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Magistrate Judge Stephen C. Williams

Case Management Procedures

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Rule 16 Conferences

Attorneys must confer and submit a Joint Report of Parties prior to the scheduled conference. A form for use in that regard may be downloaded ([here](#)), and is also included as an attachment to the Local Rules. If the case is a class action, click ([here](#)) for the form. The report must be jointly submitted -- one report bearing the original signature of each attorney of record. The conference will occur even though the joint report has been timely submitted. The joint reports shall be submitted at least 7 days before the scheduling conference.

The Scheduling and Discovery Conference will be telephonic. Plaintiff is responsible for placing the call. Occasionally, an attorney will be present at the courthouse at the time the conference is scheduled. When that happens, counsel should simply come to chambers and participate in that manner. The attorney who is most familiar with the case should participate.

The purpose of the Rule 16 Conference is twofold: (1) to identify and plan to deal with novel or difficult discovery issues; and (2) to schedule a settlement conference. Counsel should be prepared to discuss each at the conference.

In all but a very few cases, a settlement conference will be set well before discovery closes. During the scheduling conference, we will identify the least amount of discovery which is a necessary predicate to a successful settlement conference.

Discovery Disputes

Motions to compel discovery are handled telephonically and without written motions or briefs. When a discovery dispute arises which the parties are unable to resolve informally, the party seeking discovery shall schedule a telephone conference call between the Court and all parties contesting the particular discovery. The timing for the conference will be confirmed by the law clerk assigned to the case - either Amber Jeralds, (618) 482-9469, or John Steffan, (618) 482-9424.

If written discovery is involved, the interrogatories or requests in dispute should be emailed to the Court in advance of the teleconference to the Court's proposed order address (SCWpd@ilsd.uscourts.gov). Additionally, the parties should submit, without argument, citations to any binding authority relevant to the dispute.

Disputes which arise during depositions should be addressed immediately via a phone conference. Chambers' number is: (618) 482-9467. The non-prevailing party in a discovery dispute will bear the cost of the conference call.

Settlement Conferences

Settlement conference dates are selected during the Rule 16 conference. Settlement conferences will normally be set to start at 9:00 a.m. with the understanding that the conference may continue for the entire business day. Lead counsel and the parties must attend. A named individual defendant need not attend if covered by liability insurance. In that case, an insurance representative with full authority to negotiate and settle the case must be here. A proper defendant representative will be a person who can agree to any sum demanded by the plaintiff without resort to the telephone.

In employment cases, defendants should not bring anyone who had any relevant input in the employment decision(s) which gave rise to the underlying lawsuit. In some cases, due to the size of the defendant company, this is unavoidable. However, when it can be avoided it should be. A good rule of thumb is to leave behind anyone who might testify at trial concerning the reasons for the employment action taken.

Settlement statements are not filed with the Clerk. The parties should send their settlement statements directly to chambers attached to email sent to the depository for proposed documents (SCWpd@ilsd.uscourts.gov).

*If during preparation for a settlement conference a defendant determines that negotiations will be futile, then that defendant must contact chambers immediately. Defendants who appear with nothing but nuisance money may find themselves paying the cost of plaintiff(s) and plaintiff(s)' attorneys to attend. Click ([here](#)) for a copy of the [Settlement Statement of Attorney](#).

Final Pretrial Conference

The Court utilizes the Final Pretrial Order set out in the Local Rules. Forms may be downloaded by clicking [here](#). Click [here](#) for instructions in how to prepare the Final Pretrial Order. The final pretrial order shall be submitted in accordance with local rule 16.2(a), no later than 3 days before the final pretrial conference.

The Court expects adherence to the rule requiring cooperation between the parties for completion of the Final Pretrial Order.

Parties are expected to have their exhibit lists attached to the proposed order at the time of the conference and already evaluated by opposing parties to determine issues as to admissibility.

Should counsel anticipate any novel or particularly difficult legal issues which will require extensive arguments outside the hearing of the jury, the Court shall be so advised at the final pretrial conference. The Court will then determine a time and forum for resolution of the issues involved and whether counsel will be required to brief the issues and when.

Prisoner Cases to be tried by District Judge Reagan

In prisoner cases set to be tried by United States District Judge Michael Reagan, where Judge Williams is conducting the final pretrial, use the final pretrial order contained in Judge Reagan's section of this [website](#).