

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND
FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

CIRCUIT CIVIL DIVISION:
CASE NO.:

Plaintiff/Petitioner
vs.

Defendant/Respondent.

ORDER IMPLEMENTING DIFFERENTIATED CASE MANAGEMENT PLAN,
DESIGNATING CASE TO THE GENERAL TRACK,
ORDER SETTING CALENDAR CALL AND CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE
AND DIRECTING PRETRIAL AND MEDIATION PROCEDURES
(DCMGJT)

THIS MATTER is a Circuit Civil case calling for a jury trial. Accordingly, it is **ORDERED AND ADJUDGED** that pursuant to Administrative Order 3.107 (as amended), this case is designated to the **GENERAL TRACK**. The deadlines established by this Order are to ensure the case is **disposed of within 18 months from the date of filing**. To that end, the following procedures and deadlines shall be strictly observed:

I. SERVICE OF THIS ORDER, ACTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT AND NON-COMPLIANCE

Plaintiff/Petitioner is directed to serve this Order upon each Defendant/Respondent with the Initial Complaint/Petition and Summons. The deadlines and procedures set forth herein are firm and may be modified only upon a showing of a good faith attempt to comply with the deadlines or demonstration of a significant change of circumstances and through the process established in the 15th Circuit's Administrative Order 3.107 (as amended).

The parties are expected to actively manage the case and to confer early and often to ensure compliance with this order and timely resolution of the case. The parties and counsel are expected to govern themselves at all times with a spirit of cooperation, professionalism, and civility. They are expected to accommodate each other whenever reasonably possible and eliminate disputes by reasonable agreements.

Self-Represented/Pro se litigants (i.e. those without counsel) are held to the same obligations imposed upon counsel.

Motions to extend deadlines must be filed *prior* to the deadline. Untimely motions will be denied absent compelling circumstances and showing of good cause.

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH THIS ORDER, ABSENT A SHOWING OF GOOD CAUSE, MAY RESULT IN DISMISSAL OF THE ACTION, THE STRIKING OF PLEADINGS, WITNESSES, OR EXHIBITS, REMOVAL OF THE CASE FROM THE DOCKET, DEFAULT OR ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE SANCTION.

The failure to act in good faith and comply with this order must be reported, if not resolved through a conference of the parties and good faith conferral, by filing a **"Suggestion of Non-Compliance with Pre-Trial Order"** that must be set for hearing in a timely manner. The Suggestion must name the non-compliant person, describe the act of non-compliance, be served upon all parties and sent to the Court's chambers. Responses may only be submitted upon request of the Court. Failure to correct any non-compliance before the hearing may result in sanctions as described above. The parties will notify the Court immediately if non-compliance is cured; if cured more than 7 days before the hearing, the hearing may be cancelled.

II. SCHEDULING, CONTINUANCES AND PRETRIAL DEADLINES

A CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE and CALENDAR CALL will be held on December 31, 2024. The parties must be ready to try the case by that day. The specific time of Case Management Conference and procedures for conducting Calendar Call can be found on the Division's webpages at www.15thcircuit.com. The Calendar Call may be conducted in-person or by e-calendar.

The trial period begins the first business day of the immediately following week after the above-listed Case Management Conference and Calendar Call, unless otherwise described in the divisional instructions or by court order.

TRIAL CONTINUANCES: If a case cannot be ready for trial by the Calendar Call despite all good faith efforts, a motion to continue trial must be set for a Differentiated Case Management (DCM) Conference as described in the 15th Circuit's Administrative Order 3.107 (as amended) and the next paragraph. Any motion to continue the trial must comply with Fla. R. Civ. P. Rule 1.460, including that they are signed by the client. The Motion must be filed and the DCM Conference set no more than **30 DAYS** from the last defendant being served or as soon as circumstances giving rise to the need for a continuance becomes known and only for good cause. Every motion for a continuance must include a proposed Amended DCMO resetting each pretrial deadline that remains applicable and indicating the month the case can be ready for trial.

DCM CONFERENCES: DCM conferences are scheduled through the Circuit's Online Scheduling System under DCM- Case Management Conference Scheduling. No less than ten (10) days in advance of the DCM Conference the parties must file with the Clerk a Joint Status Report that:

1. Concisely updates the Court on the status of the case,
2. Identifies pending motions and other matters the Court needs to address, and
3. If applicable, provides a proposed revised pretrial schedule.

The parties must upload the Joint Status report at least 7 days in advance of a DCM Conference through the e-courtesy feature of the Circuit's Online Scheduling System. The parties are to be prepared at the DCM Conference to address the topics listed in Rule 1.200(a) and for the court, at its discretion, to hear or set for hearing any pending motions.

The following deadlines (discussed in detail below) apply unless otherwise modified by the Court:

EVENTS		DESCRIPTION	COMPLETION DEADLINE
1.	Service of Complaint	See Part III.A, infra	November 21, 2023 Service under extension is only by court order.
2.	Pleading Amendments/ Adding parties	See Part III.B, infra	January 20, 2024
3.	Resolution of all motions/objections directed to the pleadings (<i>i.e. to dismiss or strike</i>) and pleadings closed *	See Part III.B, infra	March 30, 2024
4.	Expert Witnesses and Compulsory Examinations	See Part III.D, infra	September 2, 2024
5.	Witness & Exhibit Lists	See Part III.C, infra	September 2, 2024
6.	Rebuttal Witness Lists	See Part III.E, infra	September 22, 2024
7.	Filing Summary Judgment & <i>Daubert</i> Motions	See Part III.J, infra	October 2, 2024
8.	Discovery Cut-Off	See Part III.H, infra	October 2, 2024
9.	Pre-Trial Meet & Confer	See Part III.I, infra	December 1, 2024
10.	Deposition Designations	See Part III.G, infra	December 11, 2024
11.	Deadline for Mediation	See Part IV, infra	December 21, 2024

12.	Deadline to hear ALL Motions	See Part III.J, infra	December 26, 2024
13.	Jury Instructions and Verdict Form	See Part III.O, infra	December 28, 2024
14.	Trial Ready Date **	See Part II, supra	December 31, 2024

Fla. R. Gen. Prac. & Jud. Admin. Rule 2.514 governs if any deadlines falls on a weekend or holiday.

* The parties must expeditiously address any motions directed to the pleadings. Defensive motions under Rule 1.140 of the Fla. R. Civ. P., motions to extend time to file a defensive motion or pleading, and any other motion preventing the matter from being at issue shall be set for hearing within **five (5) days** of filing. The motion should be scheduled for hearing at the earliest date that the Court and parties are available.

** The Court reserves the authority to expedite the trial setting and amend the pretrial deadlines accordingly.

III. UNIFORM PRETRIAL PROCEDURES

A. Timely Service and Defaults:

Parties must make reasonable efforts to ensure speedy service. Each return of service must be separately filed for each defendant. If service is not completed within 90 days, an Order will be issued directing service by the **120 DAY DEADLINE**. Failure to comply will result in dismissal of the case or party for lack of service. Any motions to extend the deadline for service must specify why service could not have been effectuated, what is being done to effectuate service and request only that amount of additional time necessary.

If all defendants become defaulted, a Motion for Default Final Judgment along with supporting documentation must be filed within **30 days** of the last default and set for hearing at the next available hearing time.

B. Amendment of Pleadings, Motions Directed at Pleadings and Notice for Trial:

Any Motions to Amend Pleadings to add parties, must be filed no later than the first business day **180 DAYS AFTER THE CASE IS FILED**.

The parties must expeditiously address any other motions directed to the pleadings. Defensive motions under Rule 1.140, Fla. R. Civ. P., motions to extend time to file a defensive motion or pleading, and any other motion preventing the matter from being at issue must be set for hearing within **5 days** of filing to be heard at the earliest date that the Court and parties are available.

If the pleadings are not closed and the case not at issue **250 DAYS AFTER**

FILING, the parties must appear for a DCM Conference to be noticed and held in accordance within the 15th Circuit's Administrative Order 3.107 and Divisional Instructions located on the Circuit's website for the Division to which the case is assigned.

- C. **Exhibits and Witnesses**. On the last business day no later than **120 DAYS PRIOR TO CALENDAR CALL**, the parties must exchange lists of all trial exhibits, names and addresses of all trial witnesses.
- D. **Expert Witnesses and Compulsory Medical Examinations**. If Expert Witnesses or Compulsory Medical Examinations are anticipated, the Parties must confer and establish a schedule for completing related discovery, including deadlines for disclosures, written discovery, depositions and motions directed at Experts or Compulsory Medical Examiners that will result in the completion of Expert/CME Discovery and resolution of Motions directed at them at least **120 DAYS BEFORE TRIAL**.

If agreed, the parties must submit a proposed Expert/CME Scheduling Order for entry by the Court. If not, the parties must appear for a DCM Case Management Conference.

Expert Disclosures: In addition to names and addresses of each expert retained to formulate an expert opinion with regard to this cause, both on the initial listing and on rebuttal, the parties must provide:

1. The subject matter about which the expert will testify;
2. The substance of facts and opinions to which the expert will testify;
3. A summary of the grounds for each opinion;
4. A copy of any written reports issued by the expert; and
5. A copy of the expert's curriculum vitae.

One Expert Per Specialty: The parties will be limited to one expert witness per specialty unless they obtain leave of Court to list and call more than one expert witness per specialty, no later than 60 days prior to calendar call.

- E. **Rebuttal Witnesses and Exhibits**. On the last business day no later than **100 DAYS PRIOR TO CALENDAR CALL**, the parties must exchange lists of names and addresses of all rebuttal witnesses and list of any rebuttal exhibits.
- F. **Additional Exhibits, Witnesses Or Objections**. At trial, the parties will be strictly limited to exhibits and witnesses disclosed and objections reserved on the schedules attached to the Pre-Trial Stipulation prepared in accordance with paragraphs D and E, absent agreement specifically stated in the Pre-Trial Stipulation or order of the Court upon good cause shown. Failure to reserve objections constitutes a waiver. A party desiring to use an exhibit or witness discovered after counsel have conferred pursuant to

paragraph D must immediately furnish the Court and other counsel with a description of the exhibit or with the witness' name and address and the expected subject matter of the witness' testimony, together with the reason for the late discovery of the exhibit or witness. Use of the exhibit or witness may be allowed by the Court for good cause shown or to prevent manifest injustice.

- G. **Deposition Designations.** No later than **20 DAYS PRIOR TO CALENDAR CALL**, each party must serve designation of depositions, or portions of depositions, each intends to offer as testimony. No later than **10 DAYS PRIOR TO CALENDAR CALL**, each opposing party is to serve any counter (or "fairness") designations to portions of depositions designated, together with objections to the depositions, or portions thereof, originally designated. No later than **5 DAYS BEFORE** calendar call, each party must serve any objections to counter designations served by an opposing party.
- H. **Discovery Cutoff.** Unless otherwise agreed in the Pre-Trial Stipulation, all discovery must be completed no later than **90 DAYS PRIOR TO CALENDAR CALL** absent agreement for later discovery specifically stated in the Pre-Trial Stipulation or for other good cause shown. Absent unforeseeable, exigent circumstances, the failure to complete discovery is not grounds for a continuance.
- I. **Pre-trial Meet and Confer.** On the last business day no later than **30 DAYS PRIOR TO CALENDAR CALL**, the parties must confer and:
1. Discuss settlement;
 2. Simplify the issues and stipulate, in writing, as to as many facts and issues as possible;
 3. Prepare a Pre-Trial Stipulation in accordance with paragraph E; and
 4. List all objections to trial exhibits.
- J. **Motions:** The Parties must plan for, file and timely set hearings for any motions they expect the Court to address in advance of trial. **No motions will be heard the day of trial.** Few are appropriate after Calendar Call. The parties must confer early in the case and coordinate briefing and discovery schedules, as necessary, to ensure motions are timely heard.

While motion practice is critical to the advancement and streamlining of a case, the Parties are reminded they **DO NOT have an absolute right to most motions being heard**. Failure to timely file and set motions for hearing in advance of Calendar Call will likely result the Court denying a request for hearing. Failure to file and have a motion heard is not grounds for a trial continuance.

Summary Judgment and *Daubert* Motions must be filed at least **90 DAYS**

prior to Calendar Call. The parties shall confer regarding summary judgment motions to ensure discovery necessary for those motions is completed in advance of their filing.

ALL MOTIONS (including dispositive motions to motions in limine), must be heard no less than **5 days before Calendar Call**. Parties must plan and seek hearing time sufficiently in advance to ensure this deadline is met.

K. **Filing of Pretrial Stipulation.** It is the duty of counsel for the Plaintiff to see that the Pre-Trial Stipulation is drawn, executed by counsel for all parties, and filed with the Clerk no later than **20 DAYS PRIOR TO CALENDAR CALL**. Unilateral pretrial statements are disallowed, unless approved by the Court, after notice and hearing showing good cause. Counsel for all parties are charged with good faith cooperation in this regard. The Pre-Trial Stipulation must contain in separately numbered paragraphs:

1. A list of all pending motions including Motions *In Limine* and *Daubert* Motions requiring action by the Court and the dates those motions are set for hearing. **Motions not listed are deemed waived.**
2. Stipulated facts requiring no proof at trial which may be read to the trier of fact;
3. A statement of all issues of fact for determination at trial;
4. Lists of exhibits itemized as follows:
 - a. Exhibits to be admitted by Plaintiff without objection;
 - b. Exhibits to be admitted by Defendant without objection;
 - c. Objected to Exhibits, with the specific basis for the objection stated.

Note: Reasonably specific description of each exhibit is required. Non-specific descriptions like "all documents produced in discovery" will be stricken. Moreover, Objections may not be "reserved." Failure to specify an objection constitutes its waiver.

5. Each party's numbered list of trial witnesses with addresses (including all known rebuttal witnesses); the list of witnesses must be on separate schedules attached to the Stipulation;
6. A statement of total estimated time for trial, including the time needed per side for (1) jury selection, (2) opening arguments, (3) each case in chief, and (4) closing arguments.
7. Names of attorneys to try case and their contact information; and
8. The number of peremptory challenges per party.

Failure to file the Pre-Trial Stipulation or a Court Approved Unilateral

Stipulation as above provided may result in the case being stricken from the Court's calendar or other sanctions, including dismissal or default.

- L. **Pre-Trial Conference pursuant to Fla. R. Civ. P. 1.200** If a pre-trial conference is set upon motion of a party or by the Court, counsel must meet and prepare a stipulation pursuant to paragraph K, *infra*, and file the stipulation no later than **5 DAYS BEFORE THE CONFERENCE**. Failure to request a pre-trial conference in a timely fashion constitutes a waiver of the notice of requirement of Rule 1.200. Absent prior approval, Motions for Summary Judgment will not be heard at any pre-trial conference.
- M. **Pre-Marking Exhibits.** Prior to trial, each party is to mark for identification all exhibits, as directed by the clerk. (instructions and templates found at www.mypalmbeachclerk.com/departments/courts/evidence-guidelines/civil-evidence)
- N. **Enlarged Jury Panels:** Local Rules require advance approval of the Chief Judge and Jury Office for jury panels exceeding 31 jurors. To ensure enough jurors are available, requests for enlarged jury panels must be resolved at least 6 months before calendar call.
- O. **Jury Instructions and Verdict Form:** A joint set of proposed jury instructions and a proposed verdict form must be provided to the court no less than **3 days BEFORE TRIAL** in a printed form appropriate for submission to the jury and in Microsoft Word format.

If there is an objection to a proposed instruction, the instruction should be followed by the specific objection, a brief explanation, and a citation to legal authority. If an alternative or modified instruction is proposed, it should follow the instruction it is intended to replace.
- P. **Unique Questions Of Law.** Prior to calendar call, counsel for the parties are directed to exchange and simultaneously submit to the Court appropriate memoranda with citations to legal authority in support of any unique legal questions that may reasonably be anticipated to arise during the trial.

IV. **MEDIATION**

- A. All parties are required to participate in mediation as follows:
 - 1. The attendance of counsel who will try the case and representatives of each party with full authority to enter into a complete compromise and settlement is mandatory. If insurance is involved, an adjuster with authority up to the policy limits must attend.
 - 2. At least one week prior to a scheduled mediation conference, all parties are to file with the mediator a brief, written summary of the case containing a list of issues as to each party.
 - 3. All communications at the mediation conference are privileged

consistent with Florida Statutes sections 44.102 and 90.408.

4. The mediator has no power to compel or enforce a settlement agreement. If a settlement is reached, it is a responsibility of the attorneys or parties to reduce the agreement to writing and to comply with Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 1.730(b), unless waived.
- B. The Plaintiff's attorney is responsible for scheduling mediation. The parties should agree on a mediator. If they are unable to agree, any party may apply to the Court for appointment of a mediator in conformity with Rule 1.720 (f), Fla. R. Civ. P. The lead attorney or party must file and serve on all parties and the mediator a Notice of Mediation giving the time, place, and date of the mediation and the mediator's name.
- C. **Completion of mediation prior to calendar call is a prerequisite to trial.** If mediation is not conducted, or if a party fails to participate in mediation, the case, at the Court's discretion, may be stricken from the trial calendar, pleadings may be stricken, and other sanctions may be imposed.
- D. Any party opposing mediation may proceed under Florida Rule of Civil Procedure 1.700(b).

DONE AND ORDERED in West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida.

A copy of this Order has been furnished to the Plaintiff. The Plaintiff shall serve this Order to the Defendant(s) in compliance with Administrative Order 3.107 (amended).

This notice is provided pursuant to Administrative Order No. 2.207

“If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact Tammy Anton, Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, Palm Beach County Courthouse, 205 North Dixie Highway West Palm Beach, Florida 33401; telephone number (561) 355-4380 at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the

scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.”

“Si usted es una persona minusválida que necesita algún acomodamiento para poder participar en este procedimiento, usted tiene derecho, sin tener gastos propios, a que se le provea cierta ayuda. Tenga la amabilidad de ponerse en contacto con Tammy Anton, 205 N. Dixie Highway, West Palm Beach, Florida 33401; teléfono número (561) 355-4380, por lo menos 7 días antes de la cita fijada para su comparecencia en los tribunales, o inmediatamente después de recibir esta notificación si el tiempo antes de la comparecencia que se ha programado es menos de 7 días; si usted tiene discapacitación del oído o de la voz, llame al 711.”

“Si ou se yon moun ki enfim ki bezwen akomodasyon pou w ka patisipe nan pwosedi sa, ou kalifye san ou pa gen okenn lajan pou w peye, gen pwovizyon pou jwen kèk èd. Tanpri kontakte Tammy Anton, kòdonatè pwogram Lwa pou ameriken ki Enfim yo nan Tribinal Konte Palm Beach la ki nan 205 North Dixie Highway, West Palm Beach, Florida 33401; telefòn li se (561) 355-4380 nan 7 jou anvan dat ou gen randevou pou parèt nan tribinal la, oubyen imedyatman apre ou fin resevwa konvokasyon an si lè ou gen pou w parèt nan tribinal la mwens ke 7 jou; si ou gen pwoblèm pou w tandè oubyen pale, rele 711.”