

HON. MICHAEL G. HAYES
Surrogate, Dutchess County, Acting Justice of the Supreme Court
& Acting County Court Judge

INDIVIDUAL PART RULES
(Updated as of April 12, 2024)

Court Information:

Address:	10 Market Street Poughkeepsie, New York 12601
Telephone: Chambers:	(845) 431-1774
Fax: Chambers:	(845) 483-8469

Court Staff:

Eric S. Conroy, Esq., Principal Court Attorney
Nancy S. Tang, Judge's Secretary
Angela P. Kenner, Supreme Court Part Clerk
Erica DeTraglia, Esq., Surrogate's Court Chief Clerk
Betty Litt, Surrogate's Court Deputy Chief Clerk

Part 207 of the Uniform Rules: Parties are directed to familiarize themselves with the Uniform Rules for Surrogate's Court, found in Part 207 of the Uniform Rules for the New York State Trial Courts. The Part 207 Rules shall apply to the Dutchess County Surrogate's Court unless explicitly directed otherwise in these Part Rules.

I. COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE COURT

- A. **Correspondence** - Correspondence to the Court and Clerk shall be copied to all adversaries and must include the File/Index Number. Correspondence between the parties shall not be copied to the Court unless otherwise directed, or where there is some specific judicial purpose to be served by transmitting copies to the Court.
- B. **Telephone Calls** - Telephone calls to Court staff should be limited to situations requiring immediate attention that cannot otherwise be attained by correspondence.
- C. **Faxes** - The Court will not accept faxed copies of papers that must otherwise be filed in original form (such as objections, petitions, proofs of service, motions, opposition to motions, replies, proposed Orders, and documents to be "So Ordered"). All faxes must be faxed simultaneously to all other parties. **Faxed correspondence shall not exceed three (3) pages in length.**
- D. **Ex Parte Communications** - *Ex parte* communications are prohibited except when an Order to Show Cause is submitted for signature, or with the prior consent of all parties during settlement negotiations, or when authorized by statute.

II. ADJOURNMENTS

- A. Adjournment of Conferences - Adjournment of conferences may be requested on consent of all parties. Even if a requested adjournment is on consent, the request must also be approved by the Court before it will be deemed granted. The party requesting an adjournment must deliver the adjournment request to the Court, on notice to all parties. A request to adjourn a conference should be delivered 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 request must:
- (1) identify the current date of the scheduled conference;
 - (2) identify the number of adjournments that have previously been requested, if any;
 - (3) state whether the request is made on consent of all counsel; and,
 - (4) identify the proposed adjourned date.
- B. Adjournment of Motion Return Dates
- (1) On consent: The party seeking the adjournment of a motion with the consent of the other parties shall notify the Court in writing of the agreed upon adjournment date at least 24 hours prior to the return date. Even if a requested adjournment is on consent of all parties, the request must also be approved by the Court before it will be deemed granted.
 - (2) Without consent: A party requesting an adjournment without consent of the other parties shall submit a letter to the Court at least 48 hours prior to the return date providing good cause as to why the adjournment should be granted. Parties opposing the request may submit a brief response setting forth their reasons for objecting.
- C. Adjournments of Appearances in Cases with Fully Submitted Motions - The filing of a motion does not automatically relieve any party from attending a previously scheduled appearance, regardless of the nature of the relief sought in the motion.

III. E-FILING RULES AND PROTOCOL – SUPREME COURT

- A. E-Filing Protocols: Counsel and self-represented litigants shall familiarize themselves with the statewide E-Filing Rules (§§ 202.5-b and 202.5bb of the Uniform Rules for the New York State Trial Courts, available at www.nycourts.gov/efile) and the Joint Protocols for New York State Courts e-filing for cases filed in Dutchess County available at:

https://www.nycourts.gov/courts/9jd/dutchess/dutchess_e-file/dutchessprotocols.pdf.

General questions about e-filing should be addressed to the E-Filing Resource Center at (646) 386-3033 or efile@nycourts.gov. Specific questions about local procedures should be addressed to either the Supreme Court Chief Clerk at (845) 431-1720, or the Surrogate's Court Chief Clerk at (845) 431-1770 .

All documents in mandatory e-filed cases, except documents subject to the opt-out provision of § 202.5-bb of the Uniform Rules for the New York State Trial Courts, or documents subject to e-filing in which consent is being withheld, are to be filed through the New York State Courts E-Filing System (NYSCEF).

- B. Working Copies: Counsel and self-represented litigants should provide working copies of all e-filed legal papers which require judicial action (e.g., Orders to Show Cause, motions, notices of settlement, ex parte applications and proposed orders). The working copy of a motion should include all documents filed in support of the motion, including exhibits with external tabs.

All working copies must include a copy of the NYSCEF Confirmation Notice, and must comply with all requirements of the E-Filing Protocols. The Confirmation Notice is generated when the case is e-filed and is available in the specific case file at www.nycourts.gov/efile.

All working copies shall be submitted to the Chambers within 24 hours of e-filing.

- C. Hard Copy Submissions: When a non-exempt party or attorney in an e-file case seeks to file a document by hard copy submission only, that hard copy filing will be rejected unless it bears the Notice of Hard Copy Submission - E-Filed Case required by Uniform Rule § 202.5-b(d)(1)(iv). The form is available at www.nycourts.gov/efile

IV. E-FILING RULES AND PROTOCOL – SURROGATE’S COURT

- A. E-filing is mandatory in all administration, probate, and related proceedings (such as will construction, kinship, removal, and accountings). E-filing is also mandatory for voluntary (small estate) administrations.
- B. E-filing is discretionary in all guardianship [SCPA Article 17 and Article 17-A], adoption and *inter vivos* trust proceedings. The Court recognizes that NYCSEF currently offers limited drop-down options for *inter vivos* trust proceedings, and that e-filing may not be an appropriate option in potentially complex *inter vivos* trust proceedings.
- C. The Dutchess County Surrogate’s Court’s E-Filing protocol can be found at: https://nycourts.gov/LegacyPDFS/courts/9jd/efile/surrogate/dutchess_surr_protocol.pdf

V. 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. 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.

- C. Pursuant to §202.27 of the Uniform Civil Rules, upon the default of any party in appearing at a scheduled call of a calendar or at any conference in Supreme Court, the Court may grant judgment by default against the non-appearing party.

VI. PRELIMINARY CONFERENCES – SUPREME COURT

- 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 file it with 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 at the preliminary conference for all contested matrimonial actions.
- D. Once the stipulation has been “so ordered”, no modifications are permitted except by written order of the Court.

VII. COMPLIANCE CONFERENCE – SUPREME COURT

The preliminary conference order shall provide a date and time for the parties to appear at a compliance conference.

- (a) At the compliance conference, the Court will ensure that discovery is proceeding as scheduled.
- (b) Unless a note of issue has been earlier filed, the Court shall direct a date as the deadline for filing a note of issue and certificate of readiness.

VIII. SURROGATE COURT PROCEEDINGS

- A. Accounting Proceedings - Service of Citation – Unless service is by publication, whenever a citation is served in an Accounting Proceeding, a copy of the accounting shall be served on all parties with the Citation. The Citation and affidavit of service shall recite that a copy of the accounting was served with the Citation. These heightened service requirements shall control over Section 207.40(e) of the Uniform Rules for the Surrogate’s Court.

- B. Probate Proceedings - Confidential Relationships - In a probate proceeding, if a beneficiary, attorney or draftsman has a fiduciary or confidential relationship with the testator, an affidavit explaining the circumstances surrounding the making of the bequest and the drafting of the Will must be filed with the petition.
- C. Objections to Probate – If SCPA §1404 discovery is requested, the Court will sign a written scheduling Order setting firm dates for the completion of document discovery and witness examinations, and setting a date for the filing of objections. All court-ordered 1404 discovery shall be completed before objections are filed.
- D. Objections to Letters of Administration - All discovery (document exchange and examination of witnesses) shall be completed before objections may be filed to the appointment of a fiduciary pursuant to SCPA §709, unless granted prior approval by the Court.

IX. 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.

X. 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.
- D. Expert disclosure. The exchange of expert witness information pursuant to CPLR §3101(d)(1) shall be no 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.

XI. 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. 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.
- D. Counsel should be prepared to discuss settlement and should have full authority from their respective clients.

XII. CHARGE CONFERENCE

- A. The Court will conduct a preliminary charge conference at 9:00 a.m. on the morning of the first day of jury selection, or at 9:30 a.m. on the first day of a non-jury trial. In complex matters, the Court reserves the right to schedule the preliminary charge 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) in a jury trial, 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. Amendments to the suggested jury charges will be permitted at the final charge conference following the close of evidence;

(v) in a jury trial, 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;

(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.

XIII. MOTIONS AND ORDERS TO SHOW CAUSE

A. Return Dates - Motions made in the Surrogate's Court by Notice of Motion shall be made returnable on Thursday. Motions made in the Supreme Court are returnable on any day of the week. Return dates for Orders to Show Cause shall be determined by the Court.

B. Summary Judgment Motions in Supreme Court Matters: MOTIONS FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT SHALL BE MADE WITHIN NINETY (90) DAYS AFTER FILING THE NOTE OF ISSUE.

C. Format – Courtesy copy of all e-filed motion papers are required. All affirmations, affidavits and memoranda of law must contain numbered pages and exhibit tabs. Courtesy copies should be delivered to chambers by the motion return date, along with a copy of the filing confirmation notice received by the NYSCEF site.

- D. Withdrawal of Motions - If a matter has been resolved and the parties no longer require a decision from the Court, counsel are directed to immediately notify the Court in writing.
- E. Motions Seeking Temporary Injunctive Relief - Any application for temporary injunctive relief shall strictly comply with the notice provisions of Uniform Rule 202.8-e. As proof of that compliance, the application must be supported by an affirmation or affidavit demonstrating: (i) that a good faith effort has been made to notify the party against whom the TRO is sought of the time, date and place that the application will be made in a manner sufficient to permit the party an opportunity to appear in response to the application, or (ii) that there will be significant prejudice to the party seeking the TRO by the giving of the notice.
- F. Proposed Orders, Judgments and Findings of Fact - All proposed orders, judgments and findings of facts are to be submitted with notice of settlement on notice of at least 7 days.
- G. The Court does not accept sur-reply papers, whether presented 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 file a two-page letter on notice to opposing counsel requesting a conference on that issue. Opposing counsel may file a response letter within two (2) business days. The Court will notify the parties whether a conference will be scheduled.
- H. Motions *in Limine*. The return date of any motion *in limine*, 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, the 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.
- I. 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 make the adjournment request 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.

XIV. TRIALS

- A. Once scheduled, a trial shall not be adjourned for any reason other than the actual engagement of counsel as provided by Uniform Rule §125.1, 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 Uniform Rule §125.1.
- B. **Identification of Trial Counsel** - If a matter is to be tried by an attorney other than the attorney of record, trial counsel shall be identified in writing, filed with the Court on notice to all parties, no later than 15 days prior to the date of trial as required by Uniform Rule §202.31.
- D. **Non-Jury Trial** - Unless the Court directs otherwise, the parties shall obtain (at their expense) a copy of the trial transcript. Following the close of evidence and receipt of the trial transcript, the Court may direct each party to submit proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law. The Court may also permit each party to submit a post-trial brief with respect to the issues raised at the trial.

XV. VIDEOTAPING

- A. 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.

XVI. 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.

XVII. SETTLED AND DISCONTINUED CASES

- A. The parties shall immediately provide the Court with written notice whenever a case has been settled or otherwise disposed.

XVIII. MENTAL HYGIENE LAW ARTICLE 81 PROCEEDINGS

- A. All proceedings instituted pursuant to Mental Hygiene Law Article 81 will be returnable 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).

D. Parties are encouraged to use the form Order to Show Cause, Petition, Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Judgment that are available using the following links:

http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/9jd/forms_supreme.shtml

http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/9jd/forms/art_81_fof_conclusions_of_law_judgment-mgh.pdf

http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/9jd/forms/article_81_otsc-mgh.pdf

Hard copy versions of these forms may also be picked up at the Dutchess County Courthouse, either from chambers on the first floor or the Supreme Court Chief Clerk's Office on the third floor.

XIX. 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 incapacitated 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 compete and file each of the following forms:

(1) Notice of Appointment (UCS-872)

(2) Statement of Approval of Compensation (UCS-875)[generated by the Court]

(3) Certificate of Compliance (UCS-872)

D. For Part 36 appointment paperwork, please contact the appropriate Fiduciary Clerk, as follows:

Supreme Court: Michael Thompson, Supreme Court Chief Clerk

Surrogate's Court: Erica DeTraglia, Surrogate's Court Chief Clerk

E. In Surrogate's Court, all Part 36 paperwork will be prepared by the Fiduciary Clerk.