Filed in the District Court
Of Travis County, Texas

At NOVEMBER 19, 2024 2:00 PM LJ

Velva L. Price, District Clerk
D-1-GN-61-121012

LOCAL RULES
OF
CIVIL PROCEDURE
AND
RULES OF DECORUM

The District Courts of Travis County, Texas

These Local Rules, as amended, are effective as of November 15, 2024

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CHAPTER 1
GENERAL ORGANIZATION

1.1 District Courts and Cases Governed by These Local Rules

Except when superseded by Emergency Orders and Emergency Procedures, these rules govern procedures in the District Courts hearing civil cases, family cases, and child abuse and neglect (also known as Department of Family and Protective Services or Child Protective Services / CPS) cases.

Emergency Orders and Emergency Procedures, if any, as well as Standing Orders and forms, are available on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website.

1.2 Central Docket and Specialized Dockets

The primary dockets are the Civil Docket, the Family Docket, and the CPS Docket. All civil cases, other than those on specialized dockets, and all jury trials are set on the Central Docket. See Chapter 21 regarding the setting of family cases and CPS cases. The Court Administrator will instruct regarding specialized dockets.

1.3 How the Central Docket Functions

The District Clerk will file cases by distributing them equally, on a rotating basis, among the District Courts. However, pursuant to the operation of the Travis County Central Docket, hearings and trials are assigned to available judges without regard to the court in which the case is filed. Therefore, unless a case is specially assigned to a particular judge pursuant to Local Rule 2.6 or 10.2, each hearing or trial in a case may be heard by *any judge*. For all matters, therefore, the District Court number identified in the style of the case does *not* mean the judge of that court will conduct the hearings or trial.

Please note that documents filed with the District Clerk are not forwarded to a judge; if a party is required to forward a document to a judge or intends for a document to be brought to a judge's attention, the party must deliver a courtesy copy of the file-marked document to the judge's staff, and not simply file it. To deliver a document to the judge by email, it should be emailed to the judge's submission email address or the judge's staff, not to the judge directly.

Also note that providing documents to a judge does not file them; documents provided to a judge for action (e.g., motions) must first be filed with the District Clerk, then a copy provided to the judge's staff.

1.4 Locations and Notices of Hearings and Trials

Assignments to particular judges and courtrooms will be posted in the Civil and Family Courts Facility and on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website prior to each hearing or trial. Questions about case assignments or location of hearings or trials in cases not specially assigned pursuant to Local Rule 2.6 or 10.2 must be directed to the Court Administrator, not a particular court.

Notices of hearings and trials provided by parties pursuant to Local Rule 2.4 must *not* direct the parties to the court listed in the case style (i.e., the number randomly assigned when the case was filed and listed at the top of each pleading). If a case is specially set in a particular court pursuant to Local Rules 2.6 or 10.2, that court must be listed in the notice. Otherwise, the notice of setting must direct the parties to appear at the Civil and Family Courts Facility and/or before the court designated in the docket schedule posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website and in the Civil and Family Courts Facility prior to the time of the hearing or trial. Sample notice(s) are posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website.

1.5 Motions Challenging a Prior Ruling

A request to be heard on a motion for new trial; motion to modify, correct, reform, or reconsider; or any other motion challenging a prior ruling, except one by default, must be presented to the judge who made the ruling, including a visiting judge, if available. Contact the Court Administrator's office to determine if the visiting judge who made the ruling is available.

1.6 Local Administrative Judge

By majority vote, the judges of the District Courts of Travis County elect their Local Administrative Judge, who serves at their pleasure for a two-year term. The Local Administrative Judge has the general administrative responsibility and authority necessary for the proper functioning of the District Courts, including the authority to adjust the number, type, and administration of dockets from time to time as required for the orderly disposition of cases.

1.7 Court Administrator

All dockets are administered by the Court Administrator for the Civil District Courts, under the supervision of the Local Administrative Judge.

1.8 Setting Cases

All settings for hearings and trials (other than those requested in cases specially assigned to a particular judge pursuant to Local Rule 2.6 or 10.2) must be scheduled through the Court Administrator's Office, even those included in an order signed by a judge. See Local Rule 2.3 for instructions on how to set cases.

1.9 Parties or Counsel

References to parties or counsel in these Local Rules include counsel/attorneys for the parties and the parties themselves if they are self-represented.

1.10 **“Must”**

As used in these Local Rules, the word “must” is intended to mean that the act it refers to is mandatory or required.

CHAPTER 2
SETTING CASES ON THE CENTRAL DOCKET

2.1 Schedules for Jury/Non-Jury Weeks

The Court Administrator will develop a schedule designating jury weeks and non-jury weeks for each calendar year. A copy of this schedule may be obtained from the Court Administrator's office and is posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website.

2.2 Certification Requirements

Prior to setting a hearing, the parties must make reasonable efforts to *actually speak* to one another regarding the date, time, and format (i.e., whether in-person or remote) of a hearing or trial and the substance of the motion in a genuine effort to narrow their disputes before seeking court intervention. To that end, every motion must include a certification that "counsel has conferred with (or made reasonable efforts to confer with) all parties about the date, time, and format of the setting", *and* every motion (other than dispositive motions) must also certify either:

(a) "Counsel has conferred with all parties who may be affected by the relief sought in this motion in a good faith effort to resolve or narrow the issues raised."; or

(b) "Counsel has made reasonable efforts to confer with all parties who may be affected by the relief sought in this motion but has been unable to do so."

The court retains discretion to strike any setting in which the motion (or an amended version of the motion) does not include such certificates.

2.3 Requesting a Setting and Time Estimate Requirement

A party must not request a setting unless the party has filed the motion with the certifications required in Local Rule 2.2 or will file the motion immediately, but in no event later than 24 hours after obtaining the setting.

All jury and non-jury matters on the Central Docket will be set by the Court Administrator upon written request through Civil Calendaring Online on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website or upon oral request of any party, and will be placed on the docket for each week, day, or half-day in the order in which such requests are received.

Each request for a setting must include an estimate of the *total* time required for the *entire hearing,* on all matters, for *all* participants. Please note that a half-day hearing usually includes a break, and a full-day hearing includes breaks in the morning and afternoon as well as a lunch break. As a result, a half-day hearing generally provides fewer than three hours, and a full-day hearing generally provides fewer than six hours.

Any matter which the court determines cannot reasonably be heard within the announced time will be rescheduled at the discretion of the court. For jury trials, the total announced time must include time for pretrial, voir dire, evidence, charge conference, closing argument, and deliberation.

2.4 Notice of Setting to be Provided by Party Obtaining the Setting

Neither the court nor the Court Administrator sends notices of settings. The party who obtains the setting pursuant to Local Rule 2.3 must give notice to all parties of the time and date of a setting and the total time needed for the entire hearing for all participants. Notice must be given in the manner and within the time provided by the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure and these Local Rules, including Local Rule 1.4. Sample notice(s) are posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts'

website. Notice must be sent the same day the party obtains the setting, and any delay in sending notice may be argued by opposing counsel as a basis for continuance.

2.5 Orders Setting Cases

Judges must not be requested to sign orders setting cases except when a show cause order is necessary, or when some rule of law requires that an order for a setting be signed by a judge. Any show cause or other order setting a case presented for signature to a judge must be on a separate page and not combined with a pleading. Even if a judge signs such an order, the setting must be made with the Court Administrator's office.

2.6 Assignment of All or Part of Case to a Particular Judge

If a party or parties believe that a case, or part of a case, has unusual characteristics that make it particularly suitable for assignment to one judge, the party or parties jointly may request the Local Administrative Judge to assign the case to one judge. The written request, explaining the unusual characteristics, must be filed and also submitted to the Local Administrative Judge by:

(a) Delivering the notice to the attention of the Local Administrative Judge at the Office of the District Judges at the Civil and Family Courts Facility;

(b) Mailing the notice to the Local Administrative Judge at P.O. Box 1748, Austin, TX 78767-1748; or

(c) Emailing the notice to: LocalAdministrativeJudge@traviscountytx.gov.

Generally, the request should be made at the beginning of the case, and requests made after significant litigation are less likely to be granted because the benefit of one judge has diminished. In considering the request, the Local Administrative Judge will guard against forum-shopping and will maintain the integrity of the Central Docket

system, wherein assignment is the rare exception. No request for assignment to a *particular* judge will be considered by the Local Administrative Judge except for reasons of judicial economy.

No party should ask a particular judge to accept assignment of a case or part of a case unless all parties have previously conferred and have agreed to jointly make the request.

Any judge may, *sua sponte,* self-assign a case, or part of a case, for reasons of judicial economy.

A setting before a particular judge is in-order, not a preferential setting, unless the judge specifies that it is a preferential setting.

2.7 Deadline for Setting; Announcement Required

No setting will be accepted after the Friday preceding the announcement period except by agreement of all parties, unless it is governed by a statute requiring a hearing prior to the next available week on which settings may be scheduled.

All settings must be announced pursuant to Chapter 3 below.

2.8 Jury Settings

Each jury case will be set for 9:00 a.m. on Monday of a jury week and will be subject to begin trial during that week only.

2.9 Non-Jury Settings

(a) Non-Jury Long Docket Settings

Each non-jury long docket matter will be set for 9:00 a.m. on Monday of a non-jury week and will be subject to trial or hearing at any time before noon on Thursday of that week. In the event of a Monday court holiday this docket will be set and called on Tuesday.

(b) Non-Jury Short Docket Settings

Each Non-Jury Short Docket may be set for either 9:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. on any day during a non-jury week except Friday. Such a matter will be subject to trial or hearing at any time during the half day in which it is set, but not thereafter.

(c) Non-Jury Settings on Thursdays of Jury Weeks

The following non-jury matters may be set on Thursdays of jury weeks:

(i) Any matter that is required by law to be determined within a fixed time period; or

(ii) Any matter *in its entirety* requiring 30 minutes or less. Any matter which the court determines cannot reasonably be heard within 30 minutes will be rescheduled at the discretion of the court.

Only matters that will require one day or less may be set pursuant to subparagraph (i); such matters will be given preference over those set pursuant to subparagraph (ii).

2.10 Friday Settings

Only a contested or uncontested matter that *in its entirety* will require 15 minutes or less may be set on Friday mornings of jury and non-jury weeks. Any matter which the court determines cannot reasonably be heard within 15 minutes will be rescheduled at the discretion of the court.

2.11 In-Order Settings

In-order settings are hearings to be held by a particular judge, identified by name in the docket, in the regular order of announcement. An in-order setting is made for all hearings in cases assigned to a particular judge pursuant to Local Rules 2.6 or 10.2, and, in unassigned cases, any hearing in which the judge has authorized the setting before him or her. All motions in

such assigned cases, even if unopposed, must be heard by the assigned judge. Accordingly, motions in such assigned cases must not be presented to any other judge.

Before requesting the setting from the Court Administrator of a case assigned pursuant to Local Rule 2.6 or 10.2, the moving party must confer with the judge's staff to determine the judge's availability. For visiting judges, the District Judges' Office serves as the judge's staff.

Parties seeking in-order settings must also comply with the announcement requirements in Chapter 3 of these Local Rules.

2.12 Preferential Settings

Preferential settings are hearings to be heard before all other settings on that docket. Preferential settings are not available for civil jury trials. A request for a preferential setting of a non-jury matter will be granted by the court only for good cause shown. No more than two non-jury preferential settings will be granted for any 9:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. docket.

Requests for preferential settings will not be accepted for the following week.

A preferential setting is not necessarily a setting before the judge who granted it, or before any particular judge, unless the matter is assigned to a particular judge pursuant to Local Rule 2.6 or 10.2. Any preferential setting assigned to a particular judge will be identified by name in the docket.

Parties seeking preferential settings must comply with the announcement requirements in Chapter 3 of these Local Rules.

2.13 Settings that Must be Authorized by Court

The Court Administrator is not authorized to grant any of the settings described by this Rule 2.13. The Court Administrator may, however, provide tentative settings for the convenience of the court.

A request for one of the following settings must be presented to a judge:

(a) A setting before answer date. Prior to presenting an order (including a Show Cause Order or Temporary Restraining Order) that contains a date for a hearing prior to the answer date, a tentative date must first be procured from the Court Administrator's Office and such tentative date must be included in the order prior to presentment to the court for consideration.

(b) A setting for a jury trial if a non-jury trial setting has been obtained after answer date and before a jury fee was paid, unless a written agreement to strike the non-jury setting is presented to the Court Administrator when the jury setting is requested.

(c) More than one setting for a particular hearing or trial ("back-up" settings.)

2.14 Duty to Notify Court Administrator

(a) Back-up Settings

When a matter is reached for trial or hearing, the parties must immediately notify the Court Administrator of any back-up settings that must be removed from the Central Docket.

(b) Agreement to Pass a Setting

Once announced, settings may not be passed except by agreement of all counsel. Counsel must notify the Court Administrator of an agreement to pass a setting.

2.15 Court Administrator Authorized to Strike Setting

If the Court Administrator determines that any setting has been obtained in violation of these Rules, the parties will be notified and the Court Administrator is authorized to strike the setting.

2.16 When a Party is Incarcerated

In all cases in which a party is incarcerated, the party wishing to set a hearing must communicate with the Court Administrator at least 30 days before the proposed date for hearing, except with leave of court with good cause shown. Upon receiving a request, the Court Administrator will confer with the parties and the facility to determine the date and time for a setting. The party requesting the setting must give notice to all other parties. If the setting has been requested by the incarcerated party, the Court Administrator will announce ready on his or her behalf. The Court Administrator will arrange for the incarcerated party's transportation if the court has issued a bench warrant or will arrange for the incarcerated party to participate remotely. Other parties wishing to participate must appear in person, unless otherwise authorized by the court. The Court Administrator will advise the court assigned and the court will initiate the call to the incarcerated party. A record of an evidentiary hearing will be made if requested.

CHAPTER 3
ANNOUNCEMENT DOCKET AND THE ASSIGNMENT OF CASES
FOR SETTINGS ON THE CENTRAL DOCKET

3.1 Announcement Required

All matters, including in-order and preferential settings, on the Central Docket must be set pursuant to Chapter 2 of these rules, and announced by the parties pursuant to this Chapter.

3.2 Announcements

(a) Week to Announce for Non-Jury Settings

Non-jury settings on the Central Docket must be announced by the parties the week prior to the hearing.

(b) Week to Announce for Jury Trial Settings

Jury trial settings on the Central Docket must be announced by the parties during the week that is three weeks before the jury trial setting.

(c) Days and Times to Announce

Announcements will be taken beginning Monday at 8:00 a.m. and ending Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. During this period, parties must give their announcement of ready and an updated estimate of *time required for the entire hearing, on all matters set, for all participants*. Please note that a half-day hearing usually includes a break, and a full-day hearing includes breaks in the morning and afternoon as well as a lunch break. As a result, a half-day hearing generally provides less than three hours, and a full-day hearing generally provides less than six hours.

(d) How to Announce

Announcements may be made:

(i) Through Civil Calendaring Online on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website;

(ii) By email to TC.CivilDistrictAnnounce@traviscountytx.gov;

(iii) In person at the Civil and Family Courts Facility at the Office of the Court Administrator; or

(iv) By telephone at (512) 854-2484.

3.3 Motions for Continuance

Motions for continuance must be set on the Central Docket unless a case is specially assigned pursuant to Local Rule 2.6 or 10.2. If a Central Docket setting cannot be obtained under these rules, the continuance may be heard by the Duty Judge upon request to the Duty Judge. This Rule does not relieve a movant of the burden of delivering a copy of the motion and giving notice of the hearing in the manner and within the time provided by the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure.

The name and location of the Duty Judge designated to hear motions for continuance will be posted at the Civil and Family Courts Facility and on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website.

3.4 Call of Jury and Non-Jury Long Docket

All jury cases and all Non-Jury Long Docket matters will be called at or before 9:00 a.m. on Monday of the week in which they are set. For jury trials, the court may require that the parties attend docket call prior to the date of the jury trial setting. **Jury** cases not assigned at or before 9:00 a.m. on the Monday of the week set are subject to assignment at any time before noon on Wednesday of that week. **Non-Jury** Long Docket cases not assigned at or before the

9:00 a.m. docket call are subject to assignment at any time before noon on Thursday of that week as judges become available, and the parties must be ready to begin the trial or hearing when each case is reached.

The Court Administrator may excuse parties whose cases cannot be reached.

3.5 Notice of Visiting Judge Assignment and Procedure for Objection

All or part of any case may be assigned for trial or hearing to any Visiting Judge eligible for assignment under the Court Administration Act. At or before noon each Thursday, the Court Administrator will post a notice naming the Visiting Judge(s) who will be assigned for the following two weeks. This notice will be posted at the Civil and Family Courts Facility and on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website.

An objection to the assignment of a Visiting Judge to hear any case will be timely if the objection is delivered in writing or by email to the Court Administrator before the case is called for hearing. Objections must not be filed with the District Clerk. After the receipt of such an objection, the Court Administrator will not assign the case to that Visiting Judge. No such objection will be urged before or ruled upon by any Visiting Judge assigned by virtue of the Court Administration Act.

3.6 Failure to Properly Announce

A violation of these announcement rules may result in the hearing being canceled, moved to the bottom of the docket, or reset to another docket. Unannounced cases will be heard only at the discretion of the court.

CHAPTER 4
MATTERS PRELIMINARY TO TRIALS ON THE MERITS
ON THE CENTRAL DOCKET

4.1 No Motions the Week Before Trial

No hearings may be set during the week before a bench or jury trial, except for hearings on motions for continuance.

4.2 Jury Trial Pre-Trial Scheduling Order and Motions in *Limine*

Standing orders, posted online, govern the pre-trial schedule for jury trials and motions in *limine*. Any motion in *limine* requesting additional *limine* or a modification of the standing order will be heard by the trial judge. Counsel must not repeat or otherwise address the subject matter contained in the standing order except to seek a modification of the standing order.

4.3 Courtesy Copies

Provide the judge and opposing counsel with a courtesy copy of any pleadings and other documents you wish the court to consider.

CHAPTER 5
NOTICE TO TRIAL JUDGE OF POST-TRIAL PLEADINGS

5.1 When to Notify

Pleadings that are filed with the District Clerk are not forwarded by the District Clerk to the trial judge. Notice must be given directly to the trial judge when a party files one or more of the following post-trial pleadings:

(a) Request for Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (TEX. R. CIV. PROC. 296);

(b) Notice of Past Due Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (TEX. R. CIV. PROC. 296);

(c) Any affidavit of indigence filed in connection with an appeal (TEX. R. APP. PROC. 20.1);

(d) Motion for New Trial, or Motion to Modify, Correct, or Reform Judgment;

(e) Motion for Judgment Notwithstanding the Verdict; or

(f) Motions to Enter Judgment.

5.2 How to Notify

Notice must be given to the trial judge by the party filing the pleading by:

(a) Delivery of a copy of the pleading to the attention of the trial judge at the Office of the District Judges at the Civil and Family Courts Facility;

(b) Mail addressed to the trial judge at P.O. Box 1748, Austin, TX 78767-1748; or

(c) Email to the trial court's submission email address, which may be found on each court's webpage, with "Request for Post Trial Hearing" in the subject line of the email.

CHAPTER 6
MOTIONS TO WITHDRAW AS ATTORNEY OF RECORD
AND MOTIONS TO SUBSTITUTE ATTORNEYS

6.1 Inapplicability to Limited Appearances

This Chapter does *not* apply to a withdrawal or substitution by an attorney who has made a limited appearance; Chapter 20 governs withdrawal and substitution of a limited appearance.

6.2 Hearing Required for Motion to Withdraw

A hearing is required for a motion to withdraw *unless* the motion complies with Rule 10 of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure and is filed with:

(a) A written consent to the withdrawal signed by the withdrawing attorney's client(s);

(b) A written consent to the withdrawal signed by all other parties in the action who have appeared;

(c) A certificate of last known address of the client(s), containing the client's address, telephone number, email address, and, if available, fax number; and

(d) A certification that there are no rulings of the court that have yet to be reduced to writing.

6.3 Hearing Required for Motion to Substitute Attorneys

A hearing is required for a motion to substitute attorneys *unless* the motion complies with Rule 10 of the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, and is filed with:

(a) A written consent to the substitution signed by all other parties in the action who have appeared;

(b) A certificate of service notifying withdrawing attorney of the motion to substitute;

(c) The substituting attorney's name, State bar number; address, telephone number, email address, and, if available, fax number; and

(d) A certification that there are no rulings of the court that have yet to be reduced to writing.

6.4 If No Hearing Is Required

If no hearing is required under Local Rules 6.2 or 6.3, a party may present an order for signature in accordance with Local Rules Chapter 7.

6.5 Discretion of Court

(a) Even if all parties and counsel agree to a motion to withdraw, the court retains discretion to grant or deny a motion to withdraw.

(b) Even if all requirements of Rules 6.2 or 6.3 are met, the court retains discretion to require the motion to be set for hearing.

CHAPTER 7
UNCONTESTED AND EMERGENCY MATTERS

7.1 Uncontested Submission Procedures

Parties may submit a motion to be considered without a hearing in uncontested divorces, uncontested name changes, agreed orders in pending cases, orders concerning service of citation, notices of hearing for temporary orders prior to answer day, orders to appear, friendly suits, and other such uncontested matters, as outlined in the "Standing Order for Submission Procedures in Civil and Family Cases," located on the Court Forms and Documents portion of the Travis County Civil District Courts' website. Each court's submission email address is listed on its webpage.

Matters requiring emergency relief, urgent attention, quick approval, or approval by a definite date must not be forwarded for submission but must be presented pursuant to the remainder of this chapter.

All motions submitted for consideration without a hearing pursuant to this Local Rule must be filed in a new or existing case with the District Clerk's office prior to being submitted to the Court. The Court will not consider any motion in a case that has not been filed with the District Clerk.

7.2 Other Uncontested Matters

At the times and days posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website, if any, a judge will be available to sign agreed orders and to hear agreed divorces, uncontested name changes, other agreed orders in pending cases, orders concerning service of citation, notices of hearing for temporary orders prior to answer day and orders to appear. These matters will ordinarily be considered in the order in which the proposed orders are brought to the courtroom clerk.

7.3 Emergency Docket

A Duty Judge will be available by appointment to hear requests for *ex parte* relief and other emergency matters in cases on file with the District Clerk. The Court will not consider any motion in a case that has not been filed with the District Clerk. Notice of the name and location of the Duty Judge presiding over the emergency docket will be posted at the Civil and Family Courts Facility and on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website.

7.4 Emergency Matters to Be Heard by Duty Judge and Those to Be Heard by Judge Hearing CPS Docket

Requests for *ex parte* relief or any other emergency matter, except requests by the Department of Family Protective Services, must be presented to the Duty Judge by email to that court's submission email address, which may be found on each court's webpage. Requests for *ex parte* relief by the Department of Family & Protective Services must be presented to the judge hearing the CPS Docket, or that judge's designee, in the manner and at the times that judge directs. Only when the judge hearing the CPS Docket is unavailable to hear or designate a judge to hear an urgent matter may the Department seek *ex parte* relief from the Duty Judge.

7.5 Scheduling Appointment with Duty Judge for Emergency Matter

For requests for *ex parte* relief or any other emergency matter to be presented *to the Duty Judge, the applicant must schedule an appointment with the Duty Judge* by contacting the court staff directly, unless the request meets the exception stated in Local Rule 23.2.

7.6 Fully Advise the Court

A party presenting any application for an *ex parte* order must fully advise the court of the circumstances, particularly as to whether there has been any previous application for the

same or similar relief or whether the relief sought will conflict with any previous order, or whether the opposing party has counsel.

7.7 Fully Advise the Opposing Party

A party presenting any application for an *ex parte* order must fully advise the opposing party of the relief and hearing sought, unless at the time the hearing is sought or scheduled, the court waives this notice requirement.

7.8 Request for Withdrawal of Minor's Funds

When a request is to be made for withdrawal of funds maintained in the Registry of the Court for the benefit of a minor who has not yet reached legal age, the applicant must bring to the court, with the motion and proposed order, a Summary of Minor's Bank Account obtained from the District Clerk reflecting the status of the minor's account and indicating previous withdrawals, if any.

CHAPTER 8
DISMISSAL FOR WANT OF PROSECUTION BY THE COURT

8.1 Case Selection

The following cases are eligible for dismissal for want of prosecution *sua sponte* by the court:

(a) Cases on file for more than 180 days in which no answer has been filed;

(b) Cases on file for more than 18 months that are not set for trial and have had no filings or settings within 180 days; and

(c) Any other case designated by the court.

8.2 Copies to Court Administrator

A copy of notices, motions, and pleadings required to be filed by this Chapter also must be delivered to the Court Administrator.

8.3 Notice and Summary Dismissal if No Motion to Retain

The Court Administrator will give notice that certain cases will be dismissed for want of prosecution. Such matters will be dismissed summarily without further proceedings on the dismissal date indicated in the notice of dismissal or thereafter unless at least one party files a motion to retain that complies with the requirements of this Chapter. If counsel receives a notice of dismissal of a previously dismissed or concluded case, they may contact the District Clerk's office with documentation of the prior dismissal and the matter will be removed from the dismissal docket.

8.4 Docket Settings

No Central Docket settings may be obtained in cases set for dismissal until the dismissal docket process is complete, except with leave of court.

8.5 Motions to Retain and Objections to Motions to Retain

(a) Motions to retain must set forth the factual and legal basis for retaining the case and must be filed at least 14 days prior to the dismissal date specified in the notice of dismissal.

(b) Any objection to a motion to retain must be filed at least 7 days prior to the dismissal date specified in the notice of dismissal.

(c) If a timely motion to retain is filed and no timely objection is filed, the court may grant the motion or may set it for hearing.

(d) If a timely motion to retain and a timely objection are both filed, the court will consider the motion to retain on submission or instruct the parties to set the motion to retain for hearing.

8.6 Objection to Mediation

(a) Parties filing motions to retain must file any objection to mediation simultaneously with a motion to retain.

(b) Parties receiving notice of a motion to retain must file any objection to mediation at least 7 days prior to the dismissal date specified in the notice of dismissal.

(c) Objections to referral to mediation will be taken on submission without hearing.

8.7 No Discovery

No further discovery may be conducted in cases retained by the court and ordered to complete mediation unless permitted by court order. Further discovery will not extend the deadlines prescribed in this Chapter unless ordered by the court.

8.8. Trial Settings

Cases set for trial after entry of an order to retain may not be removed from the Central Docket by agreement.

CHAPTER 9
REMOTE PROCEEDINGS

9.1 In-Person Proceedings by Default

All hearings and trials (proceedings) will be in person unless (a) all parties agree and the proceeding is set and announced as remote with the Court Administrator's Office, or (b) a judge finds good cause to determine that a remote proceeding is appropriate, after notice and opportunity for objections to be heard.

9.2 Discretion of Court Related to Remote Proceedings

Despite agreement of the parties, a judge may determine that a remote proceeding is not appropriate and may require an in-person proceeding upon notice to all parties.

9.3 Requesting and Objecting to Remote Proceedings and Remote Participation of Witnesses

Procedures and instructions for remote proceedings and remote participation of witnesses are addressed in Texas Rule of Civil Procedure 21d as well as in Standing Orders and/or Emergency Orders posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website.

9.4 Procedures for Remote Proceedings

Arrangements for remote proceedings must be made prior to the date and time of the proceeding.

WARNING: Remote proceedings will not be permitted if parties fail to comply with Local Rule 3.2 (duty to announce).

CHAPTER 10
JUDICIAL REVIEW OF ACTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES

10.1 Definitions and Applicability

(a) For the purposes of this Chapter, the following definitions apply:

(i) "Chapter 10 Case" means any case to which this Chapter applies as described in this Rule.

(ii) "Administrative Appeal" means any proceeding for judicial review of a final decision in a contested case by an agency, with the exception of cases requiring a trial *de novo*.

(iii) "Enforcement Action" means any proceeding brought by or in the name of the State to enforce agency orders, commissions, or subpoenas.

(b) This Chapter applies to:

(i) Administrative appeals;

(ii) Actions challenging a pending contested case, including injunctions or writs of mandamus;

(iii) Actions challenging agency rules or agency rulemaking proceedings;

(iv) Declaratory judgments involving a state agency brought pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act;

(v) Tax refund and tax protest cases against the Texas Comptroller, regardless of whether they require a trial *de novo;*

(vi) Actions challenging agency rulings or decisions that do not require trial *de novo*, regardless of whether they resulted from a contested case, as defined in the Administrative Procedure Act; and

(vii) Actions brought by or against a state agency which the court determines would benefit from the procedures of this Chapter.

(c) This Chapter does not apply to:

(i) Enforcement Actions, except in appropriate circumstances upon order of the court;

(ii) Actions brought pursuant to the Public Information Act or Open Meetings Act; or

(iii) Actions subject to *de novo* or "modified *do novo*" trial.

10.2 Assignment of Cases

(a) Notice of Chapter 10 Case to Local Administrative Judge. A party who files a Chapter 10 Case must notify in writing the Local Administrative Judge, as specified below in section (b). A notice under this Subsection also must be provided after all parties have answered, unless a party seeks a temporary restraining order or emergency relief pursuant to Rule 10.3. The notification must contain:

(i) A list of all parties to the case;

(ii) Their attorneys of record;

(iii) The attorneys' addresses, telephone numbers, and electronic mail addresses, if applicable; and

(iv) For any case arising from the same or related agency docket or challenging the same rules or rulemaking procedure:

1. the style and cause number,

2. whether it has been assigned, and

3. if so, to whom.

(b) Delivery to Local Administrative Judge. In addition to filing, the notice must be submitted to the Local Administrative Judge by:

(i) Delivering the notice to the attention of the Local Administrative Judge at the Office of the District Judges at the Civil and Family Courts Facility;

(ii) Mailing the notice to the Local Administrative Judge at P.O. Box 1748, Austin, TX 78767-1748; or

(iii) Emailing the notice to: LocalAdministrativeJudge@traviscountytx.gov.

(c) Assignment by Local Administrative Judge. The Local Administrative Judge will assign the case, generally on a rotating basis, provided, however, that the Local Administrative Judge may assign a case out of rotation, in the interest of judicial economy, on (1) the Local Administrative Judge's own motion, (2) a written request signed by all the parties, or, (3) if all parties do not agree to such a request, upon a written motion that sets forth reasons why in the interest of judicial economy a particular judge should be assigned. The Local Administrative Judge will inform the parties by letter when a case has been assigned.

10.3 Applications for Temporary Restraining Order or Other Emergency Relief

(a) An application for a temporary restraining order or request for emergency relief in a case not yet assigned may be heard by the Duty Judge.

(b) If seeking a temporary restraining order or other emergency relief, the applicant must, contemporaneously with or immediately after seeking a temporary restraining order or other emergency relief, provide the notice described in Rules 10.2.

(c) Advance notice of the application for a temporary restraining order must be provided by email and by telephone to the party or parties to the agency proceeding and to counsel if the party was represented at agency proceeding.

(d) If notice is not provided pursuant to Subsection (c), a statement of the reason for any failure to provide notice.

(e) In all cases, prior notice must be given to counsel for a governmental entity of any application to restrain governmental action.

(f) Notice of any hearing to restrain agency action must be provided to the Office of the Attorney General of Texas.

(g) This Rule is in addition to and does not alter or excuse specific notice requirements imposed by law or rule.

10.4 Hearings

(a) The judge to whom a case is assigned will hear all matters relating to the case.

(b) All settings before a judge to whom a case is assigned must be scheduled through the office of the assigned judge but should also be set as an in-order hearing before the assigned judge on the Central Docket.

(c) Before setting a final hearing on the merits of an administrative appeal, all counsel must confer regarding:

(i) the date of any hearing;

(ii) the amount of time to be requested for the hearing (although the time to be allotted to argument is in the discretion of the court); and

(iii) if there are multiple parties, the order of presentation.

(d) The parties must announce at docket call in the usual manner for all proceedings before the assigned judge set on the Central Docket.

10.5 Briefing for Administrative Appeals

(a) Administrative appeals must be briefed by the parties in advance of the hearing on the merits.

(b) The parties must attempt to establish a briefing schedule by agreement and must notify the judge to whom the case is assigned of the agreed dates.

(c) Unless otherwise instructed by the assigned judge, all briefing must be filed and delivered to the court at least 30 days prior to the date of the hearing on the merits.

(d) Briefs must conform to the "Requisites of Briefs," in the Texas Rules of Appellate Procedure, including the limits on length, as they apply to an administrative appeal in the courts of appeal, *except:*

(i) do not include a statement regarding oral argument; and

(ii) do include a glossary of technical terms, which is not counted in determining the limit on the length of the brief.

(e) Failure to brief an issue for the merits hearing waives the issue, but failure to argue an issue at the merits hearing does not waive the issue.

(f) Each party must deliver their brief either digitally or in hard copy, pursuant to the instructions of the assigned judge.

10.6 Required Appendix to Administrative Appeal Briefing

(a) When the Plaintiff delivers the copies of the opening brief, the Plaintiff *must* also deliver to the judge, either digitally or in hard copy, pursuant to the

instructions of the assigned judge, in a **separate** clearly labeled appendix, courtesy copies of:

(i) The agency's final order, including any report or recommendation incorporated or adopted by reference in the order; and

(ii) The Plaintiff's motion for rehearing filed with the agency, or that portion of the motion necessary to show that the points of error briefed were included in the motion.

(b) Appendices must be served on all parties but are not required to be filed with the Clerk**.**

10.7 Optional Appendices to Administrative Appeal Briefing

(a) In addition to the required appendix, any party *may* also provide to the judge, either digitally or in hard copy, pursuant to the instructions of the assigned judge in a **separate** clearly labeled appendix, courtesy copies of:

(i) Material excerpts from the administrative record pertinent to the points briefed;

(ii) Material statutes, rules, regulations, and other law sources that may not be readily accessible; and

(iii) Authorities that the party's counsel considers to be particularly material to the argument.

(b) Appendices must be served on all parties but are not required to be filed with the Clerk**.**

10.8 Administrative Record in Administrative Appeals

(a) In Administrative Appeals, the party or parties challenging the agency action are responsible for having the administrative record in the courtroom at the

time and date designated for the hearing on the merits. The process for requesting the administrative record is posted on the District Clerk's website.

(b) The Attorney General must cooperate with and provide reasonable assistance to the party or parties challenging the agency action in having the administrative record in the courtroom at the time and date designated for the hearing on the merits.

(c) This Rule does not affect the agency's statutory duty to file the administrative record with the District Clerk.

(d) If the administrative record has not been filed in advance of the designated hearing date, counsel for the agency is responsible for having the administrative record in the courtroom at the time of the hearing.

10.9 Briefing in Other Administrative Matters

Chapter 10 cases that are not Administrative Appeals may be briefed in accordance with Rules 10.5 – 10.7 upon agreement of the parties or by order of the court.

10. 10 Dismissal for Want of Prosecution

Upon notice and hearing on a motion of any party or the court's own motion, a Chapter 10 case may be dismissed for failure of the party or parties bringing the suit to prosecute the suit with reasonable diligence.

10.11 Alternative Dispute Resolution

Chapter 10 cases are not referred for mediation pursuant to Chapter 13 of these Rules.

CHAPTER 11
DRAFTS OF JUDGMENTS, DECREES, AND ORDERS TO BE SIGNED BY JUDGE

11.1 No Filing of Proposed Orders

Proposed or draft orders must not be filed with the clerk as stand-alone documents. Proposed or draft orders may be filed with the clerk only as attachments to other pleadings.

11.2 Approval as to Form

So far as practicable, every draft of a judgment, decree, or order to be signed by a judge or associate judge must be signed by all parties evidencing approval as to form before it is presented to the judge. Each attorney's signature block on these documents must identify the parties represented by that attorney.

11.3 Presentation of Orders After Hearing

Draft orders approved as to form must be presented to the judge who decided the matter unless instructed to present it to any judge.

11.4 Orders to be on Separate Page

A draft of an order must not be typed on the same page with a pleading, motion, certificate of service, or any part thereof, and each such draft must have a heading showing the cause number, the style of the case, and the court in which it is pending.

The signature line for the judge to sign proposed orders must not be on a separate page but must be on a page with other text.

11.5 Date of Signing Only

The word "entered" must not be used to show the date on which a judgment, decree, or order is signed.

CHAPTER 12
RULES OF DECORUM

12.1 Conduct of All Persons

The reference to "courtrooms" in this chapter refers to both in-person and virtual courtrooms.

All persons entering the courtroom must be dressed in clothing befitting the dignity and solemnity of the court proceedings. All lawyers must dress in business attire and all other persons must dress business casual, at a minimum. Business casual includes neat jeans and tennis shoes. No person should wear shorts, tank tops, flip flops, or t-shirts with advertising, pictures, writing, or cartoons.

In the courtrooms, there must be:

- No talking or other noise that interferes with court proceedings.
- No talking on any electronic devices. Any use of electronic devices during court proceedings must not be disruptive or disrespectful of court proceedings and all such devices must be silenced.
- No chewing gum.
- No tobacco use.
- No eating.
- No reading newspapers or magazines.
- No soda bottles, cups, or beverage containers. You may only bring a water bottle with a lid or use court-provided water pitchers and cups.
- No feet on tables or chairs.
- No other behavior that is disruptive or disrespectful of court proceedings.

- No photographs or recordings unless in compliance with Texas Rule of Civil Procedure 18c and Chapter 16 of these Local Rules.

When the court is called to order, complete order must be observed.

When the judge or jury enters or exits the courtroom, all persons must stand.

All persons shall refer to and address other persons in the proceedings respectfully and impersonally, by using appropriate titles and surnames rather than first names.

12.2 <u>Conduct of Parties and Counsel</u>

(a) Attorneys must advise their clients and witnesses of these rules; self-represented parties must familiarize themselves and their witnesses with these rules.

(b) All parties must promptly enter the courtroom before the scheduled time for each court session.

(c) All objections, arguments, and other comments must be directed to the judge or jury and not to opposing parties or counsel.

(d) While a party is addressing the judge or jury, no one else may stand for any purpose except to claim the right to interrupt the person who is speaking.

(e) No one should approach the bench without leave of court, unless otherwise instructed, and no one should ever lean on the bench.

(f) Unless otherwise instructed by the court, parties must remain seated at the counsel tables at all times except:

(i) When the judge enters or exits the courtroom;

(ii) When addressing the judge or jury; and

(iii) Whenever it may be proper to handle documents, exhibits, or other evidence, or to approach a witness, at which time leave of court is not

required, unless otherwise instructed. Counsel must anticipate any need to move furniture, appliances, or easels, and must make advance arrangements with the court. Tables must not be moved during court sessions.

CHAPTER 13
REFERRAL OF CASES TO MEDIATION OR OTHER ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

13.1 Purpose and Scope

This chapter governs the referral of cases to mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution in the Travis County Civil District Courts, as authorized by statute. Where applicable, this chapter applies to:

(a) The mandatory referral to mediation;

(b) The mandatory referral to mediation of cases set on the dismissal for want of prosecution docket, as set forth in Chapter 8 of these Local Rules; and

(c) The discretionary referral of other cases to mediation by a judge, on the court's own motion, on a motion by a party, or by agreement of the parties.

Matters related to mediation are confidential in accordance with applicable rules and/or statutes.

13.2 Policy for Referral of Cases by Civil District Courts

It is the policy of the Travis County Civil District Courts to encourage the peaceable resolution of disputes and the early settlement of pending litigation by identifying cases appropriate for referral to mediation. Parties are also encouraged to attempt to settle their cases without mediation.

13.3 Cases to be Referred to Mediation

(a) All cases set for trial on the merits on the jury docket or on the Non-Jury Long Docket [Local Rule 2.9(a)], including cases set before an Associate Judge, are automatically referred to pre-trial mediation, except as provided in section 13.4 below.

(b) All cases in which notice of dismissal for want of prosecution has been given are automatically referred to mediation, if retained on the docket pursuant to Local Rule 8.8(a).

(c) Any other case deemed appropriate, in the discretion of a judge, may be referred to mediation. In determining whether to refer a case to mediation, the court may give consideration to such factors as the subject matter of the case, the amount in controversy, the complexity of the case, the number of parties, the interest of the parties in pursuing mediation, the availability of mediation, and the likelihood of settlement by mediation.

(d) Nothing in this chapter prevents a case from being submitted to mediation or another form of alternate dispute resolution at any time by the agreement of the parties, by motion of one of the parties, or on the court's own motion.

13.4 <u>Cases Exempt or Excused from Referral to Mediation Procedures</u>

(a) The following types of cases are exempt from automatic referral to mediation pursuant to this rule:

(i) Administrative appeals challenging an agency order or a challenge to agency rule;

(ii) Cases brought by the Department of Family Protective Services under the Family Code; or

(iii) Cases brought by the Travis County Attorney's office under Title 4 of the Texas Family Code. Although a case is exempt from automatic referral, a party may elect to file a motion to refer the case to mediation.

(b) Cases are excused from automatic referral to mediation when a party files a notice that the dispute was submitted to mediation or another alternate dispute resolution process prior to the date the setting was obtained.

(c) A party to a case may file a motion objecting to the automatic referral to mediation. Any objection to mediation will be decided by the court in the exercise of its discretion. Special consideration may be given to whether or how cases are mediated when there are allegations of domestic violence. A hearing on the objection must be set and heard before the beginning of the docket announcement period for the date of trial or the objection to the referral is deemed waived. If an objection to the referral is waived or denied, parties must complete mediation before the announcement period for the date of trial to avoid being moved to the bottom of the list of cases set for the same date.

13.5 Discovery to Continue

The setting of a case and the corresponding referral to pre-trial mediation procedure does not automatically stay discovery. Upon agreement of the parties or order of the court after notice and hearing, discovery may be stayed.

13.6 General Procedure

(a) Authority to Settle at Mediation and Parties Required to Participate

(i) All parties participating in mediation pursuant to this chapter must be prepared to negotiate openly and knowledgeably in a mutual, good faith effort to reach a fair settlement.

(ii) Each party, and a person with authority to settle the case on a party's behalf (such as an insurer or other entity providing indemnity to a party), must be present during the entire mediation, unless the parties

otherwise agree in writing, or upon motion, the presence of such a person or party has been excused by order of the court.

(iii) If a party is the state or a political subdivision, the party must have present an agent whose position is commensurate with the pre-mediation demand or offer and whose recommendation to approve a mediated settlement will be meaningful to the person or body whose approval of the mediated settlement is required.

(iv) If a party thinks it unreasonable to have a person participate in the mediation as required by **(ii)** or **(iii)**, and if not otherwise agreed in writing, a pre-mediation conference must be held with the mediator to negotiate who will be present at the mediation.

(v) If a party thinks that some other party has not designated an agent in compliance with this section, a pre-mediation conference must be held with the mediator to negotiate who will be present and participate at the mediation.

(vi) If attendance cannot be negotiated, a motion may be filed with the court to resolve the issue.

(b) **<u>Before the Mediation</u>**

(i) The parties and their attorneys are responsible for designating a date and time for the mediation.

(ii) The parties must agree in advance upon the minimum amount of time they will commit to mediation, or the parties may agree in advance to place that decision in the hands of the mediator. The time committed to

mediation excludes travel time to or from the place that mediation is to occur.

(iii) The minimum amount of time must be commensurate with the dispute. All mediators and parties are expected to commit sufficient time. If the parties cannot agree, a pre-mediation conference will be held with the mediator to negotiate the time. If time cannot be negotiated, a motion may be filed with the court to resolve the issue. Travel time is outside the time committed to mediation.

(c) **Termination of the Mediation**

The mediation must be terminated:

(i) By settlement;

(ii) By declaration of the mediator of an impasse; or

(iii) By the passage of the time agreed upon in advance for mediation, although the parties can agree to extend the time.

13.7 **Timing and Announcing of Mediation**

(a) The mediation procedure must be completed prior to the docket call announcement period.

(b) When making an announcement for either a jury setting or a non-jury long docket setting during the announcement period, all parties must include in their announcement of time a statement as to whether or not mediation has been completed.

CHAPTER 14
APPLICATION FOR INITIAL AUTHORITY TO SERVE CIVIL PROCESS
IN TRAVIS COUNTY (RULE 103 ORDERS)

14.1 Compliance with Supreme Court Rules Required

All persons seeking authority to serve process in Travis County, Texas must comply with the certification requirements for Persons Authorized to Serve Process as promulgated by the Texas Supreme Court and administered by the Texas Process Service Review Board.

14.2 Process for Application

A form application for authority to serve process in Travis County, Texas, is posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website. Completed applications must be submitted to the Local Administrative Judge.

14.3 Action by Local Administrative Judge

If the Local Administrative Judge finds the applicant qualified, an order authorizing the applicant to serve process will be signed and filed with the District Clerk. When signing such an order, the Local Administrative Judge is authorized to act for each and every court. The District Clerk will maintain all such applications and orders in a central file. The orders will be numbered chronologically.

14.4 Requirements for Return of Service

When a return is required, a person authorized to serve process must state in his or her return that he or she is

(a) Not less than eighteen years of age;

(b) Not a party to or interested in the outcome of the suit; and

(c) Authorized by written order to serve process, and the number of such blanket written order.

14.5 Authority of Local Administrative Judge

A person authorized to serve citation and other notices has no right to or interest in continued authorization. This chapter may be amended or repealed at any time. The Local Administrative Judge may vacate any order made under this chapter at any time.

14.6 Expiration of Authorization

All orders for blanket authority expire when the applicant or person authorized is no longer certified or approved by the Texas Process Service Review Board, or on vacation of the order by the Local Administrative Judge.

CHAPTER 15
Reserved for Expansion

CHAPTER 16
RULES GOVERNING THE RECORDING, BROADCASTING OR PHOTOGRAPHING OF COURT PROCEEDINGS

The following Rules govern the recording, broadcasting, or photographing of persons, objects, and proceedings in the Civil District Courts of Travis County, and their Associate Judges.

16.1 Definitions

(a) **"Courtroom"** means both in-person and virtual courtrooms.

(b) **"Court"** means the particular judge or associate judge before whom the proceeding will be held.

(c) **"Recording, Broadcasting, or Photographing"** means any visual or audio recording, broadcasting, or photographing by any equipment, any means, and any individual or entity.

16.2 Recording, Broadcasting, or Photographing Inside a Courtroom Is Not Permitted by Anyone, Absent Court Approval

The recording, broadcasting, or photographing of any person, object, or proceeding inside the courtroom is not permitted unless previously authorized by the court. Any individual or entity who violates this Rule may be subject to punishment by contempt and/or being removed from the Civil and Family Courts Facility.

16.3 When Recording, Broadcasting, or Photographing Permitted

(a) **Investiture or Ceremonial Proceedings,** If the recording, broadcasting, or photographing is of investiture or ceremonial proceedings, permission and the manner are determined solely by the court, with or without guidance from this Rule. If the recording, broadcasting, or photographing is desired for

other than investiture or ceremonial proceedings, the provisions of this Rule governs.

(b) **Written Order Required.** Recording, broadcasting, or photographing is permitted only on written order of the court. A person wishing to record, broadcast, or photograph any person, object, or proceeding in a physical or virtual courtroom must file with the District Clerk a request to do so in the particular proceeding. The request must state:

(i) The case style and number;

(ii) The date and time when the proceeding is to begin;

(iii) The name of the requesting individual or entity;

(iv) The type of recording, broadcasting, or photographing; and

(v) The type and extent of equipment to be used.

A copy of the request must also be delivered to the court, Court Administrator, all counsel of record and all self-represented parties. Such request must be made in time to afford the attorneys and parties sufficient time to confer, to contact their witnesses, and to be fully heard by the court on the questions of whether the recording, broadcasting, or photographing should be allowed and, if so, what conditions, if any, must be imposed. Whether or not consent of the parties or witnesses is obtained, the court may in its discretion, and considering any relevant factors, deny, limit, or terminate the recording, broadcasting, or photographing.

(c) **Consent Forms.** If the recording, broadcasting, or photographing is sought with consent, consent forms adopted by the court must be used to evidence the consent of the parties and witnesses. Original signed consent forms of the

parties must be attached to and filed with the request for order. Consent forms of the witnesses must be obtained in the manner directed by the court. No witness or party should give consent to the recording, broadcasting, or photographing of a proceeding in exchange for payment or other consideration, of any kind or character, either directly or indirectly. No one should pay or offer to pay any consideration in exchange for such consent.

16.4 Recording, Broadcasting, or Photographing without Consent

If the recording, broadcasting, or photographing is sought without consent, the decision to allow such coverage is discretionary and will be made by the court on a case-by-case basis. Objections to the recording, broadcasting, or photographing must not be conclusory but must state the specific and demonstrable injury alleged to result from the recording, broadcasting, or photographing. If the court denies the request, it will set forth in its order the findings upon which such denial is based.

In determining an application, the court will consider all relevant factors, including but not limited to:

(a) The type of case involved;

(b) Whether the recording, broadcasting, or photographing would cause harm to any participants;

(c) Whether the recording, broadcasting, or photographing would interfere with the fair administration of justice, advancement of a fair trial, or the rights of the parties;

(d) Whether the recording, broadcasting, or photographing would interfere with any law enforcement activity;

(e) The objections of any of the parties, prospective witnesses, victims, or other participants in the proceeding;

(f) The physical structure of the courtroom and the likelihood that any equipment required for recording, broadcasting, or photographing proceedings can be installed and operated without disturbance to those proceedings or any other proceedings in the Civil and Family Courts Facility;

(g) The extent to which the recording, broadcasting, or photographing would be barred by law in the proceeding; and

(h) The fact that any party, prospective witness, victim, or other participant in the proceeding is a child, to which fact the court will give great weight.

16.5 Media Coverage Prohibited

Recording, broadcasting, or photographing of proceedings held in chambers, proceedings closed to the public, and jury selection is prohibited. Audio or close-up video or photographic coverage of conferences between an attorney and client, witness, or aide, between attorneys, or between counsel and the court at the bench is prohibited.

16.6 Coverage of Jurors Prohibited

Visual recording, broadcasting, or photographing of potential jurors and jurors in the Civil and Family Courts Facility is prohibited except when the physical layout of the courtroom makes it impossible to conduct visual recording, broadcasting, or photographing of the proceedings without including the jury, and the court so finds. In such cases visual recording, broadcasting, or photographing is allowed only if the jury is in the background of some other subject and only if individual jurors are not identifiable.

16.7 Equipment and Personnel

The court may, among other things:

(a) Require that a person seeking to record, broadcast, or photograph a proceeding demonstrate or display the equipment that will be used;

(b) Prohibit equipment that produces distracting sound or light;

(c) Prohibit signal lights or devices showing when equipment is operating, or require their concealment;

(d) Prohibit moving lights, flash attachments, or sudden light changes;

(e) Require the use of the courtroom's existing video, audio, and lighting systems, if any;

(f) Specify the placement of personnel and equipment;

(g) Determine the amount of equipment to be allowed in the courtroom;

(h) Require pooling of equipment if more than one person wishes to record, broadcast, or photograph a proceeding;

(i) Require that operators not move equipment or enter or leave the courtroom while the court is in session, or otherwise cause a distraction. All equipment must be in place in advance of the proceeding or session; and

(j) Require that identifying marks, call letters, words and symbols must be concealed on all equipment. Personnel must not display any identifying insignia on their clothing.

16.8 No Delay of Proceedings

No proceeding or session must be delayed or continued for the sole purpose of allowing recording, broadcasting, or photographing, whether because of installation of equipment, obtaining consent, conduct of the proceeding related to the recording,

broadcasting, or photographing, or other questions. To assist those preparing in advance for recording, broadcasting, or photographing proceedings, and when requested to do so:

(a) The court will attempt to make the courtroom available when not in use for the purpose of installing equipment;

(b) Counsel (to the extent they deem their client's rights will not be jeopardized) must make witness lists available; and,

(c) The Court Administrator on request will inform those requesting to record, broadcast, or photograph proceedings in a particular matter of settings in that matter.

16.9 Official Record

Any product of recording, broadcasting, or photographing of a proceeding pursuant to these Rules will not be considered as part of the official court record.

CHAPTER 17
LOCAL RULES OF ADMINISTRATION FOR
THE DISTRICT AND STATUTORY COUNTY COURTS

17.1 Authority of Court

As provided in the Texas Government Code, any civil case filed in the District Courts or the County Courts-at-Law of Travis County may be heard by any District Court or County Court-at-Law of Travis County.

17.2 Authorization of Court Administrator

When assigning cases, the Court Administrator of the District Courts is authorized to assign each available judge of the County Courts-at-Law to hear any matter.

17.3 Assignment of Case to County Court at Law

The Local Administrative Judge may assign all or part of a District Court case to a particular County Court-at-Law Judge pursuant to Rule 2.6 of the Local Rules of the District Courts.

CHAPTER 18
INTERPRETERS

18.1 Arrange in Advance

A party who needs a foreign language interpreter may (a) make arrangements directly with a qualified interpreter at the party's expense, or (b) may seek to qualify for appointment of an interpreter under the Travis County Civil District Courts' Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan posted online at the Travis County Civil District Courts' website. A party who needs an interpreter for a deaf person must make arrangements directly with Travis County Services for the Deaf, which will provide an interpreter free of charge.

When a party needs a foreign language or deaf interpreter or plans to call a witness who needs a foreign language or deaf interpreter, the party, when setting the hearing or trial, must inform the Staff Services Coordinator, or their designee in the Court Administrator's Office, that an interpreter will be needed, and that they have made arrangements with a qualified interpreter or that they are seeking to qualify for appointment. A non-moving party who needs interpretive services must confirm that an interpreter will be available at the hearing or trial and notify the Court Administrator as soon as possible, but not later than three days in advance of the hearing or trial.

18.2 Judge May Appoint

The court may appoint an interpreter at the court's discretion.

18.3 When Certified or Licensed Court Interpreter Required

For foreign language interpretation, a licensed court interpreter, as defined in Section 57 of the Texas Government Code, is required whenever possible under reasonable circumstances.

Non-state court certified interpreters may be utilized for uncontested matters or when there is no available Texas court certified interpreter within a 75-mile range. A certified court interpreter is required for deaf interpretation.

CHAPTER 19
PROCEEDINGS BEFORE TAX MASTERS IN DELINQUENT PROPERTY TAX COLLECTION CASES AND PROCEEDINGS BEFORE ASSOCIATE JUDGES IN OTHER CIVIL CASES

19.1 Referral to Tax Master or Associate Judge

(a) Pursuant to statute the District Courts have appointed Tax Masters to hear certain matters specified by these Rules and by these Rules refer such matters to the Tax Masters.

(b) Pursuant to statute the District Courts have appointed Civil Associate Judges to hear certain matters specified by the Rules and by these Rules refer such matters to the Associate Judges.

19.2 Authority of Tax Master and Associate Judge

(a) A Tax Master may hear all matters relating to delinquent property tax suits over which the District Courts have jurisdiction.

(b) An Associate Judge may hear all matters authorized by the Government Code to be heard by an Associate Judge in civil cases over which the District Courts have jurisdiction.

19.3 Settings Before Tax Masters and Associate Judges

(a) Matters set before a Tax Master will be set on the days and times reflected on a docket schedule published from time to time by the Court Administrator. The current docket schedule may be obtained from the Court Administrator. Notice of the location of the docket calls and hearings will be posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website.

(b) Matters referred to an Associate Judge will be set as determined by the District Judges.

19.4 Delivery of Request for *De Novo* Hearing

A person requesting a *de novo* hearing before a District Judge must deliver a copy of the request to the Court Administrator on the same day that the request is filed with the District Clerk.

CHAPTER 20
LIMITED APPEARANCE, WITHDRAWAL, & SUBSTITUTION

Consistent with Texas Disciplinary Rule of Professional Conduct 1.02(b), an attorney may limit the scope, objectives, and general methods of representation if the client consents after consultation. This rule addresses the responsibilities to the court of an attorney who wishes to make a limited appearance in court. It also addresses the responsibilities of opposing counsel regarding service.

20.1 Scope of Limitation

An attorney who files a Notice of Limited Appearance has no responsibility to the court for any matter outside the scope of the Notice except as provided in this rule.

20.2 Notice of Limited Appearance

An attorney making a limited appearance must file a Notice of Limited Appearance. The Notice must state the hearing to which the limited appearance pertains, and, if the appearance does not extend to all issues to be considered at the hearing, the Notice must identify the discrete issues covered by the appearance. An attorney may file a Notice of Limited Appearance for more than one hearing in a case.

20.3 Ruling and Order

If, pursuant to a Notice of Limited Appearance, an attorney appears at a hearing, the attorney's obligation to the court continues on the matters within the scope of the Notice of Limited Appearance until an order is filed that rules on those matters, except as follows. If the hearing was on a preliminary or temporary issue and the court defers its ruling until final hearing, the attorney's obligation to the court ends with the hearing at which the attorney appeared.

The fact that an order is subject to review by the trial court at a later date does not extend the attorney's obligation to the court.

20.4 Responsibilities of Opposing Counsel regarding service

Whenever service is required or permitted to be made upon a party represented by an attorney who has filed a Notice of Limited Appearance, service regarding matters outside the scope of the Notice of Limited Appearance must be made on the party. Any notice upon an attorney regarding matters outside the scope of the Notice of Limited Appearance is not effective notice on that party. Service upon a party must be at the address listed for the party in the Notice of Limited Appearance.

20.5 Withdrawal and Substitution

A motion to withdraw from representation or from a limited appearance must be presented at a hearing after notice to the client and to all other parties *unless* the moving attorney:

(a) Files written consent to the withdrawal signed by all other parties;

(b) Files a written consent to the withdrawal signed by the client;

(c) Files a certificate stating the last known mailing address of the client; and

(d) Files a certificate stating that he or she has completed all the tasks required by a Notice of Limited Appearance, if any, including obtaining a ruling and filing an order on any matter presented.

If a motion to withdraw and to substitute another attorney includes an appearance by another attorney pursuant to the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, that appearance will satisfy the requirements of subparagraphs (b) and (c) above but will not satisfy the requirement of subparagraph (a).

If an attorney is substituting in a limited appearance, the certificate required by paragraph (d) must state that the substituting attorney has assumed responsibility for all uncompleted matters within the scope of the Notice of Limited Appearance, and it must be signed by both the withdrawing and the substituting attorney.

Even if all parties and counsel agree to a motion to withdraw, the court retains discretion to determine only whether the attorney has fulfilled the attorney's responsibilities to the court pursuant to the Notice of Limited Appearance and this rule and whether any substituting attorney has assumed any remaining responsibilities.

CHAPTER 21
SETTING CASES ON THE FAMILY AND CPS DOCKETS

21.1 Long Docket Cases

All settings that are longer than 3 hours in family cases must be set on the Family Docket on any Monday at 8:30 a.m. Long Docket cases must be announced pursuant to Chapter 3.

21.2 Short Docket Settings

All settings that are 3 hours or shorter in family cases must be set on the Family Docket at 8:30 a.m. on any Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday. Short Docket cases must be announced pursuant to Chapter 3.

21.3 Continuances

Continuances for settings on the Family Docket are heard every Thursday at 1:30 p.m. Continuances of longer than 3 hour merits settings are heard the Thursday one week before the setting. All others are heard the Thursday before the next week setting. This Rule does not relieve a movant of the burden of delivering a copy of the motion and giving notice of the hearing in the manner and within the time provided by the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure.

21.4 CPS Docket

The judge hearing the CPS Docket will instruct litigants regarding the setting of hearings. CPS Court forms, Standing Orders, practices and procedures, and related documents are available on the CPS page of the Travis County Civil District Courts' website. All contested termination merits trials must be set on the Central Docket. Agreed terminations must be set in accordance with the documents referred to above.

CHAPTER 22
PROCEEDINGS BEFORE ASSOCIATE JUDGES IN FAMILY LAW CASES

22.1 Appointment of Associate Judges

Pursuant to statute, the District Courts have appointed Associate Judges to hear certain matters specified by these Local Rules and by these Local Rules do refer these matters to the Associate Judges.

22.2 Authority of Associate Judges

An Associate Judge may hear all matters relating to suits over which the District Courts have jurisdiction under TEX. FAM. CODE. ANN. Title 1, Chapter 45, Title 4, and Title 5.

22.3 Objections to Associate Judges.

(a) A party may file an objection to the assignment of an Associate Judge to hear any trial on the merits. A trial on the merits is any trial in which a party seeks a final adjudication from which an appeal may be taken to a court of appeals. The objection must be in writing.

(b) The time for filing an objection is:

(i) On or before ten days from receipt of a notice of setting on the Family docket; or

(ii) On or before ten days from receipt of notice that a judge referred a specific case to an Associate Judge for a trial on the merits.

(c) A person filing an objection must deliver a copy of the objection to all parties and to the Court Administrator on the same day the objection is filed with the District Clerk.

(d) A party may file a motion to have any other matter heard originally before a District Judge instead of an Associate Judge. The motion must be in writing and

must specify the grounds in support of the motion. The party filing the motion must set the motion for hearing by a judge with notice to all parties as required by the applicable rules of civil procedure.

22.4 Settings Before Associate Judges

Matters set before an Associate Judge will be set on the days and times reflected on the docket schedule published by the Court Administrator from time to time, and may include specialty dockets such as uncontested terminations of parental rights, adoptions and confirmations of foreign adoptions, and Domestic Relations Office cases, child protection cases, and County Attorney family violence cases. The current docket schedule may be obtained from the Court Administrator.

22.5 Notice of Right to *De Novo* Hearing

Notice of the right to a *de novo* hearing will be posted outside the courtroom of each Associate Judge or will be otherwise communicated by each Associate Judge.

22.6 Request for *De Novo* Hearing

Any person requesting a *de novo* hearing before a judge must also deliver a copy of the request to the Court Administrator on the same day that the request is filed with the District Clerk.

CHAPTER 23
PRE-TRIAL PROCEDURE IN FAMILY LAW CASES

23.1 Standing Orders

The parties in any divorce suit or suit affecting the parent-child relationship (which include, but are not limited to, modification suits, paternity suits, and original suits) filed in Travis County are subject to the Travis County Standing Order for Family Law Cases and any amendments thereto. This and other applicable Standing Orders may be found on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website. When requesting a temporary restraining order or temporary injunction, counsel must not repeat or otherwise address the subject matter contained in the standing order except to seek a modification of the standing order.

23.2 Application for TRO to be Served with Citation

Notwithstanding Chapter 7, in a family law case, a request for a TRO to be served with citation may be presented *ex parte* at the uncontested docket if supported by an affidavit *and* if the relief would not affect the possession of or access to a child. When requesting a temporary restraining order or temporary injunction, counsel must not repeat or otherwise address the subject matter contained in Travis County Standing Order for Family Law Cases except to seek a modification of such Standing Order. All other emergency relief is governed by Chapter 7.

23.3 Pre-Trial Procedure Before a Final Trial on the Merits

Before the final trial on the merits in any divorce suit or suit affecting the parent-child relationship (which include, but are not limited to, modification suits, paternity suits, and original suits), each party must prepare and deliver pre-trial forms and any amended pleadings as follows:

(a) **<u>Forms Required Depend on Type of Suit and Issue at Trial</u>**

(i) In a divorce suit, each party must prepare and deliver a Proposed Property Division using the form posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website or spreadsheet in substantial compliance with such form, fully completed and signed by the party, or a single agreed Proposed Property Division, signed by both parties. If a spreadsheet is used in lieu of the Proposed Property Division form, then a copy of such spreadsheet must be provided to the court in an editable electronic format at the beginning of the trial.

(ii) In any suit requiring a determination of child support or spousal maintenance, each party must prepare and deliver a Proposed Support Decision using the form posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website, fully completed and signed by the party.

(iii) Additionally, in any suit requiring a determination of child support or spousal maintenance, unless the parties agree or stipulate to a party's income and/or net resources as defined by the Texas Family Code, each party is required to furnish to the court (but not file), and to opposing parties, copies of the following at the time of trial:

1. The party's federal income tax returns for the previous two calendar years, or if no such return(s) have been filed, then all payroll statements, pay stubs, W-2 forms, 1099 forms, and Schedule K-1 for such years; and

2. All payroll statements, pay stubs, W-2 forms, 1099 forms, and Schedule K-1 for the calendar year of the trial from January 1 through the date of the trial.

3. This Rule does not supersede any requirement to respond to discovery requests.

(iv) In any suit requiring a determination or modification of conservatorship, or possession and access to a child, each party must prepare and deliver a Proposed Parenting Plan, pursuant to Texas Family Code §153.603, fully completed and signed by the party, a single agreed Proposed Parenting plan signed by both parties, or must summarize the requested relief in brief complete sentences as part of a Proposed Disposition of Other Issues. The form parenting plan posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website is acceptable, and other forms may also be acceptable.

(v) Additionally, each party must also prepare and deliver a Proposed Disposition of Other Issues, which must state separately in brief complete sentences each trial decision that is sought by the party that is not covered by the Proposed Property Division, Proposed Support Decision, or Proposed Parenting Plan.

(b) Where to File

Each party must file the required forms with the District Clerk and deliver a copy to the opposing party.

(c) When to File

(i) Each party must file the required pre-trial forms and any amendment to pleadings before 5:00 p.m. on the Monday two weeks before the week of the trial setting.

(ii) Amendments to pre-trial forms and amendments to pleadings may be filed after the deadline above only by agreement of the parties or upon leave of court, which leave will be granted unless there is a showing that the filing will operate as a surprise to the opposite party.

23.4 Pre-Trial Procedure Before a Temporary or Interim Orders Hearing

Before any hearing on temporary or interim orders in any divorce suit divorce suit or suit affecting the parent-child relationship (which include, but are not limited to, modification suits, paternity suits, and original suits) each party must prepare and deliver pre-trial forms as follows:

(a) Forms Required Determined by Issues at Hearing

(i) In any suit requiring a determination of child support or spousal maintenance, each party must prepare and deliver a Proposed Support Decision using the form posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website, fully completed and signed by the party.

(ii) Additionally, unless the parties agree or stipulate to a party's income and/or net resources as defined by the Texas Family Code, each party is required to furnish copies of the party's preceding four payroll statements or paystubs and the party's preceding year's income tax return (if the tax return has been filed) to the judge (but not file) at the time of the hearing and to the opposing party prior to the hearing.

(iii) Compliance with this Rule does not change the responsibility to respond to discovery requests and to make initial disclosures.

(iv) In any suit requiring a determination or modification of conservatorship, or possession and access to a child, each party must prepare and deliver a Proposed Parenting Plan, pursuant to Texas Family Code §153.603, fully completed and signed by the party, a single agreed Proposed Parenting plan signed by both parties, or must summarize the requested relief in brief complete sentences as part of a Proposed Disposition of Other Issues. The form parenting plan posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website is acceptable, and other forms may also be acceptable.

(v) Additionally, each party must also prepare and deliver a Proposed Disposition of Other Issues, which must state separately in brief complete sentences each trial decision that is sought by the party that is not covered by the Proposed Support Decision or Proposed Parenting Plan.

(b) To Whom Form Is Delivered

Each party must deliver the required form to the opposing party and to the judge hearing the case.

(c) When Form Is Delivered

Each party must deliver the required form to the opposing party before the case is called for hearing, and to the judge at the time of the hearing.

23.5 Not Required In DRO, DFPS, AG or County Attorney Protective Order Hearings

Pre-trial forms are not required for any hearing on the Travis Domestic Relations Office docket, the CPS docket, the IV-D court docket, and the Travis County Protective Order docket. Pre-trial forms are not required to be filed by the Travis County Domestic Relations Office, CPS, the Texas Attorney General's Office or the County Attorney Protective Order Division for cases set on the Family Law Docket.

23.6 No Extensions or Waivers by Court Administrator or by Agreement

The Court Administrator is not authorized to extend the time for delivering pretrial forms. The parties may not by agreement waive or modify the provisions or requirements of these rules.

23.7 Use as Evidence

Subject to applicable rules of evidence, the pre-trial forms required by these rules may be used during the trial or hearing and may be marked as exhibits and offered in evidence.

23.8 Consequences for Failure to Comply

(a) All Parties Fail to Comply

If all parties in a case fail to deliver pre-trial forms as required by these rules, the case will be required to be reset or will be moved to the bottom of the list of cases set for the same time and will be heard only after all announced cases are heard and only if time permits.

(b) A Party Fails to Comply

If it appears that any party in a case failed to deliver pre-trial forms as required by these rules, the court may conduct a pre-trial conference and the court may

impose one or more of the sanctions authorized by TEX. R. CIV. PROC. 215 against any party or attorney responsible for such failure.

(c) Issues Waived

All issues not stated in pre-trial forms as required by these procedures will deemed waived except upon a showing of good cause for failure to comply with these rules.

23.9 Motion to Confer with a Child

Absent good cause shown, all Motions to Confer with a Child must be set on the same day as the hearing such motion is related to (temporary orders or final merits trial). The specific judge who will be hearing the temporary orders hearing or final merits trial will rule on the Motion to Confer with a Child.

Litigants are discouraged from bringing a child to the Civil and Family Courts Facility, thereby removing the child from his or her daily routine, before the court decides whether and when to confer.

23.10 No Limitation on Texas Rules of Civil Procedure

These rules must not be construed as a substitute for, or as any limitation on, any pre-trial or discovery provision(s) pursuant to the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure.

CHAPTER 24
CHILD SUPPORT AND SPOUSAL MAINTENANCE ORDERS

24.1 Place of Payment

(a) All child support required by any court order must be paid directly to the Texas Child Support State Disbursement Unit, P.O. Box 659791, San Antonio, Texas, 78265-9791.

(b) Spousal maintenance required by a court order that also requires the payment of child support must be paid directly to the State Disbursement Unit, P.O. Box 659791, San Antonio, Texas, 78265-9791.

(c) Spousal maintenance required by a court order that requires spousal maintenance, but not child support, must be paid through the Travis County Domestic Relations Office, P.O. Box 1495, Austin, Texas 78767.

24.2 DRO as Registry

The Travis County Domestic Relations Office is hereby designated as the Registry of the Court for all District Courts for the purpose of receiving spousal maintenance payments under 24.1(c) and for the establishment and custody of records of child support payments.

24.3 Duty to Establish Account

At the time any spousal or child support is ordered, the party who is to receive the support must provide to the Domestic Relations Office a "Request to Establish an Account" containing the information required by that office. After the order or decree is signed, that party must deliver to the Domestic Relations Office a signed copy of the order or decree.

CHAPTER 25
ADOPTIONS AND TERMINATIONS

25.1 Confidential Records

The District Clerk will maintain the files, docket sheets, and minutes as confidential records:

(a) In every suit in which the petition includes a prayer seeking adoption of a child;

(b) In every suit in which any authorized agency seeks termination of the parent-child relationship.

25.2 Non-Confidential Records

In all other suits seeking termination but not adoption, the files, docket sheets, and minutes will not be confidential or sealed unless otherwise ordered by the court.

All pre-adoptive home screening and post-placement adoptive reports will be maintained as confidential records.

25.3 Procedures

The District Courts have determined that the following procedures concerning the preparation of pre-adoptive home screenings and post- placement adoptive reports, and the appointments of guardians *ad litem* are necessary for the orderly disposition of suits seeking termination of the parent child relationship or adoption, or both. These procedures are subject to any order that may be made in a particular case.

(a) In every suit in which the petitioner seeks to terminate a parent-child relationship or seeks to adopt a child, the Clerk will forward a copy of the petition as soon as practicable to the Manager of the Family Court Services Unit

of the Travis County Domestic Relations Office (Family Court Services Manager).

(b) In each suit seeking adoption of a child placed for adoption by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (the Department), the pre-adoptive home screening and post-placement adoptive report must be made by the Department.

(c) In each suit brought by a child placing agency (other than CPS) that seeks to terminate the parent-child relationship, and in each suit that seeks adoption of a child placed by a child placing agency, the child placing agency must prepare the pre-adoptive home screening and post-placement adoptive report.

(d) In every other suit seeking termination of the parent-child Relationship or adoption of a child, the Family Court Services Manager must prepare the pre-adoptive home screening and post-placement adoptive report. The Domestic Relations Office may designate private providers to prepare the pre-adoptive home screening and post-placement adoptive report. The fees for preparation of a pre-adoptive home screening and post-placement adoptive report must be paid as directed by the Family Court Services Manager.

(e) In every termination suit in which the Texas Family Code does not require the preparation or filing of a pre-adoptive home screening and post-placement adoptive report, the Family Court Services Manager must file with the District Clerk a letter report stating that he or she has reviewed the pleadings filed in

the suit, describing his or her investigation, and reporting his or her findings and recommendations.

(f) In any case, any party or the Family Court Services Manager may request the appointment of the Family Court Services Manager as guardian *ad litem,* or the court on its own motion may appoint a guardian *ad litem.*

(g) In any case, the Family Court Services Manager may request that the case is set for trial or pretrial hearing.

25.4 Criteria

Each pre-adoptive home screening and post-placement adoptive report made pursuant to Section 25.3 (d) must be prepared according to criteria established by the Family Court Services Manager under the supervision of the District Judges.

25.5 Proposed Order of Dismissal for CPS Case Involving Adoption

Upon the adoption of a child who was under the conservatorship of CPS, if the adoption is in Travis County, the attorney representing the adoptive parent(s) of the child must present to the court handling the adoption a proposed dismissal order of the CPS case at the time of the adoption. If the adoption is not filed in Travis County, the attorney representing the adoptive parent(s) of the child must send a proposed dismissal order of the CPS case to the Travis County Presiding CPS Court Judge immediately after the adoption is granted.

25.6 Pre-trial Information Form

In every termination suit, except those brought by CPS, and in all adoption suits, the petitioner must file a completed pretrial information form with the District Clerk and serve a copy on the Family Court Services Manager fourteen days before the final hearing. Petitioner's Pretrial Form in Suit for Termination and Adoption must be in the form posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website.

CHAPTER 26
FAMILY LAW NOTICES AND ORDERS TO APPEAR

26.1 Notice of Hearings for Appearance after Answer Day

Notices of Hearing for Temporary Orders that require appearance after answer day do not require an order and must not be presented to a judge for signature.

26.2 Orders to Appear

Orders to Appear before answer day must be on a separate page and must contain the language in the form posted on the Travis County Civil District Courts' website.

These Local Rules, as amended, are effective as of November 15, 2024.

Signed by all Civil District Judges and filed with the District Clerks Office on November 19, 2024.

MARIA CANTU HEXSEL
Judge, 53rd District Court

DANIELLA DESETA LYTTLE
Judge, 261st District Court

RHONDA HURLEY
Judge, 98th District Court

JAN SOIFER
Judge, 345th District Court

AURORA MARTINEZ JONES
Judge, 126th District Court

MADELEINE CONNOR
Judge, 353rd District Court

JESSICA MANGRUM
Judge, 200th District Court

CATHERINE A. MAUZY
Judge, 419th District Court

AMY CLARK MEACHUM
Judge, 201st District Court

LAURIE EISERLOH
Judge, 455th District Court

KARIN CRUMP
Judge, 250th District Court

MAYA GUERRA GAMBLE
Judge, 459th District Court