

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

**CIVIL PRETRIAL PROCEDURES  
MAGISTRATE JUDGE ALLISON H. GODDARD**

The Court provides this information for general guidance to counsel and litigants. The Court may modify these procedures as appropriate in any case upon request or on its own.

**Civility and Professionalism.** All counsel who appear before the Court must review CivLR 83.4 and, at all times, act in compliance with the Code of Conduct set forth in that rule.

**Communications with Chambers.** Letters, faxes, and emails to chambers are prohibited unless specifically requested by the Court. Telephone calls to chambers are permitted only for non-substantive matters such as scheduling and calendaring. Court personnel are prohibited from giving legal advice or discussing the merits of a case.

**Early Neutral Evaluation Conferences.** The Court will schedule an ENE at the outset of the case, typically after all parties have answered. The ENE is informal and confidential. Counsel must carefully review the order scheduling the ENE for more information, including directions regarding briefing and requirements for personal attendance by the parties.

**Case Management Conferences.** The Court typically conducts the CMC required under Fed. R. Civ. P. 16 and CivLR 16.1 immediately following the ENE if no settlement is reached. Prior to the initial CMC, the parties must lodge a Joint CMC Statement with the Court at [efile\\_goddard@casd.uscourts.gov](mailto:efile_goddard@casd.uscourts.gov) that complies with the Court's Requirements for Joint Case Management Statements (<https://www.casd.uscourts.gov/Judges/goddard/docs/Goddard%20Joint%20Case%20Management%20Statement%20Rules.pdf>). The Court may schedule additional status conferences following the initial CMC. The parties are not required to file a joint report in advance of a status conference unless specifically ordered by the Court.

**Scheduling Order.** The Court will issue a Scheduling Order following the CMC. Modification of the Scheduling Order requires the approval of the Court, which will only be granted on a showing of good cause.

**Telephonic Appearances.** Attorneys located outside the Southern District of California may only appear by telephone with leave of Court, which will not be granted absent a showing of good cause. An attorney appearing telephonically at a hearing may only listen to the hearing and may not present argument by telephone.

**Motions to Seal.** There is a presumptive right of public access to court records based upon common law and the First Amendment. The Court will scrutinize any request to file information under seal, and a request will only be granted if a specific showing is made that justifies sealing. Generic and vague references to “competitive harm” will almost always be insufficient to justify sealing.

**Joint Motions.** Any administrative request to the Court (i.e., extension of time, continuance of ENE, etc.) should be made to the Court by joint motion. If only one party is making the request and the other party or parties do not oppose, they should indicate that in the joint motion. If the other party or parties oppose the request, they should set forth their position in the joint motion. *Ex parte* applications are disfavored, and any unopposed request should be filed as a joint motion rather than an *ex parte* application. Counsel who force an *ex parte* application by refusing to participate in the filing of a joint motion will be subject to sanctions.

**Requests for Continuances.** All requests for continuances must be made by a joint motion no less than seven calendar days before the affected date. The request must state:

- The original deadline or date;
- The number of previous requests for continuances;
- A showing of good cause for the request;
- Whether the request is opposed and why;
- Whether the requested continuance will affect other case management dates; and
- A declaration from the counsel seeking the continuance that describes the steps taken to comply with the existing deadlines, and the specific reasons why the deadlines cannot be met.

**Discovery Disputes.** The parties must meet and confer in an attempt to resolve any discovery disputes before contacting the Court. After meet and confer attempts have failed, the movant must e-mail chambers at [efile\\_goddard@casd.uscourts.gov](mailto:efile_goddard@casd.uscourts.gov) seeking a telephonic conference with the Court to discuss the discovery dispute.

The email must include: (1) at least three proposed times mutually agreed upon by the parties for the telephonic conference; (2) a *neutral* statement of the dispute; and (3) one sentence describing (not arguing) each parties' position. The movant must copy opposing counsel on the email.

No discovery motion may be filed until the Court has conducted its pre-motion telephonic conference, unless the movant has obtained leave of Court. The Court may strike any discovery motion that is filed without complying with this process.

This process does not apply where a party is in custody. In that case, counsel may contact chambers by telephone to obtain a hearing date on a noticed discovery motion.

If a dispute arises during the course of a deposition, counsel must meet and confer prior to seeking any ruling from the Court. After meet and confer attempts have failed, counsel may call chambers to seek a ruling. If the Court is unable to review the matter at that moment, counsel should proceed with the deposition in other areas of inquiry and the Court will respond as soon as practicable.

**Deadline to Raise Discovery Disputes With the Court.** The parties must bring any discovery dispute to the Court's attention (either by email or filing a motion as outlined above) no later than 45 days after either (1) the date of service of the written discovery response that is in dispute; or (2) the date that the portion of the deposition transcript in dispute is completed. Failure to meet this deadline will bar a party from filing a corresponding discovery motion. The parties must file a joint motion demonstrating good cause if they seek to extend this deadline. The parties cannot extend this deadline by any agreement that is not approved by the Court.

**Stipulated Protective Orders.** Any protective order submitted for the Court's signature must contain the following two provisions:

1. No document shall be filed under seal unless counsel secures a court order allowing the filing of a document, or portion thereof, under seal. An application to file a document under seal shall be served on opposing counsel, and on the person or entity that has custody and control of the document, if different from opposing counsel. If opposing counsel, or the person or entity who has custody and control of the document, wishes to oppose the application, they must contact the chambers of the judge who will rule on the application to notify the Court that an opposition to the application will be filed.

2. The Court may modify the protective order *sua sponte* in the interests of justice or for public policy reasons.

The Court recommends that the stipulated protective order contain a provision regarding the disposition of confidential or sealed documents and information after the case is closed.

All stipulated protective orders must be filed as a joint motion. The parties must email a copy of the proposed order in Word format to [efile\\_goddard@casd.uscourts.gov](mailto:efile_goddard@casd.uscourts.gov).

**Notice of Settlement.** If the parties reach a settlement, counsel must promptly file a Notice of Settlement or an appropriate Motion to Dismiss. If a scheduled date with the Court is imminent, counsel must also contact chambers to advise of the settlement. Once a Notice of Settlement is filed, the Court will schedule a telephonic Settlement Disposition Conference, which will be taken off calendar once the case has been dismissed.