

LOCAL RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES FOR THE 451st JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

451st Judicial District Court
Judge Kirsten B. Cohoon, Presiding
Kendall County Courthouse
201 E. San Antonio
Boerne, Texas

I. GENERAL

- A. **POLICY** – Judges and attorneys have a duty to uphold the highest standards of conduct and to earn and promote public respect for the judiciary, the legal profession and the American system of justice.
- B. **THE TEXAS LAWYERS CREED** – The standards of professional conduct in Section IV of the Texas Lawyer’s Creed, as promulgated by the Texas Supreme Court and the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, are adopted and incorporated herein by reference as guidelines for participating in litigation in the 451st Judicial District Court of Kendall County.
- C. **DECORUM REQUIRED OF ALL PERSONS** – All persons in the courtroom during trials and other proceedings shall be attentive to the proceedings and shall refrain from any action which may disrupt the proceedings. The bailiff of the court shall enforce these rules of conduct and decorum. All persons entering the court shall comply with the following:
 - a. Timeliness - All counsel (plus the defendants in criminal cases) are required at all court settings and must be present on time. The Court will not tolerate tardiness. If you are going to be late, it must be communicated to the Court in advance through either the Court Administrator or the Court Clerk.
 - b. All attorneys are required to provide notice of all Court settings to their clients. Notice to the attorney will be considered notice to the client.
 - c. Cell phones must be off or on silent.
 - d. No tobacco use in any form is permitted in the courtroom.
 - e. No food items will be allowed in the courtroom.
 - f. No gum chewing in the courtroom.
 - g. No talking or unnecessary noise which interferes with the Court proceeding will be permitted. Any discussions must be moved to the hallway, conference room or law library outside of the courtroom.
 - h. No person may, by facial expression, shaking or nodding of head, or by any other conduct, express approval or disapproval of any testimony, statement or transaction in the courtroom.
 - i. No newspapers will be allowed in courtroom.
 - j. Treat everyone with respect.
 - k. All persons shall be appropriately attired for Court proceedings and in a manner reasonably befitting the dignity and solemnity of the Court. Counsel shall ensure that clients and witnesses are dressed appropriately. This means the following clothing **WILL NOT BE PERMITTED** in the courtroom:
 - i. shorts
 - ii. flip flops
 - iii. tank tops

- iv. hats
- v. sunglasses
- vi. cut offs
- vii. capris
- viii. any clothing which is deemed profane, vulgar, or risqué by the court.

- D. **DECORUM FOR COUNSEL** - All counsel in the courtroom during trials and other proceedings shall be attentive to the proceedings and shall refrain from any action which may disrupt the proceedings. All counsel are anticipated to follow the rules set forth herein. Failure to follow these rules may result in removal from the courtroom:
- b. Counsel shall rise and remain standing while addressing the Court.
 - c. Counsel shall address all statements, request and objections to the Court and not to opposing counsel.
 - d. Counsel shall not argue objections in the presence of the jury without prior leave of Court.
 - e. Counsel shall not interrupt or talk over opposing counsel, except when stating formal objections.
 - f. Counsel shall remain behind the Counsel table while examining witnesses. If requested by Counsel, Counsel may stand at a podium to exam any witnesses.
 - g. Counsel shall neither make or insinuate derogatory or insulting remarks about opposing counsel, parties or witnesses.
 - h. Counsel shall address the Court as "your Honor" or "Judge" and, except with leave of court, shall refer to all Counsel, parties and witnesses (except children) by their surnames, using such titles as Mr., Mrs., Miss, Dr., etc., as appropriate comment and not by first names or nicknames, or any discriminatory or other inappropriate classification.
 - i. Counsel shall request leave of Court before approaching the bench or to approach the witness when necessary to work with documentary or tangible evidence.
 - j. Counsel shall not lean on the bench unless it is necessary to prevent jurors from overhearing bench conferences. Counsel shall not engage in personal discussions with the Court or each other during trial while in the presence of jurors, parties, or witnesses.
 - k. Counsel shall advise Counsel's clients, witnesses and others that are subject to Counsel's control of these rules of conduct and courtroom decorum.
- E. **CONTINUANCE POLICY** - All motions for continuance must be in writing and filed with the District Clerk's Office not later than 24 hours before any setting. The first request for an Agreed Continuance will be granted in accordance with Texas Rules. Any additional request for a continuance, agreed or opposed, must be supported by good cause. Additional continuances are highly discouraged unless absolutely necessary. Any requests for an additional continuance must be heard and ruled on by the Court prior to the date of the hearing or trial.
- F. **WITHDRAWAL OF ATTORNEY POLICY** - All withdrawals of counsel must be approved by the Court. None will be allowed within 60 days of trial setting unless for good cause.
- G. **STATUS CONFERENCE** - All parties are required to be present and on time for any status conference.
- a. **Civil** - Failure to appear for a status conference in civil cases will result in the matter being placed on the Dismissal Docket. Status conferences conducted by video conference in civil cases are acceptable and encouraged by the Court with prior notice and written

agreement by the parties. In order to schedule a video conference, please contact the Court Coordinator.

- b. **Criminal** - Failure of the Defendant to appear for a status conference in a criminal case may result in a warrant being issued for the Defendant. Failure of the Defendant's counsel to appear for a status conference in a criminal case may result in the attorney being held in contempt of court. Notice of a status or pre-trial conference in a criminal matter to the attorney of record will also constitute notice to the defendant. Failure of the criminal defendant to appear in response to a notice provided to the attorney may result in a warrant being issued due to the criminal defendant's failure to appear.

II. CRIMINAL MATTERS

A. FILING/RETURN OF INDICTMENTS –

- a. The Criminal District Attorney shall note on a non-substantive part of the indictment the following information:
 - 1. Whether there are other pending indicted causes on the defendant;
 - 2. Whether the indictment is a re-indictment; and
 - 3. The names of any co-defendants.

B. ATTORNEYS

- a. Appointment - Attorneys wishing to receive appointments for criminal cases in the Court shall file any necessary documents as set forth in the indigent defense plan.
- b. Appointed counsel must immediately report any change in the status of their license to practice law in the State of Texas to the Office of Court Administration and to the Court.
- c. The phrase “the court” or “trial court” as set forth in the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure article 1.051 shall refer to the elected judge of that Court, any visiting judge of the Court, or any magistrate designated by the Court for the purpose of performing the court's duties as set forth in that Article.

- C. **CRIMINAL CODE OF PROCEDURE 28.01 ORDER** – A Criminal Code of Procedure 28.01 Order will be issued upon the arraignment date or the first status conference setting and will be signed off by the District Attorney (or Assistant District Attorney), Defense Counsel and Defendant.

D. CONTINUANCES/RESETTING/POSTPONEMENT

- a. Continuances – All continuances shall be in accordance with Article 29 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. ***Non-agreed continuances filed less than seven (7) days prior to a hearing are presumptively DENIED and the filing party should NOT rely on the Continuance Motion without a signed Order.***
- b. Agreed Continuances – if you have a continuance that is agreed to by all parties, please contact the Clerk of the Court or the Court Coordinator and advise of this and s/he will consult with the Judge prior to removing the matter from the docket. **Continuances are not automatic upon agreement by the parties. Mere filing of a Motion for Continuance does not mean the continuance will be granted. See Section I(E) above.**

E. SETTINGS AND STATUS HEARINGS

- a. Settings – Criminal cases will be set for trial after the arraignment and two status hearings. A final pre-trial hearing, as provided by Article 28.01 Texas Code of Criminal Procedure

will be conducted in each case approximately ten (10) days prior to trial unless otherwise agreed by the parties and the court.

- b. Status Hearing - The Court will set two (2) status hearings approximately sixty days apart and then move forward to disposition or trial setting. Additional status conferences will be set by the Court when requested by the State and/or the defendant if the Court deems circumstances for such additional setting exists.
- c. Conflict in Trial Settings – Whenever an attorney has two or more cases on the trial docket for trial at the same time in two different courts, it shall be the duty of the attorney to bring the matter to the attention of the Court immediately upon learning of the conflicting setting. As much as is practicable, the Court shall attempt to agree upon which case shall have priority in conference with the other court. Absent such an agreement, conflicting trial settings shall be resolved in the priority set forth in the 6th Judicial Regional Rules, Rule 10:
 - 1. Criminal cases;
 - 2. Cases given statutory preference;
 - 3. Preferentially set cases, other than those given statutory preference;
 - 4. The earliest case set;
 - 5. The case with the earliest filing date.
- F. **DISPOSITION SETTINGS** – A disposition setting is a final setting. The purpose of this setting is for the Court to accept a plea, dismissal of the matter or hear final arguments. A disposition setting is not and should not be viewed as another status hearing.
- G. **PRE-TRIAL HEARINGS AND OTHER PRE-TRIAL MATTERS**
 - a. All pre-trial motions, including motions in limine, which may require substantial argument (in excess of thirty minutes total), must be filed and hearing held prior to the final pre-trial unless such motion can be run with the trial on the matter.
 - b. Each pre-trial motion that is set for hearing must contain the following:
 - 1.A statement of the relief sought, the facts pertinent to the motion, and supporting argument with authorities;
 - 2.Signature of counsel and, where required, by the defendant;
 - 3.Sworn to when required;
 - 4.A certificate of service and statement of consultation with opposing counsel and that the matter[s] raised in the motion were not resolved, or if no consultation, then an explanation thereof;
 - 5.A notice that the motion will be presented to the Court, with or without evidence, at the final pre-trial hearing or the alternate date chosen (per II.G.a. above); and
 - 6.A proposed order granting or denying the motion in full or in part.
 - c. The Court may refuse to consider any pre-trial motion that fails to comply with these rules.
 - d. All pre-trial motions, including any motion for continuance, whether filed by the State or Defendant, must comply with the applicable law contained in the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, must be filed seven (7) days prior to any hearing to be considered by the Court on. Any motion for continuance that does not comply with this rule will not be considered unless such motion establishes that the grounds for the continuance did not exist or were not known.

- e. Except for good cause, the Court shall not consider any motion for continuance after the parties announce ready for trial.
- H. **MOTION TO ADJUDICATE/REVOKE COMMUNITY SUPERVISION** – One (1) status hearing will be allowed for all Motions to Adjudicate / Revoke Community Supervision and will be followed by a disposition setting held between the Judge, District Attorney and/or Assistant District Attorney, Defense Counsel, Defendant, any necessary witnesses and the Probation Officer. No additional status conference will be allowed without good cause shown.
- I. **PLEAS** – A plea can be heard on any Court date and does not need to wait for a criminal court docket day. The Court will consider any plea on any day the Court is in session. However, if for any reason you are going to be late for a plea setting that occurs on a date other than a criminal docket day, you must contact the Court before the scheduled plea.
- J. **STANDING DISCOVERY CONTROL ORDERS** – The Court has a Standing Discovery Control Order that applies in all criminal cases. A copy of this Order may be obtained through the District Attorney's Office or the District Clerk's Office. Parties should not file Motions which duplicate the Standing Orders.
- K. **PAYMENT OF COURT APPOINTED ATTORNEYS** – All court appointed attorneys shall provide the Court with an itemized statement reflecting the number of hours spent in Court representing an indigent defendant and the number of hours spent out of Court representing said defendant. The itemized statement shall be presented to the Court as allowed under the indigent defense plan. All itemized statements shall be submitted through TechShare. All court appointed attorneys shall familiarize themselves with the Amended Standing Order for the Compensation of Attorneys Appointed to Represent Indigent Defendants. A copy of this Order may be obtained through the District Clerk's Office or on the District Clerk's website.

III. CIVIL MATTERS

At the bottom of all orders setting matters, please list all the parties who need to be notified. If the parties are represented by attorneys, please list the attorneys' email address and fax numbers. If they are self-represented litigants, please give their mailing address[es], email address[es] and fax number (if any).

At the end of all MOTIONS, please include the opposing counsel's name, address, phone number, email address and fax number under the Certificate of Service.

- A. **AGREED CIVIL DISCOVERY AND DOCKET CONTROL ORDER AND CONFERENCES** - An Agreed Discovery and Docket Control Order shall be submitted to the Court within sixty (60) days of filing an Answer in consultation with the Court Coordinator. If an Agreed Discovery and Docket Control Order is not received by the Court within the sixty (60) days, or if the parties cannot reach an agreement, the Court may set the case for a Status Conference. If a status conference is set by the Court, Counsel or Self-Represented Litigants ("SRL") will be required to attend the Status Conference but attendance may be via telephonic or video conference with prior Court approval. The party seeking to attend via telephone or video shall be responsible for making the arrangements with the Court Coordinator. Failure to attend the Status Conference may result in the matter being placed on the Dismissal Docket. Such Agreed

Discovery and Docket Control Order, when entered, shall control the subsequent course of action, unless later modified.

- B. **PLEADING / MOTIONS / SETTINGS** - Any pleading or motion that requires a setting with the Court must be on file with the District Clerk's Office. When filing any pleading or motion that requires a setting by the Court, a formal "Request for Oral Hearing" or "Request for Submission" must be filed with the pleading, as a separate instrument, in accordance with these rules.
- a. Settings - For any matter requiring a setting with the Court, you must contact the Court Coordinator to get a date and time that the Court is available. Please remember that the Court's calendar is available at <https://www.co.kendall.tx.us/page/district.court#> and should be reviewed prior to contacting the Court. Please advise the Coordinator of the type of setting needed (i.e. jury trial, bench trial, discovery dispute, temporary orders, divorce prove-up, etc.) and the estimated amount of time needed for the setting.
 1. The Court Coordinator will provide a date and time for the setting.
 2. After receipt, the moving party is required to confer with all other parties, and, once the date is agreed upon, file a Notice Setting the matter.
 3. The Notice Setting must contain a Certificate of Conference (described below) signed by the movant. The District Clerk's office will forward the Notice Setting for the Court's signature. Once the Notice Setting has been signed, it will be set on the docket. ***The Court will not hold any dates until your Notice Setting has been signed by the Judge. If no Notice Setting is signed by the Judge, then no setting is on the Court's docket.***
 - b. Form of Motions - Motions should be filed with the District Clerk's office not the Court. Motions shall be in writing and shall contain a summary of the argument. All motions shall be accompanied by a proposed order granting the relief sought. The proposed order shall be filed as a separate instrument, unless the entire motion, order, signature lines and certificate of service are all on one page. ***If there is not a Proposed Order accompanying the motion, the motion will be deemed not complete and will not be considered, reviewed, or ruled on.***
 1. "Request for Oral Hearing" or "Request for Submission" - It will be this Court's practice that all motions not requiring an oral hearing will automatically be set for submission.
 2. If any party desires an oral hearing on a case, it may be set according to the Court's availability by the Court Coordinator. Please keep in mind that if a pleading or motion is reviewed under submission and the Court needs to hear oral argument, the Court will, under its own discretion, set the pleading or motion for an oral hearing. Also, there are certain motions that require an oral hearing. If an oral hearing is granted or requested by the Court, the parties shall provide copies of relevant case law and discovery (with pertinent provisions highlighted). The Court prefers to receive this information electronically via flash drive rather than hard copy.
 3. The Judge will rule on the motion in accordance with the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, whether heard by oral argument or by submission.
 - c. Responsive Motions - Responses shall be in writing and timely filed. Failure to timely file a response will be considered a representation of no opposition. All responses shall be accompanied by a proposed order denying the relief sought filed as a separate

instrument. The proposed order shall be filed as a separate instrument, unless the entire response, order, signature lines and certificate of service are all on one page.

- d. Certificate of Conference – a certificate of conference shall be included with all motions and must contain the following information:

1. That counsel has conferred with the opposing party.
2. The parties are agreeable to the date of the submission or oral hearing, if any, or the parties are unable to agree upon the date and the reason for the impasse plus the dates exchanged.
3. The estimated time for the hearing, if any.
4. Names, fax number, and email addresses, if any, of all counsel of record.
5. Names, addresses, email addresses, and fax numbers, if any, of all SRLs who are a party to the suit.

C. PRE-TRIAL / POST-TRIAL HEARINGS

- a. After contacting the Court Coordinator and obtaining an agreeable date with all counsel, the requesting party shall file a copy of the Order Setting and the district clerk will forward to the Court for entry.
- b. Any Order Setting received by the Court with NO HEARING OR SUBMISSION DATE will be held in the Court's file until a hearing or submission date is obtained. If the parties cannot agree to a hearing date, a certificate of conference must contain the dates exchanged and the reason for impasse. The Court will then set the matter for a status conference or will simply set the matter for the requested hearing on a date convenient with the Court.
- c. Any Order Setting without names/faxes/emails, will be held until corrected and resubmitted.

D. DISMISSAL DOCKET

- a. Dismissal for Want of Prosecution – If no substantive action is taken by a party seeking affirmative relief directed towards a trial on the merits within the time frames listed below, the Court will proceed to dismiss the case for want of prosecution in accordance with Rule 165a, T.R.C.P.:
 1. Non-family matters - within nine (9) months;
 2. Contested family law matters – 180 days;
 3. Uncontested family law matters – 90 days.
- b. Failure to Appear – Failure of counsel for a party seeking affirmative relief to appear for trial, pre-trial or preliminary hearing may result in placement of the matter on the Dismissal for Want of Prosecution docket.

E. TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDERS AND PROTECTIVE ORDERS

- a. An application for a Temporary Restraining Order and/or Protective Order, to be granted without notice to the adverse party, will be considered only upon the applicants verified complaint or affidavit accompanying the application and, except for a s. 83.006 Texas Family Code Motion, no testimony will be received by the Court. No Temporary Restraining Order and/or Protective Order will be granted without notice to the adverse party unless the applicants verified complaint or affidavit accompanying the application contains "specific facts" and a "plain and intelligible statement of the grounds for such relief," as required by rules 682 and 680 of the Texas Rule of Civil Procedure. No such

Temporary Restraining Order shall be granted upon a complaint or affidavit containing mere conclusions, even if verified.

- b. Ex parte orders in family law matters must meet the requirements of the Texas Family Code.

F. **APPLICATION FOR EX PARTE ORDERS** – Counsel presenting any application for an ex parte Order shall, at the time the application is presented to the Court, certify in writing that:

- a. To the best of counsel's knowledge, the party against whom the relief is sought is not represented by counsel; or
- b. If the party against whom the relief is sought is represented by counsel, that (a) such counsel has been notified of the application and does not wish to be heard by the Court thereon or (b) counsel presenting the application has diligently attempted to notify the opposing counsel, has been unable to do so, and the circumstances do not permit additional efforts to give such notice.

G. **FAMILY LAW MATTERS**

- a. The "Standing Order Regarding Property and Conduct of Parties in Divorce" and "Suits Affecting the Parent-Child Relationship" attached hereto as Appendix I, is to be attached by counsel to the original citation in all suits of divorce and suits affecting the parent-child relationship. The order attached as Appendix I will remain in effect throughout the pendency of a suit unless specifically modified or set aside by the Court.
- b. The trial of family law matters involving children may be given preference over the trial of other civil cases as determined by the Judge.
- c. The attorneys in all contested hearings concerning support shall prepare complete written income and expense statements as to their respective clients and present same to the court prior to the hearing.
- d. In all contested cases involving the division of property where the value of assets in dispute exceeds \$250,000, the attorney shall prepare, or have prepared, a complete written inventory of the assets and liabilities of the marital estate and of the separate estate of their respective client and submit same to the Court prior to trial.

H. **TRIAL ON THE MERITS**

- a. Request for Setting – A setting for a trial on the merits will be made in response to a written Request for Setting submitted directly to the Court Coordinator. The party requesting the setting should file the Request with the District Clerk. The Request for Setting shall contain the following:
 - 1. The style and the number of the case;
 - 2. The name, telephone and fax numbers, and address of the attorney (or SRL) making the request and the opposing counsel (or SRL);
 - 3. The date on which the jury fee was paid if a jury trial is being sought;
 - 4. A statement that the pleadings of the party requesting the setting are in order;
 - 5. A statement that mediation is scheduled, has been completed or none is required;
 - 6. A statement that all discovery has been completed or none is desired;
 - 7. A statement that all pre-trial matters have been disposed of or none are pending (if pre-trial matters remain pending the request shall state the nature of same, the party asserting same, the estimated time for hearing same and possible dates

for a pre-trial hearing **which have been cleared with opposing counsel or the SRL**);

8. Possible dates for the trial of the cause **which have been cleared with opposing counsel or the SRL** (if opposing party will not agree to the dates for trial, the dates proposed and the reason for the refusal to agree);
 9. The estimated time for trial;
 10. A certificate that a copy of the Request for Setting has been served on all counsel or the SRL in the case, the name and address of each attorney and the date of service;
 11. The signature of the attorney making the Request; and
 12. An Order Setting with an agreed date should be attached to the Request.
- b. Upon receipt of the Request and Order Setting from the District Clerk's office, the Court will set the case for trial on the merits on the Court's docket and deliver a copy of same to the District Clerk to file who will then deliver a copy to each attorney or SRL.
- c. At the time the parties announce ready, each party shall submit to the Court the proposed jury questions which shall be provided on a flash drive and in Word format.

When setting a civil case for pre-trial, jury trial, non-jury trial or a post trial hearing, please call the Court Coordinator prior to filing your Motion and Order Setting, to obtain available hearing/trial dates. After you have the available dates, please contact opposing counsel or SRL to obtain a date that is agreeable to ALL PARTIES. Once you have an agreed date, fill in that date with a statement that this date is agreeable to all and forward to the Court Coordinator for entry with the Court. THE DATES PROVIDED ARE NOT CONFIRMED UNTIL THE ORDER SETTING IS RECEIVED AND SIGNED BY THE COURT.

IF THE PARTIES CANNOT AGREE ON A DATE FOR TRIAL, THE COURT WILL EITHER (1) SET THE MATTERS FOR TRIAL BASED ON THE AGREED SCHEDULING ORDER (ABOVE III(A)) AND THE COURT'S SCHEDULE OR (2) SET THE MATTER FOR A STATUS CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS THE IMPASSE.

- I. **SETTLEMENT** - In the event a civil case settles, the Court requires that a Rule 11 be signed by all parties and filed with the District Clerk's Office immediately. The Rule 11 will announce that the case has settled, and that final paperwork must be tendered to the Court within 45 days of the Rule 11 Agreement.
- J. **DISCOVERY**
- a. The listed discovery shall not be filed with the district clerk except on special order of the Court, unless it is filed with the original petition:
 1. Discovery requests, deposition notices, and subpoenas required to be served only on parties;
 2. Responses and objections to discovery requests and deposition notices, regardless on whom the requests are notice were served;
 3. documents and tangible things produced in discovery;
 4. Statements prepared in compliance with the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure 193.3(b) or (d); and
 5. Certificates of written discovery.
 - b. Following discovery materials must be filed:

1. Discovery request deposition notices and subpoenas required to be served on nonparties;
 2. Motions and responses to motions pertaining to discovery matters; and
 3. Agreements concerning discovery matters, to the extent necessary to comply with Texas Rule of Civil Procedure 11.
- c. Notwithstanding paragraph A:
1. The Court may order discovery materials to be filed;
 2. A person may file discovery materials in support of or in opposition to a motion or for other use in a court proceeding; and
 3. A person may file discovery materials necessary for proceeding an appellate court.
- K. **ALTERNATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION**
- a. **POLICY** - It shall be the policy of the Court to encourage peaceable resolution of disputes and early settlement of pending litigation, including family law litigation, by referral to alternative dispute resolution ("ADR") pursuant to the Texas alternative dispute resolution procedures act, Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code section 154.
 - b. **ADR MANDATORY** - No trial on the merits shall be conducted in any civil or family law case until all contested issues have been through the ADR procedure, and ADR has been unsuccessful; or the court has determined under section d. below that ADR is inappropriate for the case.
 - c. **MANNER OF REFERRAL** - It is anticipated that the parties shall cooperate in referring such issues to an ADR procedure under terms and conditions as are mutually agreeable, without the need for Court intervention. If the parties are unable to cooperate or agree to a referral of such issues to an ADR procedure, then upon written notification to the Court by one of the parties that efforts to coordinate a referral have been unsuccessful, the Court, without the necessity of a hearing, shall enter an order of referral to an ADR procedure, and under such terms and conditions selected by the Court. The Court may, in its discretion, forward an Order of Referral to Mediation to all parties.
 - d. **OBJECTION TO REFERRAL** - If the Court enters an Order of Referral to an ADR procedure, any party may object to such a referral pursuant to Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code, chapter 154. Upon the filing of an objection, the Court shall schedule a hearing. If the Court finds that there is reasonable basis for the objection, the Court may, in its discretion, order that the case not be referred to an ADR procedure and order the case to proceed to trial on the merits.

IV. HANDLING HEARING AND TRIAL EXHIBITS

- A. It is the policy of this Court that in all family and civil matters, the parties shall confer and determine, prior to trial, which exhibits will be pre-admitted and which exhibits will require a ruling from the Court on objections to their admission. The parties shall prepare an exhibit list prior to trial to be shared with the official court reporter.
- B. Multi-page documents should either be Bates stamped or paginated and bound without the use of paperclips.
- C. One original set that the official court reporter will retain needs to have an original sticker on the bottom right-hand corner. This is the only set that should have an original sticker. Copies for the Court and opposing counsel need to be discernible from the original set.

- E. Exhibits should be marked using numbers only and each exhibit sticker shall have date the exhibit is "Admitted" into evidence on the bottom of the exhibit sticker.
- F. If you will be using oversize exhibits during trial, an 8 1/2x11 should be produced for the court reporter's records. We will not retain oversized exhibits due to storage limitations. If you have a demonstrative exhibit, such as an object, please provide the court reporter a photo of the exhibit that can be used in the event a record needs to be prepared.
- G. Providing the court reporter exhibits on a flash drive in a searchable format is not a requirement, but is preferable.
- H. The Court or its official reporter will assist in keeping track of which exhibits were offered and admitted during the trial if you will take a small pause in speaking while she marks on her list as things are offered and admitted.
- I. Before leaving the courtroom for the day, please confer with opposing counsel and verify all offered and admitted exhibits are in the possession of the court reporter.
- J. Exhibits are not to be left in open view of the jury and/or witnesses when not in use. The court will provide a designated holding area for all offered and admitted exhibits during trial.
- K. At the conclusion of the hearing or the trial, both sides will agree on the record that all exhibits are accounted for and all redactions, if any, have been made. At that time, the court reporter will make exhibits available to the jury, if any.

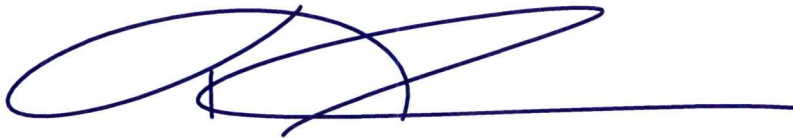
IV. ADOPTION

These rules shall become effective on January 1, 2023 and so long thereafter until amended, repealed or modified by the District Court. Each numbered or lettered paragraph of these rules shall be considered separate and distinct from all other portions hereof, and if any portion should be declared by a higher Court to be improper, such declaration will not affect any other portion not so declared to be improper.

The District Clerk is directed to publish a copy of these rules on the Office of Court Administration's website in accordance with Rule 3a of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure and Texas Rule of Judicial Administration 10. In addition, the District Clerk is directed to record these rules in the Minutes of the 451st District Court.

Adopted on this 29th day of December, 2022 to become effective on January 1, 2023.

Signed on the 29th day of December, 2022.



Kirsten B. Cohoon
Presiding Judge
451st Judicial District Court
Kendall County, Texas

FILED 1/3/23
at 9:00 o'clock A. M.
Susan Jackson, District Clerk
Kendall County, Texas
By: Susan Jackson Deputy