

**Superior Court of California
County of Orange**

HONORABLE RANDALL J. SHERMAN

CLERK: Jason Phu
COURT ATTENDANT: Joseph Villegas

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES – DEPARTMENT C24

CENTRAL JUSTICE CENTER
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Welcome to Department C24. To facilitate the progress of your case and assure its timely disposition, this Court has established the following procedures. Counsel also should be familiar with and must comply with Division 3 of the Local Rules of the Orange County Superior Court.

WEEKLY DEPARTMENT SCHEDULE

1. **Trials** – Monday-Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; some Thursday mornings, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. (If you do not file your trial documents in advance as the local rules require, the court might assume that you have settled your case.)
2. **Law and Motion** – Thursday at 1:30 p.m.
3. **Ex Parte Applications** – Monday-Friday at 1:30 p.m.
4. **Case Management Conferences** – Friday at 9:00 a.m. (CRC Rule 3.725 requires the filing of a Case Management Statement at least 15 days before the CMC.)
5. **Default Prove-Up Hearings** – Friday at 9:00 a.m.
6. **Order to Show Cause Hearings** – Friday at 9:00 a.m.
7. **Review Hearings** – Friday at 9:00 a.m.
8. **Mandatory Settlement Conferences** – Thursday at 9:00 a.m.

TRIAL PROCEDURES

1. **Trial Documents – OCSC Local Rule 317** – The court requires that counsel comply with Local Rule 317, which mandates (among other things) as follows:

The parties must prepare courtesy copies for the Court of all trial briefs, exhibits, and voir dire questions (jury trials only). Trial exhibits (those which are or can be reduced to paper copies) must be contained in a separate notebook, together with an Exhibit List with columns for indicating whether the exhibits have been marked and entered.

Parties who file motions in limine are responsible for providing **courtesy copies for the Court of all filings generated by their motions in limine**. If a party files four or more such motions, these courtesy copies should be contained in **three-ring binders** with tables of contents and separately numbered tabs for each motion and all papers related to that motion, including opposition and reply papers.

Plaintiff is responsible for providing courtesy copies of the Joint Statement of the Case (jury trials only), the Joint Witness List and the Joint List of Controverted issues.

The above items, including the courtesy copies referenced above, and the Statement of Compliance signed by all counsel and self-represented parties, must be **submitted to the courtroom clerk in the department** of the judicial officer to whom the case has been assigned for trial **no later than noon of the Friday before trial**.

2. **Motions in Limine** – Counsel must comply with Local Rule 317, cited above. Each motion in limine must be numbered on the face page of the motion. Please avoid overbroad, general motions such as those asking the court to exclude hearsay or inadmissible evidence or evidence not disclosed in discovery. The Court expects counsel to meet and confer and resolve as many of these motions as possible before trial, and before discussing them with the Court. Untimely filed motions or oppositions might not be considered.
3. **Exhibits**
 - a. **Exhibit Lists** – At the Issue Conference before trial, counsel should jointly prepare an exhibit list. Each exhibit should be listed by exhibit number. Do not use letters for exhibits. Each counsel should use a separate range of numbers, with plaintiff's exhibits to begin with Exhibit 1. Different parties should not use the same exhibit number, and duplicate exhibits should be avoided. The exhibit list should set forth each exhibit number along with a very brief description of the exhibit, including the date of the document or a notation that the document is undated. Each exhibit should consist of only one document, although multiple photographs or other related documents like bank statements may be marked as one exhibit as long as each page of the exhibit is separately numbered. Copies of the exhibit **list** should be made for the Court, the clerk, the reporter, and each counsel.
 - b. **Exhibit Notebooks** – Exhibits should be placed in circular three-ring binders with tabbed dividers. Each tab should bear the corresponding exhibit number. A copy of the Exhibit List should be inserted in the binder before the first exhibit. The original exhibits should be given to the clerk at the time of trial. (As an exception to the

Local Rule, the exhibit notebooks need not be submitted before the trial date.) Another set of such binders, similarly tabbed, should be prepared for the Court.

- c. **Exhibit Tags** – Each exhibit must have a court exhibit tag attached.
 - d. **Special Exhibits** – If any party intends to use a video exhibit or videotaped deposition, the Court should be advised at the earliest opportunity since the Court's permission is required before videos, tape recordings, overhead projectors and the like may be used at trial. It is each party's responsibility to supply the necessary equipment and have it set up before trial or during a recess.
 - e. **“Rebuttal” and “Impeachment” Exhibits** – The Court takes a dim view of attempts to use exhibits that were not identified and marked before trial by characterizing such documents as rebuttal or impeachment exhibits. Such documents will not be admitted unless the court concludes they are truly for rebuttal or impeachment. Documents which a defendant uses to “rebut” the plaintiff’s case are not rebuttal documents. Rather, rebuttal exhibits usually are those used by a plaintiff in response to the defendant’s case in chief, but which were not expected to be part of the plaintiff’s case in chief.
4. **Jury Instructions and Verdict Forms** – Each party should deliver proposed jury instructions (the entire instruction, not just the CACI number) and verdict forms to the clerk on the day of trial. The Court generally favors the exclusive use of CACI instructions. If special verdict forms are proposed, please ensure they are complete and contain no inconsistencies.
5. **Voir Dire** – This Court uses the six-pack method of jury selection, and normally seats 14 jurors with two non-designated alternate jurors. Alternates will be selected by lot at the conclusion of the trial. Stipulations allowing a jury of either six or eight jurors, with an additional two alternates, are encouraged. Peremptory challenges should be addressed to the group of potential jurors in the jury box. The Court will conduct the initial voir dire of prospective jurors using applicable questions contained in Standard 3.25 of the Judicial Council’s Standards of Judicial Administration. Counsel should conduct their voir dire within 30 minutes for the first group of potential jurors, and within 15 minutes for each subsequent group.

6. Trial Conduct

- a. Appropriate titles (e.g., Mr., Ms. or Dr.) rather than first names are to be used when addressing witnesses (unless they are children), jurors or one another.
- b. Do not make speaking objections. Simply state the legal grounds for the objection. Any argument about a ruling will be done either at the bench or on the record outside the presence of the jury.
- c. Counsel should speak from behind the counsel table or lectern unless the court has given permission to approach a witness.

- d. It is all counsels' responsibility to arrange the appearance of witnesses to avoid delay, to confer among themselves during trial as to when witnesses will be needed, to advise the Court at the earliest opportunity of any anticipated problems with the presence of witnesses, including any need to call a witness out of order, and to advise witnesses of the appropriate manner of testifying, including proper behavior and attire in the courtroom and any rulings that may apply to their testimony. Counsel should keep all other counsel informed as to who their next few witnesses will be to facilitate their preparation.

LAW AND MOTION PROCEDURES

1. Law and Motion matters are heard every Thursday at 1:30 p.m. Motion reservation dates are made through the court's website at www.occourts.org. Each law and motion calendar will have a maximum of 18 motions, including no more than two motions for summary judgment or summary adjudication.
2. Tentative rulings usually will be available on the day of or the day before the hearing. They will be posted on the court's website at:
<http://www.occourts.org/directory/civil/tentativerulings/>
3. If counsel intends to submit on the tentative ruling, they should telephone the court clerk and notify opposing counsel. If all parties do not submit on the tentative ruling, oral argument will be held. If no one appears for argument, then the tentative ruling will most likely become the final ruling.

EX PARTE PROCEDURES

1. Ex Parte applications are heard every court day at 1:30 p.m. The requirements contained in California Rules of Court, Rules 3.1200-3.1207, will apply. Applicants must be sure they comply with the requirements of notice to all other parties by 10:00 a.m. the court day before the hearing, a showing of the irreparable harm that will occur if the relief requested is not granted, and a proposed Order.
2. The applicant's papers must be filed by 3:00 p.m. on the court day before the hearing. The clerk in Department C24 must be notified of the filing of the Ex Parte application by 12:00 noon on the court day before the hearing. If any party intends to oppose the Ex Parte application they should telephone the clerk in Department C24 at (657) 622-5224 and file any opposition papers as soon as is feasible. Courtesy copies of any opposition papers should be either submitted before or brought to the hearing.
3. The Court usually will hear oral argument on Ex Parte matters. If other matters are set for 1:30 p.m. there may be a delay in being heard. Unopposed matters may be decided in chambers before the hearing time.