

JUDGE JEFFREY A. CONRAD  
(Court Expectations and General Court Procedures)

The Honorable Jeffrey A. Conrad began his service to the Commonwealth and the Court of Common Pleas of Lancaster County on January 2, 2018. With a positive attitude and a heart for justice, Judge Conrad seeks to ensure that all who enter his courtroom and chambers are treated with dignity and respect. Judge Conrad knows that while he cannot right all the world's wrongs, he can ensure that each day in Courtroom 10 "a little justice" is administered and the laws of the United States of America and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are upheld.

I. Courtroom Expectations

Conduct.

Punctuality and courtesy from counsel and self-represented parties to the court and each other, both in the presence of the court and otherwise, is expected.

Unless permission is granted otherwise, the examination of witnesses should be conducted from the lectern or from counsel table either seated or standing.

Counsel and unrepresented parties shall rise to address the court. This includes making or responding to objections. While in the court room, counsel should address the court as "Your Honor."

Counsel shall seek permission from the court before approaching a witness.

Counsel and unrepresented parties will direct all comments to the court or to the witness under examination and not to other counsel or the jury.

Consultation with Opposing Counsel.

In general, counsel should only bring matters to the court's attention only after they have discussed the matter with opposing counsel. When communicating with the court, counsel shall be prepared to state the position of opposing counsel.

II. Communication with the Court

Communication with the judge's law clerk and judicial administrative assistant is discouraged and inquiries regarding scheduling should be directed to Court Administration (case scheduling) or to the Prothonotary.

Please do not write letters directly to the court or send or designate copies of correspondence among and between counsel to the court, except:

- (1) When letters of transmittal accompany documents required by the court to be sent to or filed with the court;
- (2) When counsel are specifically requested by the court to communicate some information to the court by letter;
- (3) When counsel are filing a joint request of the court to reschedule or resolve a matter;
- (4) When the participation of counsel in the case is expected to be affected by a personal matter concerning counsel, a party, a witness, or counsel's immediate family, such as medical problems, vacation plans, or other similar personal problems or question; or
- (5) To confirm or advise the court that a case has been settled, dismissed, or otherwise finally disposed.

All other written communications with the court concerning any case assigned to this court calendar should be done by the filing of a pleading, motion, application, brief, legal memorandum, rule returnable, rule to show cause or other filing provided for in the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure or Lancaster County Local Rules. Do not write letters to the court that are properly the subject of these filings. The Court will not respond to any correspondence that fails to comply with this policy.

When a written communication concerning a case cannot timely address a problem, counsel may initiate necessary telephone communications with chambers.

### III. Requests for Continuance

If a continuance is requested with the agreement of both parties, the party seeking the continuance shall submit to chambers a motion and a proposed order. The motion shall include the reason for the continuance and indicate whether the opposing part is in agreement with the continuance.

Continuances should be sought as soon as an issue arises affecting the party's or counsel's presence in court. Emergency motions for a continuance are those occurring within two business days before a trial or hearing. Emergency motions may be submitted by hand delivery or email to the law clerk and judicial administrative assistant.

### IV. Civil Trials – Pre-trial Procedures

Request for Pre-Trial Conference. When a matter is ready for trial, either party may file a request for a pre-trial conference and Chambers will contact counsel to schedule and an Order will be issued setting a deadline for the pretrial statement. The pre-trial statement shall be in the form prescribed by Pa. R.C.P. 212.2. It must be filed with the Prothonotary with a courtesy copy delivered to Chambers via email to the Judge's law clerk and judicial administrative assistant. Following the pre-trial conference, a Certification Order will be issued setting forth additional requirements for the exchange

of exhibits, lists of witnesses, time for filing motions in limine, etc. If counsel for either party believes a final pre-trial conference is required prior to the morning of trial, they shall contact Chambers after ascertaining from opposing counsel several possible dates and times that counsel are available to attend.

Jury Instructions. Jury instructions are not required with respect to familiar points of law not in dispute between the parties but the parties shall be prepared to list the subjects they wish the court to cover. With respect to specific requests, they shall be submitted in writing 5 business days prior to trial with a copy being provided to opposing counsel. Amendments or supplements may be submitted at a charging conference to be held at the close of evidence. Legal citation must accompany any proposed jury instruction or it will not be considered.

Special Interrogatories to the jury if desired shall be submitted at the earliest convenient time, and no later than the close of evidence.

Special Arrangements/Audio Visual Equipment. Any counsel seeking to publish exhibits via an electronic format are required to utilize their own equipment. Any evidence that a party plans to publish by projection shall have a corresponding hard copy which can be marked and maintained for the record. Court personnel should not be expected or depended upon to provide such service for any party or counsel, unless so ordered by the Judge.

Continuances will not ordinarily be granted because of the unavailability of a witness, particularly an expert witness. If a witness's availability for trial is doubtful, counsel should arrange for a video tape deposition.

Translators. Counsel are responsible for contacting the Lancaster County Court of Common Pleas Language Access Coordinator if translators are needed or may utilize privately retained translators provided that they are certified.

## V. Trial Procedure – Civil Cases

Final Pre-trial Conference. Counsel should be prepared to meet on the morning of trial to address any outstanding issues including whether there are requests for voir dire, which the court may permit.

Note taking. Notetaking is permitted pursuant to Pa.R.C.P. No. 223.2.

Witnesses out of sequence. Counsel will be permitted to examine witnesses out of turn for the convenience of the witness if necessary.

Opening and Closing Statements. In most cases, each party is permitted twenty to thirty minutes for an opening and thirty to forty-five minutes for a summation or closing argument.

Videotaped Testimony. Videotaped testimony should begin with the witness being sworn. Counsel should bring objections to the court's attention at the first opportunity (pretrial conference or by motion at least a week before trial). After the court rules on any objections, counsel should edit the tapes before offering the videotaped testimony at trial.

Exhibits. Exhibits should be pre-marked and exchanged in accordance with the certification order. On the day of trial, counsel may publish exhibits electronically, but any exhibit that counsel intends to admit into evidence must be backed up by a printed version of the image if possible.

Counsel must be familiar with Pa. R.C.P. 5102-5104 and the corresponding local rules regarding custody of exhibits.

Motions for Nonsuit. Motions for nonsuit or judgment as a matter of law in jury trials and motions for involuntary dismissal in non-jury trials is ordinarily permitted by oral motion.

Proposed Findings of Fact. If ordered, proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law in non-jury cases should be submitted at least twenty days after the trial transcript is available.

Jury Deliberations. If appropriate, the court will give the jury a copy of the written jury instructions. The court and counsel will discuss whether any exhibits should go with the jury for deliberation.

Counsel must remain near courthouse during jury deliberations and provide their cell phone number to the bailiff.

Polling of the jury may occur if requested by counsel.

## VI. Injunctions

Counsel should be prepared to submit proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law for preliminary injunction hearings. The court will set the time for submission of these items.

## VII. Criminal Pre-trial Procedures

Status Conferences. Counsel are expected to attend. When there is a **prior** agreement with the District Attorney's Office regarding the status or disposition of a case, such as pending ARD, veterans' court, or drug court, or the like, counsel may notify chambers by emailing the Judge's judicial administrative assistant and cc to the assigned district attorney. The email must include whether the ADA concurs and whether the case is to be put on the "call of the list" or placed back on the status list. The email must also include a designation as to whom the time is to be allocated pursuant to Pa.Crim.P. 600.

In an emergency situation or when counsel is unable to attend the status conference due to a scheduling conflict, *and* counsel has been unable to secure an agreement with the District Attorney's Office prior to the status conference, a short written motion must be filed with a copy email to the Judge's judicial administrative assistant with a copy to the Judge's law clerk.

**Telephone calls to Chambers seeking to be excused from attending a Status Conference will not be accepted.**

Call of the List. Counsel and their client must attend the Call of the List. With very limited exceptions, the court will not excuse counsel from attending the Call of the List unless counsel is attached for trial elsewhere.

Should counsel be attached for trial elsewhere and unable to attend, a written motion must be filed with the court and a copy must be emailed to the Judge's judicial administrative assistant and law clerk. A copy of an order showing that counsel is attached for trial must be included with the motion.

If an agreement for final disposition of a case has been reached, and counsel is unable to attend due to an emergency or scheduling conflict, counsel shall email the Judge's judicial administrative assistant and copy the assistant district attorney assigned. Counsel is responsible, however, for ensuring that counsel's client attends the Call of the List.

If a final disposition has already occurred, counsel may be excused from the Call of the List but shall email the Judge's judicial administrative assistant with the final disposition and date of occurrence.

**No telephone calls to Chambers seeking to be excused from the Call of the List will be accepted.**

Omnibus Pre-trial Motions/Petitions. Always provide chambers with a courtesy copy of any motions that have been filed and do not hesitate to contact chambers to check the status of any motion that has been filed. There are many instances when Chambers has not received motions through Pac-File even though they were correctly filed by counsel. If necessary, Chambers will schedule a hearing on the motion for the

appropriate time. Judge Conrad prefers to address criminal pre-trial matters in advance of trial and not at the beginning of trial.

Pre-trial Conference. Chambers will contact counsel to schedule a pre-trial conference in the days preceding trial to discuss any outstanding issues or other matters which may arise during the course of the trial.

Translators. Counsel are responsible for contacting the Lancaster County Court of Common Pleas Language Access Coordinator if translators are needed or may utilize privately retained translators provided that they are certified.

## VIII. Trial

Audio/Visual. Any counsel seeking to publish exhibits via an electronic format are required to utilize their own equipment. Court personnel should not be expected or depended upon to provide such service for any party or counsel, unless so ordered by the Judge.

Voir Dire. Should counsel wish to voir dire the jury pool, a written request with the proposed question(s) must be submitted by the morning of trial.

Exhibits. Exhibits should be pre-marked. On the day of trial, counsel may publish exhibits electronically, but any exhibit that counsel intends to admit into evidence must be backed up by a printed version of the image. Counsel must be familiar with Pa. R.C.P. 5102-5104 and the corresponding local rules regarding custody of exhibits.

Jury Instructions. After the close of evidence, a charging conference will be held in Chambers. If counsel desires any special instruction(s), each proposed individual instruction must be printed on a single page and it must include legal citation.

Witnesses out of sequence. Counsel will be permitted to examine witnesses out of turn for the convenience of the witness if necessary.

Opening and Closing Statements. In most cases, each party is permitted twenty to thirty minutes for an opening and thirty to forty-five minutes for a summation or closing argument.

Note taking. Jurors are permitted to take notes pursuant to Pa.R.Crim.P. 644.

Jury Deliberations. If appropriate, the court will give the jury a copy of the written jury instructions. The court and counsel will discuss whether any exhibits should go with the jury for deliberation in accordance with Pa.R.Crim.P. 646. In rare cases does the court keep a jury or the parties past 5:00 p.m. during deliberations.

Counsel must remain near courthouse during jury deliberations and provide their cell phone number to the bailiff.

Polling of the jury may occur if requested by counsel.

Chambers can be contacted through:

Judicial Administrative Assistant  
Amelia Valentin  
717 299 8070  
[Valentina@lancastercountypa.gov](mailto:Valentina@lancastercountypa.gov)

or

Law Clerk  
Tamara E. Hogan, Esquire  
717 299 8073  
[Tahogan@lancastercountypa.gov](mailto:Tahogan@lancastercountypa.gov)