Trials” section of these Part Rules.
- (b) Requests for adjournments of a motion will be reviewed under the “Motions” section of these Part Rules.
- (c) Requests for adjournment of conferences may be requested on consent of all counsel. Even if a requested adjournment is on consent of all counsel, the request must also be approved by the Court before it will be deemed granted. The party requesting an adjournment must fax the adjournment request to the Court, on notice to all counsel. A request to adjourn a conference must be faxed to this court at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled appearance. Unless good cause is shown, no more than two adjournments of a conference shall be permitted on any matter. A written adjournment request must:
 - (i) identify the current date of the scheduled conference,
 - (ii) identify the number of adjournments that have previously been requested, if any,
 - (iii) state whether the request is made on consent of all counsel, and
 - (iv) identify the proposed adjourned date.

SETTLED AND DISCONTINUED CASES:

Counsel shall immediately provide the Court with written notice whenever a case has been settled or otherwise disposed.

MENTAL HYGIENE LAW ARTICLE 81 PROCEEDINGS:

- (a) All proceedings instituted pursuant to Mental Hygiene Law §81 *et seq.* will be returnable on a Friday morning at a date and time to be determined by the Court.
- (b) All proposed orders to show cause must conform with the requirements of MHL §81.07.
- (c) Proposed orders to show cause must contain separate decretal paragraphs for service as provided in MHL §81.07(d)(1) and (2).

FIDUCIARY APPOINTMENTS:

- (a) In order to be eligible for appointments to serve as a referee, court evaluator, guardian ad litem, receiver, attorney for receiver or attorney for an Alleged Incompetent Person (AIP), counsel must appear on the Part 36 list promulgated by the Office of Court Administration.
- (b) In order to be eligible for appointment to serve as an attorney for a child, counsel must be a certified member of the Dutchess County Attorneys for Children Panel.
- (c) Court evaluators and appointed attorneys must complete and file each of the following forms:
 - 1. Notice of Appointment (UCS-830.1)
 - 2. Statement of Approval of Compensation (UCS-830)
 - 3. Certification of Compliance (UCS-830.3)
 - 4. Affirmation of legal services.