

# **The Honorable Mark A. Kearney**

Judge, United States District Court  
Room 5118, U.S. Courthouse  
601 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106  
267-299-7680  
Fax: 267-299-5023

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (January 2015)**

These Policies and Procedures (“Policies”) apply to all matters unless ordered otherwise.

### **I. Communicating with the Court**

#### **A. Correspondence with the Court in limited circumstances is permitted.**

Other than as listed below or otherwise directed by the Judge, request for the Court’s direction must be made through a pleading, motion, application, or similar filing with service upon all parties under the Federal and Local Rules of Civil and Criminal Procedure.

Counsel shall not send copies of correspondence among themselves to the Court. Correspondence to chambers is permitted only in the following instances:

- (1) counsel are specifically requested by the Court to communicate information by letter;
- (2) an uncontested request for an extension of the Rule 16 Scheduling Order deadlines not affecting the dates for filing summary judgment motions;
- (3) a scheduling request based on an unanticipated and irreversible personal matter concerning counsel, a party, a witness, or counsel’s immediate family; or,
- (4) a case has been settled.

This limited correspondence must include a specific and candid description of the situation requiring the Court’s attention, the position of the opposing party, and the specific relief sought by way of an attached proposed Order. Correspondence may be sent by mail to the chambers’ address above.

#### **B. Telephone inquiries and conferences will occur as warranted.**

Judge Kearney may hold telephone conferences. The Court will notify counsel of the date and time for the telephone conference. In a civil case, counsel for the plaintiff or moving party initiates the telephone conference and contacts Judge Kearney through his Civil Deputy after all parties are on the call. In a criminal case, the United States Attorney’s Office will be responsible for initiating the call.

These policies are intended to answer a wide variety of questions. To the extent counsel or a party has a question not addressed, telephone inquiries should be directed as appropriate to either:

Civil Deputy: **Pam Hyland - 267-299-7681**

For matters relating to civil scheduling, case management, and general procedures.

Courtroom Deputy: **Ulrike Hevener - 267-299-7688**

For matters regarding all service issues, all criminal cases, courtroom procedures, trial setup, and transcripts.

**C. No telephone communications from pro se parties**

Telephone and fax communications by a pro se party are prohibited unless approved by Judge Kearney beforehand and an ESR/Court Reporter is present. Pro se parties may not appear for hearings before the court by telephone.

**D. No communications with law clerks.**

Counsel and parties are not permitted to communicate with the Judge's law clerks unless specifically directed by the Judge on a particular issue.

**E. Limited fax communications.**

Parties may fax letters of no more than two (2) pages to address an issue raised in Section IA above. No other papers may be faxed to chambers. Abuse of this convenience may result in offending counsel or parties being denied this future convenience.

**F. Electronic Case Filing ("ECF") under Rule 5.1.2 is required of all counsel.**

Counsel shall file all papers required to be filed under the Federal or Local Rules of Civil and Criminal Procedure electronically through ECF.

**G. Courtesy electronic copies shall be provided only as directed.**

Courtesy copies shall not be provided to chambers unless required under these Policies or otherwise requested by chambers. All required courtesy copies must be delivered electronically on a CD or thumb drive. Pre-Sentence Investigation Reports and Sentencing Memoranda shall also be delivered to chambers on a CD or thumb drive.

**II. Initial Steps in Civil Matters**

**A. Rule 16 Conference and Rule 26(f) meeting are substantive obligations.**

The initial pretrial conference (*see* Fed. R. Civ. P. 16 and Local Rule 16.1) will be scheduled shortly after a defendant has entered an appearance.

**1. Rule 26(f) Meeting.**

The Court relies on counsel's good faith compliance in all respects with Rule 26(f). Parties should complete the Rule 26(f) meeting as soon as possible. This meeting is a

meaningful and substantive discussion to address prompt settlement positions, formulate the proposed discovery plan and discuss the parties' factual and legal positions.

Pending motions will not excuse the requirements of holding the meeting and submitting the plan. Parties who do not comply will have no input at the initial pretrial conference.

At least five (5) business days before the initial pretrial conference, counsel must file a comprehensive joint report of the Rule 26(f) meeting in the form provided at [www.paed.uscourts.gov](http://www.paed.uscourts.gov)

## **2. Rule 16 Conference.**

The initial pretrial conference is a substantive discussion addressing, at a minimum: items listed in Fed.R.Civ.P. 16 and Local Rule 16.1(b); completion of self-executing disclosures under Fed.R.Civ.P. 26(a); status of pending discovery; the preservation, production and cost allocation of electronically stored information; status of settlement demands and offers and proposed timing of mediation; and, specific facts regarding liability, damages and relief sought. Judge Kearney will issue a Scheduling Order at, or shortly after, the conclusion of the initial pretrial conference.

Absent compelling grounds provided in writing before the conference, counsel attending the initial pretrial conference shall be designated as lead trial counsel. Lead trial counsel shall be prepared to discuss settlement at the initial pretrial conference, including having full authority from clients on settlement. Counsel may not claim lack of authority to discuss settlement with opposing counsel and the Court unless the client or carrier representative with full authority is present at the initial pretrial conference.

There will be no Rule 16 conference in arbitration or social security cases. These will be governed by separate scheduling orders set by the Clerk of Court.

### **B. Threshold motions**

Motions to dismiss, transfer, add parties, and other threshold motions should be filed before the initial pretrial conference. Lead trial counsel will discuss the merits of any pending or anticipated threshold motions at the initial pretrial conference, even if not fully briefed at that time.

### **C. Prompt resolution of matters through ADR and settlement conferences.**

To the extent counsel cannot resolve the case before or during the initial pretrial conference, Judge Kearney will direct all parties and client representatives with full settlement authority to meet as soon as possible for a settlement conference with Magistrate Judge Heffley. Counsel must comply with Magistrate Judge Heffley's requirements regarding meaningful settlement efforts.

Counsel are reminded that meaningful participation in an early alternative dispute resolution ("ADR") effort is strongly encouraged and will be discussed *passim*, including in the initial pretrial conference. Counsel, familiar with the Court's mediation program and Local Rule 53.3, will have explored ADR feasibility, including court-annexed mediation, not only between themselves but with their clients as well. As shown, the specific reason for any decision not to participate in a form of early ADR shall be specifically detailed in the Rule 26(f) report.

#### **D. Pro Hac Vice Motions**

Motions for *pro hac vice* admission should be made as soon as possible and must be filed by an attorney: (1) admitted to practice and in good standing before this Court; (2) whose appearance has been entered in the case in which the motion is made; and, (3) reciting the positions of all counsel regarding the motion.

The motion must also be accompanied by the affidavit of each attorney seeking *pro hac vice* admission swearing:

- i. Year and jurisdiction of each bar admission:
- ii. Status of the attorney's admission(s), i.e., active or inactive, in good standing, etc.;
- iii. Whether the attorney has ever been suspended from the practice of law in any jurisdiction or received any public reprimand by the highest disciplinary authority of any bar in which the attorney has been a member;
- iv. That the affiant/declarant (a) has in fact read the most recent edition of the Pennsylvania Rules of Professional Conduct and the Local Rules of this Court and (b) agrees to be bound by both sets of Rules for the duration of the case for which *pro hac vice* admission is sought; and
- v. That, if granted *pro hac vice* status, the affiant/declarant will in good faith continue to advise counsel who has moved for the *pro hac vice* admission of the current status of the case for which *pro hac vice* status has been granted and of all material developments therein.

Thoughtful opposition to a motion for *pro hac vice* must be filed within three (3) business days of the filing. The admission of counsel *pro hac vice* does not relieve associate local counsel and the attorney moving the admission of responsibility for counsel admitted *pro hac vice*.

#### **E. Continuances and Extensions**

Unless there is demonstrated good cause in writing to justify a change, the parties are expected to adhere to the dates contained in the Scheduling Order. The Court may grant a continuance or extension based on a stipulation of all parties if the continuance or extension does not affect the dispositive motions deadline. If a continuance or extension will affect the dispositive motion or trial date, counsel shall file a written motion which sets forth the basis for the continuance or extension and detail the positions of other parties with a proposed order. A request for an extension or continuance of the trial date or the deadline for filing dispositive motions will not be granted absent extraordinary circumstances.

### **III. Discovery**

The Federal and Local Rules of Civil Procedure (“Rules”) call for voluntary, cooperative discovery in a timely manner. The information required to be disclosed pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(a) is required to be exchanged no later than seven (7) days after the date of the Order scheduling the Rule 16 conference. Counsel is expected to act in accordance with both the letter and the spirit of the Rules.

If they have not done so yet, the parties are required to commence core party written discovery immediately upon receipt of notice of the date of the Rule 16 conference. Core party written discovery includes, among other efforts: document requests; admissions; and interrogatories. It does not include third party discovery or depositions before the initial scheduling conference unless specifically ordered for good cause. Counsel will be required to report on the progress of this core party written discovery at the initial pretrial conference.

It is expected that the parties will reach an agreement on conducting electronic discovery. Absent an agreement before the initial pretrial conference, the Court will enter an order incorporating default standards. The default order should be reviewed at [www.paed.uscourts.gov](http://www.paed.uscourts.gov).

#### **A. Discovery dispute resolution**

Counsel will proceed in discovery in a cooperative manner consistent with their professional obligations. If a discovery dispute cannot be resolved, Judge Kearney expects that the Local Rule 26.1(f) certification will be substantive, specific and meaningful. For example, it is not sufficient to certify that “counsel can’t reach opposing counsel”; “reasonable efforts have been made but were unsuccessful”; “counsel have conferred in good faith”; “counsel repeatedly conferred with opposing counsel” or similar generalities. *See, e.g., Naviant Marketing Solutions, Inc. v. Larry Tucker, Inc.*, 339 F.3d 180, 186 (3d Cir. 2003); *Evans v. American Honda Motors Co., Inc.*, 2003 WL 22722417 at \*1-2 (E.D. Pa. Nov. 26, 2003).

Limited discovery disputes to enforce compliance resolved by short motion. Judge Kearney will promptly consider a short motion of three (3) pages or less, double-spaced twelve (12)-point font, with an attached proposed order seeking to enforce timely and full compliance with discovery obligations under the Federal and Local Rules and Policies. This limited purpose motion may result in a prompt telephone conference with the Judge to address compliance and the entry of an Order. The Judge may resolve the issue before a response, unless opposing counsel immediately advises by letter that they will file a response within one (1) business day of filing the motions.

Discovery motion practice. Every other discovery motion must be filed and served with citations to authority and may not exceed seven (7) pages, double-spaced twelve (12)-point font, along with a proposed order. A response may be filed within seven (7) days, also limited to seven (7) pages, double-spaced twelve (12)-point font. Counsel seeking to file replies or longer motions or responses must write to the Judge (Section IA above) and obtain leave to do so before filing. No memorandum or reply should be filed without leave of court. The motion does not need to be in a numbered paragraph format.

Deposition conduct. Where warranted, Judge Kearney will allow telephone conferences to resolve disputes during depositions where the deposition would otherwise have to be adjourned. Stopping or “walking out” of a deposition is strongly disfavored, and counsel should not do so before seeking direction from the Court, mindful of the time and expense incurred by all parties that should not be lost due to a discovery dispute that experienced counsel in this District Court can usually resolve without loss of time or Court direction.

#### **B. Confidentiality Agreements**

The Court will only approve confidentiality or sealing orders for good cause shown. *See Pansy v. Borough of Stroudsburg*, 23 F.3d 772 (3rd Cir. 1994). Any party seeking to file documents under seal must present the motion (under Section IV below) as narrowly as possible, and must articulate good cause.

All such orders must contain the following language (or language substantially similar): “The Court retains the right to allow, *sua sponte* or upon motion, disclosure of any subject covered by this [stipulation/order] or to modify this [stipulation/order] at any time in the interest of justice.”

#### **IV. Motion practice for non-discovery issues.**

##### **A. Proposed Orders and Motions**

All grounds for relief must be set forth in a single, comprehensive motion, accompanied by a proposed order and memorandum. The proposed order should specifically refer to the motion, docket filing motion number and specific basis for requested relief, similar to a Summary of Argument. Parties responding to a motion must file an opposition attaching a proposed order that specifically refers to the motion, docket filing number and specific basis for denying the requested relief, similar to a Summary of Argument.

##### **B. Briefs/Legal Memoranda**

Mindful that “less is often more,” any brief or memorandum filed in support of, or in opposition to, a motion is limited to twenty (20) pages of double-spaced twelve (12) point font. Reply briefs, without a proposed order, are permitted if filed and served within seven (7) days of the date that a non-moving party files its Opposition, may not exceed ten (10) pages, and must be limited to issues newly raised in the Opposition. Briefs in excess of these page limits and sur-reply briefs are not permitted unless leave is granted upon motion.

#### **V. Additional Protocol for Rule 56 motions**

##### **A. Separate Statements of Material Facts**

Any motion filed pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 56 shall include a separately filed Statement of Undisputed Material Facts which details, in numbered paragraphs, the material facts that the moving party contends are undisputed and entitle the movant to judgment as a matter of law. Only those facts which bear on dispositive material issues shall be included in the Statement of Undisputed Facts. Opposition to a motion for summary judgment shall include a separate filing of a statement of material facts, responding to the numbered paragraphs in the movant’s Statement of Undisputed Facts, which the respondent contends present genuine issues for trial. The responding party also shall set forth, in separate numbered paragraphs, any additional facts which the respondent contends preclude summary judgment.

Statements of material facts in support of or in opposition to a motion for summary judgment shall include specific and not general references to the parts of the record that support each of the statements. Each stated fact shall cite the source relied upon, including the page of any document or line and page number of any deposition to which reference is made.

##### **B. Memoranda**

Memoranda in support of, or opposing, a Rule 56 motion is limited to twenty-five (25) pages, double-spaced, twelve (12) point font.

### **C. Appendix**

Upon filing, the movant(s) shall also file a separate appendix of all exhibits or its affidavits which may relate to the issues raised in the motion. On all cross-motions under Rule 56, the cross-movants must consult before filing to prepare a joint appendix. All pages of the appendix shall be consecutively “Bates stamped” and referenced in the motions and briefs by the Bates number assigned each page. The appendix shall include a table of contents. The movant shall make every effort to include all necessary exhibits in the appendix, anticipating the respondent’s necessary citations to the fullest good faith extent possible. Should it become necessary for the non-moving party to submit affidavits or additional exhibits, however, it may do so in a respondent’s appendix filed with its Opposition. Any additions to the movant’s appendix shall also be consecutively Bates-stamped, beginning at the page number where the movant’s appendix ended, and shall include a table of contents. Judge Kearney will not consider material not included in the appendix.

Failure of the movant to follow this procedure in all respects may result in the denial of the motion without prejudice to be renewed at trial. Respondent’s failure to comply in all respects may result in the Court’s considering the motion as uncontested.

## **VI. Final Pretrial Proceedings**

**A. Pretrial memoranda.** Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, the parties shall prepare pretrial memoranda in accordance with Local Rule of Civil Procedure 16.1(c), and also include:

- (1) All stipulations of counsel.
- (2) Deposition testimony (including videotaped deposition testimony) that the party intends to offer during its case-in-chief. The statement should include citations to the page and line number and the opposing party's counter-designations.
- (3) The substance of the testimony of each witness. Identifying a witness as giving testimony on liability and/or damages is insufficient.
- (4) The parties shall provide the Court with one copy of each exhibit and two copies of a schedule of exhibits which shall describe each exhibit. Exhibits shall be arranged and tabbed in a three-ring binder for the Court provided to chambers at the time of filing.

**B. Motions *in limine*.** It is expected that counsel attempted to resolve all objections to exhibits and testimony prior to the final pretrial conference, leaving for the Court only those objections the parties could not resolve. To the extent there are unresolved evidentiary issues, counsel should anticipate that the Scheduling Order will require that motions *in limine* be filed within seven (7) days of the contemporaneous exchange of pretrial memoranda, with a reply due before the pretrial conference. Hearings challenging expert witness competency or necessity will be scheduled before the final pretrial conference.

**C. Final pretrial conference.** Sidebar conferences and objections to evidence which should have been anticipated will be strongly discouraged at trial. Consequently, one of the goals

of the final pretrial conference, which counsel can expect to last two to four hours, is to resolve all evidentiary issues to avoid delay at trial and to provide counsel with advance notice of evidentiary requirements. Therefore, counsel should expect rulings on all outstanding motions at, or shortly after, the final pretrial conference.

## **VII. Injunctions**

Upon notice of a request for emergency relief, Judge Kearney's practice is to hold a prompt conference with counsel before scheduling hearings for temporary restraining orders and preliminary and permanent injunctions. Judge Kearney usually handles filed motions for expedited discovery by conference when scheduling the hearing.

## **VIII. Arbitration**

Judge Kearney will not hold an initial pretrial conference or issue a Scheduling Order in arbitration track cases. The parties are expected to complete all discovery prior to the date of the arbitration hearing. Upon demand for trial *de novo* from an arbitration award, the Court will issue a Scheduling Order setting the date for trial at the earliest date available to the Court. Neither discovery nor dispositive motions will be allowed after the arbitration hearing absent compelling cause.

## **IX. Trial Procedure**

### **A. Scheduling**

The date for final pretrial memoranda, trial motions, final pretrial conference and trial will be determined at the initial pretrial conference. Once a case is listed for trial, counsel, parties, and witnesses are attached to start trial on the date noted. Counsel must advise the Court of any irreversible scheduling conflicts as soon as possible, and no later than the close of discovery.

### **B. Courtroom Technology**

Parties are responsible for arranging and providing all electronic technology they wish to use during trial. Any party that plans to use such equipment must submit a letter to chambers, as early as possible but no later than one (1) week before trial, explaining what equipment it will be using. If a party would like to test electronic equipment in the courtroom prior to trial, it should contact Courtroom Deputy Ulrike Hevener (267-299-7688) at least two weeks before trial to arrange a time.

### **C. Cases Involving Out-Of-Town Parties or Witnesses**

Judge Kearney schedules the trial of cases involving out-of-town counsel, parties, or witnesses in the same manner as all other cases. Counsel is responsible for the scheduling of witnesses.

### **D. Jury Selection in Civil Cases**

After Judge Kearney's brief introduction to the general nature of the case and standard disqualification questions (as previously reviewed with counsel), the attorneys will conduct *voir dire*. Judge Kearney will then entertain cause and hardship strikes.



Counsel will then exercise peremptory challenges by alternate strikes, plaintiff first, until each side has stricken three (3) potential jurors or opts not to use any or all of their strikes.

After consultation with counsel based on length of trial, Judge Kearney will typically seat eight (8) jurors in a civil case.

#### **E. Courtroom Protocol**

The examination of witnesses must be conducted from the lectern or from counsel table. Counsel need not ask the Court for permission before approaching witnesses, as warranted. In addition, counsel will direct all comments to the Court or to the witness under examination and not to other counsel or to the jury.

#### **F. Note-taking by Jurors during the Evidence**

Judge Kearney may permit jurors to take notes during the submission of evidence.

#### **G. Trial Briefs**

Parties should submit a trial brief only if requested by the Court.

#### **H. Examination of Witnesses Out of Sequence**

The Court will permit counsel to examine his/her own witnesses out of turn for the convenience of a witness.

#### **I. Opening Statements and Summations**

Mindful that “less is often more,” Judge Kearney does not generally impose time limits less than twenty (20) minutes on opening statements or closing arguments.

#### **J. Examination of Witnesses or Argument**

Only one attorney for each side may examine the same witness or address the jury during the opening statement or summation.

#### **K. Videotaped Testimony**

Videotaped testimony should begin with the witness being sworn. After the Court rules on any objections at the pretrial conference, counsel must edit the tapes according to the Court’s final pretrial order before offering the videotaped testimony at trial.

#### **L. Preparation and Admission of Exhibits**

The parties will prepare one joint exhibit book with all exhibits that counsel may use at trial based on the rulings at the pretrial conference along with a schedule of exhibits in the form attached hereto. Plaintiff’s exhibits will begin the sequence, followed by defendants’ exhibits, and then third party exhibits. Counsel should provide a copy of the joint exhibit book to the Court at *voir dire*. The cost of producing the exhibit book(s) will be equally shared per capita upon all parties, subject to modification if abused.

Motions to admit exhibits will be considered at the close of a party’s case-in-chief and not before. As the evidentiary issues were addressed in the final pretrial conference, the parties should expect this short motion to be promptly resolved.

#### **M. Sidebar or the Evidentiary Conference**

Counsel must confer privately to resolve any unanticipated evidentiary issues that may arise during trial. If unsuccessful in resolving the issues, counsel should only bring a matter to the Courtroom Deputy's attention at the beginning of the day or during an appropriate break when the jury is not present. All evidentiary conferences in the courtroom are on the record.

**N. Directed Verdict Motions**

Motions for judgment as a matter of law in jury trials and motions for an involuntary dismissal in non-jury trials must be filed and served.

**O. Proposed Jury Instructions and Verdict Forms**

The Scheduling Order will note the date on which the parties shall file JOINT proposed jury instructions on substantive issues unique to your matter and JOINT proposed verdict forms or special interrogatories to the jury. Each party shall also file proposed jury instructions, verdict forms or special interrogatories on those issues not agreed upon by the parties in their joint submission.

In submitting proposed points for charge, the parties are directed to the Model Civil Jury Instructions (available at <http://www.ca3.uscourts.gov/model-jury-instructions>). Where applicable, the Court will use the Model Instructions to instruct the jury. In submitting points for charge based on the Model Instructions, however, the parties should tailor the proposed instructions to the specific facts of the case.

Proposed jury instructions shall be submitted on a separate sheet of paper, double spaced, with accurate quotes from, and pinpoint citations to cases and pattern jury instructions where appropriate. The parties shall also provide the proposed instructions on a CD or thumb drive in Microsoft Word format.

**P. Proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law in non-jury cases.**

Proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law in non-jury cases should be submitted as specified in the Scheduling Order. The parties shall also provide them on a CD or thumb drive in Microsoft Word format. The parties may submit revised or supplemental findings of fact and conclusions of law with specific reference to trial evidence at the conclusion of the case. A schedule for the submission of revised findings/conclusions will be discussed at the conclusion of trial.

**Q. Unavailability of Witness**

If a witness is unavailable at the time of trial, as defined in Fed. R. Civ. P. 32(a)(3), the Court expects an oral or videotaped deposition to be used at trial for that witness, whether the witness is a party, a non-party, or an expert. The unavailability of such witness will not be a ground to delay the commencement or progress of trial.

**R. Objections**

Judge Kearney does not permit speaking objections. Objections must be made by reciting the appropriate rule number or a one word basis.

**X. Jury Deliberations**

**A. Written Jury Instructions**

The Court will give the jury a copy of the written jury instructions provided to them in the jury charge.

**B. Exhibits in the jury room**

After the jury has been instructed and taken to the jury room to begin deliberations, the Court and counsel will confirm the admissible exhibits from the joint exhibit book(s) to be presented to the jury for its consideration during deliberations. Generally, the Court will instruct the jury that it may review specific exhibits as it sees fit.

**C. Jury requests to read back testimony or replay tapes**

At the jury's request, the Court may, in limited instances in longer trials, permit the Courtroom Deputy to read portions of testimony back to the jury or to replay the audio or video-taped testimony.

**D. Availability of counsel during deliberation.**

Unless excused by the Court, trial counsel must remain in the courthouse during jury deliberations with their cell phone. Counsel are expected to return to the courtroom within ten (10) minutes after receiving a call from the Courtroom Deputy.

**E. Taking the verdict and special verdicts.**

Ordinarily, the Court will submit interrogatories to the jury. The Courtroom Deputy will take the verdict in the presence of the Court, counsel, and the parties.

**F. Polling the jury.**

If requested by counsel, the Court will poll the jury.

**G. Interviewing the jury.**

Judge Kearney will allow counsel to interview jurors but will instruct the jurors that they are not required to talk to counsel or any person purporting to represent counsel.

**XI. Additional protocols in criminal cases**

Incorporating the Policies to the extent applicable in criminal cases, the Court also requires in criminal cases:

**A. Motions Practice**

1. All pretrial motions – including motions *in limine* and any motions challenging the indictment, seeking suppression of evidence, or raising any dispositive matters – must be filed in accordance with the deadline set forth in the scheduling order entered in the case. Upon the filing of any motion, the parties shall advise the Court whether they intend to present testimony in support of or in opposition to the motion and the expected duration of any such testimony, so that the Court can schedule a hearing, if necessary. The Court will generally permit oral argument on substantive motions upon request.

2. The government is required to file proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law prior to the commencement of the pretrial hearing. The parties may request to leave to supplement proposed findings of fact after the hearing.

### **B. Trial Continuances**

Any request for a continuance must be filed no later than fourteen (14) days in advance of the scheduled trial date. Requests for a continuance must be filed as a motion stating the reasons for the request. Any such motion must be accompanied by the form of consent to continuance signed by the defendant, as found on the Court's website ([www.paed.uscourts.gov](http://www.paed.uscourts.gov)) along with these policies, a proposed form of order which, if approved by the Court, would grant the relief sought by the motion. The proposed form of order must be consistent with the requirements of the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(8), and must include a proposed finding that explains in reasonable detail why the ends of justice served by granting the requested continuance outweigh the best interest of the public and the defendant in a speedy trial.

A telephone conference with the Court will be required before granting the first continuance of a trial. Any subsequent continuance is strongly discouraged, and, if a further continuance is sought, counsel must appear in person to argue the matter.

### **C. Pretrial Conferences**

The Court does not generally hold telephone conferences with counsel in criminal cases, unless counsel specifically requests one or the Court finds that a conference is appropriate. The Criminal Deputy Clerk handles scheduling of criminal matters. If the Court holds a pretrial conference, any issues related to *voir dire*, motions *in limine*, jury instructions, and jury verdict forms must be submitted at least seven (7) days prior to the pretrial conference.

### **D. Voir Dire**

In criminal cases, the Court will conduct the initial *voir dire* regarding hardships, the general suitability of the jurors, etc. Counsel may then ask additional, preapproved questions. Counsel should submit and serve proposed *voir dire* questions in writing seven (7) days before jury selection.

### **E. Guilty Pleas**

1. Before a defendant offers a guilty plea, counsel must complete the guilty plea memorandum, guilty plea statement, and acknowledgement of rights and review those documents with the defendant. Counsel must also provide copies of those documents to the Court.

2. The guilty plea agreement must state whether the plea is a general plea of guilty, a conditional plea, or a plea of *nolo contendere*. The guilty plea agreement also must disclose to the defendant and the Court whether the plea is entered pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 11(c)(1)(A), (B) or (C), relating to the obligation of the Government regarding other charges under subsection (A), a non-binding sentencing recommendation under subsection (B), or a binding sentencing recommendation under subsection (C). In addition, the plea agreement must inform the defendant and remind the Court, pursuant to Rule 11(c)(3)(B), that the defendant has no right to withdraw the plea if the Court does not follow the recommendation or request if the plea is entered under Rule 11(c)(1)(B).

3. The government must submit a guilty plea memorandum at least two (2) days prior to the change of plea hearing. The memorandum shall include the elements of each offense to which the defendant is pleading guilty and legal citations for the elements, the maximum statutory penalties for each offense, the terms of any plea agreement and the factual basis for the plea.

4. Defendant may notify the court of a change in plea no later than 14 days before the scheduled trial date.

#### **F. Trial Memorandum**

At least one (1) week prior to the trial date, the government must file a trial memorandum setting forth the essential elements of the offenses, the facts which it intends to present, the identity of each witness it intends to call, a statement of the substance of each witness' testimony and any legal issues. The defendant is not required to file a trial memorandum but may do so.

#### **G. Sentencing**

1. Sentencing will be scheduled on the day the Court accepts a defendant's guilty plea or after a defendant is convicted at trial. Sentencing will generally occur approximately ninety (90) days after a guilty plea or trial. Sentencing will be continued for good cause only.

2. To avoid delay in sentencing, all objections to the Presentence Investigation Report ("PSR") must be sent to the probation officer in advance of sentencing. In no event shall counsel raise objections for the first time in a sentencing memorandum.

3. Counsel must file sentencing motions and supporting memoranda at least seven (7) days prior to the scheduled sentencing date, and any response thereto must be filed at least three (3) days prior to the scheduled sentencing date. The memorandum must set forth any legal authority relied upon by the party. No replies may be filed without leave of Court.

4. Sentencing memoranda (exclusive of motions), by both the government and the defense must be filed no later than seven (7) days before the scheduled sentencing date, and any response thereto must be filed at least three (3) days prior to the scheduled sentencing date. Counsel shall serve a copy on the United States Probation Office.

5. If a defendant may be responsible for restitution, the government must submit sufficient information in its sentencing memorandum to enable the Court to determine entitlement, the name and the address of each victim, the amount of loss for each victim, and documentary support for each amount. If liability for restitution is joint and several, the government shall itemize the restitution amount for which each defendant may be responsible.

*For any civil or criminal litigation issues not addressed above, please consult the Local Rules of Civil and Criminal Procedure for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, available at <http://www.paed.uscourts.gov>*