

Civil and Criminal Chambers Rules

Hon. Guillermo Cabrera

United States Magistrate Judge

(Updated May 2026)

The Court provides the following information as general guidance to counsel and parties. The Court may vary these procedures as appropriate in any case.

I. General Rules

For questions about criminal matters, please contact courtroom deputy Erica Fry at Erica_Fry@casd.uscourts.gov or (619) 557-2923. For transcript requests, please contact Noemy Martinez at Noemy_Martinez@casd.uscourts.gov or (619) 557-7310. For questions about civil matters (other than transcript requests), please contact Judge Cabrera's chambers at efile_cabrera@casd.uscourts.gov or (619) 446-3965.

Telephone calls and emails to chambers are permitted only for administrative matters such as scheduling and calendaring, and to bring discovery disputes to the Court's attention pursuant to these Rules. Court personnel are prohibited from giving legal advice or discussing the merits of a case. Only counsel with knowledge of the case should contact chambers. Contacting chambers is a privilege and, if abused, may be limited by the Court.

Letters to chambers are prohibited, except as set forth in these Rules, the Local Rules, or otherwise requested by the Court.

II. General Decorum

The Court expects all counsel and parties to be courteous, professional, and civil at all times to opposing counsel, parties, and the Court, including all court personnel. Professionalism and civility—in court appearances, communications with chambers, and written submissions—are of paramount importance to the Court. Personal attacks on counsel or opposing parties will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Counsel and all *pro se* litigants are to read and be familiar with the tenets espoused in Civil Local Rule 2.1, which shall be the guiding principles of conduct in this Court. Counsel and all parties are expected to be punctual for all proceedings.

III. Criminal Rules

The parties must lodge all plea-related documents no later than noon the day before any change of plea hearing. Where plea-related documents are not timely lodged, the change of plea will be taken off calendar and rescheduled for another day.

IV. Civil Rules

A. Meet and Confer Requirement

Before bringing *any* matter to the Court for resolution, lead counsel (or attorneys with full authority to make decisions on the matter in dispute) must promptly meet and confer. If the matter is subject to Civil Local Rule 26.1.a, the parties must meet and confer “concerning all disputed issues.” The meet and confer must occur in person or by videoconference. Under no circumstances may a meet and confer occur entirely through written correspondence.

B. Disputes During Depositions

If a dispute arises during a deposition, the parties must suspend the deposition and immediately meet and confer. If the dispute is not resolved after meeting and conferring, the parties may call chambers for an immediate ruling on the dispute. If Judge Cabrera is available, he will either rule on the dispute or give instructions on how to proceed. If Judge Cabrera is not available, the parties must mark the deposition at the point of the dispute and continue with the deposition. Upon completion of the deposition, the parties must once again meet and confer and, if the dispute is still not resolved, follow the procedures set out in sections C and D below.

C. Other Discovery Disputes

After meet and confer attempts have been exhausted, the movant must e-mail chambers at efile_cabrera@casd.uscourts.gov seeking a conference to discuss the discovery dispute. The email must include: (1) at least three proposed dates and times mutually agreed upon by the parties for the conference; (2) a neutral statement of the dispute; and (3) one sentence describing (not arguing) each party’s position. The movant must copy all counsel on the email.

No discovery motion may be filed until the Court has conducted its pre-motion conference unless the movant has obtained leave of Court. Where briefing has been ordered by the Court, counsel should attach only those exhibits that are necessary to the resolution of the parties’ dispute. Generally speaking, this does not include counsel’s meet-and-confer correspondence.

The foregoing requirements apply to all discovery disputes.

D. Timing For Raising Discovery Disputes

The parties must initiate the procedure described in section C above **within 30 days** of the event giving rise to the dispute. For disputes regarding depositions, the event giving rise to the dispute is the date of the deposition in which the dispute arose. For disputes regarding written discovery, the event giving rise to the dispute is the date the initial response was served, or, if a party fails to respond, the date the response was due.

The parties may not unilaterally extend these deadlines by stipulation or by service of amended or supplemental responses. Any extension requires leave of Court upon a showing of good cause.

E. Motions to Extend, Amend, Continue or Vacate Dates or Deadlines

Requests to extend, amend, continue, or vacate dates and deadlines must be made by motion. The motion must be brought as a single motion, whether or not the parties are in agreement, and signed by all counsel, except in cases involving pro se litigants. The motion must state good cause for the extension and the basis for any party's opposition (if opposed). Motions filed on the date of the deadline sought to be modified will be denied unless it is apparent on the face of the motion that the request could not have been made earlier for reasons not within counsel's control.

F. Protective Orders

All stipulated protective orders must be filed as a joint motion. The parties must email a copy of the proposed protective order in Word format to efile_cabrera@casd.uscourts.gov.

The parties are encouraged to use Judge Cabrera's model protective order, which is available on the District Court's website under his Chambers Rules. If the parties jointly seek a protective order that differs from his model protective order, the joint motion must explain the basis for the proposed changes, and the parties must attach to the joint motion a redlined copy of the proposed protective order highlighting the changes.

G. Motions to Seal

The public enjoys a presumptive right of access to court records, and any motion to file information under seal must be supported by a specific showing that the material is protectable under the law. Any motion to file a document under seal must be served on the person or entity that has custody and control of the document, if that person or entity has not already appeared in the action.

Where the party requesting sealing is not the designating party (*i.e.*, the request to seal is made because another party has designated information "confidential"), the designating party must file a joinder in the motion to seal within five business days of service and must make the required showing that the information is protectable under the law. **The fact that the information or document has been designated confidential pursuant to a stipulated protective order, standing alone, is not a sufficient basis for sealing.** Any opposition to a motion to seal must also be filed within five business days of service.

After filing a motion to seal, the moving party must immediately file the proposed sealed documents in CM/ECF using the "Sealed Lodged Proposed Document" event pursuant to ECF Manual Section 2(j). If the moving party seeks to seal an entire document, it should lodge the document in full. If the moving party seeks to seal only portions of the document by using redactions, the document should be lodged with the proposed redactions highlighted in yellow for the Court's consideration. **Parties should not seek to file under seal entire pleadings, or entire attachments, unless the party can establish that the entire document satisfies the standard for sealing.**

The party moving to seal must also file a "public" version of the document(s) it seeks to file under seal. The public version should be a slip sheet for a document proposed to be sealed entirely or a document with the proposed sealed information redacted.

H. Other Motions

For all other motions not explicitly addressed by these Rules or the Local Rules, including *ex parte* motions, please be aware that the Court does not provide hearing dates or briefing schedules in advance of filing. Please do not call chambers to request a hearing date.

I. Notification of Case Resolution

If the parties reach a settlement outside the presence of the Court, counsel must promptly email chambers at efile_cabrera@casd.uscourts.gov to advise of the settlement and file a Notice of Settlement. The Notice of Settlement can be filed jointly or by the plaintiff.

J. Chambers Copies and Proposed Orders

Chambers (courtesy) copies of motions, exhibits and lodgments are not required unless specifically requested by the Court. All proposed orders should be submitted by email (efile_cabrera@casd.uscourts.gov) in Word format and should be free of any attorney names, firm names, document management numbers or insignia in the caption, margins or footer.

K. Lawyer Development

The Court encourages parties to contribute to the development of the bar by permitting less experienced lawyers to argue matters before the Court. The Court may in its discretion hold a hearing on any motion where a party notifies the Court in advance that a lawyer with fewer than 5 years of experience will argue on behalf of the party. Any lawyer with less than 5 years of experience should contact Chambers if they would like to argue a particular motion.