

The Honorable Denise Langford Morris

Courtroom 3A - Third Floor - Oakland County Courthouse
Telephone: 248-858-0363

Procedural Guidelines for Practice in Judge Denise Langford Morris' Courtroom

In order to serve the attorneys and litigants appearing in Judge Langford Morris' courtroom, we have adopted the following guidelines. Please advise your clients and staff so that there are no misunderstandings.

Background

Judge Langford Morris is a graduate of Wayne State University, undergraduate and graduate school, and the University of Detroit Law School. She has served on the Circuit Court since 1992. Previously, Judge Langford Morris was an Assistant U.S. Attorney, Civil Division, an Assistant Oakland County Prosecutor, and a trial attorney in private practice specializing in Insurance Defense and general practice in numerous areas of practice.

Scheduling/Conference

Settlement conferences are held upon request. Scheduling orders are computer-generated by the Case Management Office. Uses telephone conference on good cause; arranged by parties. Criminal sentence and arraignments held at 8:30 a.m. on Thursdays. Cobbs pleas must be made on the record. Adjournments occasionally allowed with good cause.

Motion Practice

Motions heard Wednesday morning. Add-ons may be allowed on consent of both parties. No oral argument on motions for reconsideration. Summary disposition motions heard Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. Court sets relevant dates pursuant to scheduling order after motion is filed. In limine motions are due in advance of trial. Court requires motion/order clearly stating reason for hearing and issues in evidentiary hearings including list of witnesses and exhibits. Judicial staff attorney reviews appeals from state agency district court, motions for relief from judgment, and new trial. Court permits oral bond motions on criminal cases.

TRO/Injunction

Court uses MCR 3.310; generally does not allow ex parte relief absent good cause.

Discovery

Time allowed is computer generated for good cause only, and should be requested by motion in advance of deadline. Court will refer parties to discovery master assigned by Chief Judge.

Pretrials

Uses telephone pretrials on occasion. Uses joint final pretrial similar to federal court. Joint pretrial order due after pretrial conference. Settlement discussions emphasized at final pretrial conference; all parties must attend and trial counsel (no substitutes).

Trials

Docket is computer generated. Adjournments allowed if good cause. Requires copies of exhibits to be prepared in advance of trial; Plaintiff-numbers; Defendant - letters. Uses benchbook of exhibits. In limine motions filed as case dictates. Court

occasionally requires proposed findings. Court conducts voir dire with counsel. Specific voir dire requests due first day of trial in writing. Jury instructions on plain paper (eight copies for civil) (17 copies for criminal); no authority citations allowed on jurors' copies; filed first day of trial for civil jury trial, and during trial in criminal trial. Jury charged following final argument, jury takes instructions into deliberations; jury can take notes and pose questions if both parties agree and for good cause absent further order of the Court.

General

Encourages all ADR techniques. Driver's license restoration, if alcohol related, requires evidence of AA attendance and evidence that petitioner does not pose a threat to self or public. Court prefers professional alcohol assessment report. Research attorney sets briefing schedule for district court appeals for Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.