

Honorable Lisa Langton
Courtroom W2, First Floor - West Wing - Oakland County Courthouse
Telephone: 248-858-1704

In order to better serve the attorneys and litigants in the Oakland County Circuit Court-Family Division, the family division judges have adopted the following guidelines. Please advise your clients and staff so that there are no misunderstandings.

Orders Presented for Judge's Signature

- Signatures: Original signatures must appear on all orders. Clients and attorneys must both sign orders (if applicable).
- True Copies: As a courtesy, our clerks will process up to four true copies of each signed order. It is the responsibility of the attorney to provide the copies to the court.
- Returning Orders: We will mail true copies of orders to parties providing self-addressed envelopes with sufficient postage. Otherwise, we will hold the copies for seven business days due to storage constraints. The court will discard all copies if not picked up by that time. It is the responsibility of the party to provide an envelope of sufficient size and postage.
- Withdrawal/Substitution of Counsel: When filing a withdrawal or substitution of counsel, the opposing party or parties must also sign the stipulation.
- Ex Parte Orders: All ex parte orders regarding custody, child support, or visitation must comport with MCR 3.207(B)(5). All other proposed ex parte orders must comport with MCR 3.207(B)(6).

Pretrial/Settlement Conferences

- Attendance: Attorneys and unrepresented parties must attend any scheduled conference or hearing. The court will enter a scheduling order for the first trial date in DO cases and the first settlement conference in DM cases unless the parties present a signed consent judgment or place proofs on the record. The court excuses client attendance—if represented—at the first hearings in those case classifications where it will issue a scheduling order. Clients and attorneys must appear at all subsequent, including procedural, hearings.
- Adjournments: The court will not adjourn the first trial date in DO cases, or the first settlement conference in DM cases, without good cause.
- Scheduling Order: If the court issues a scheduling order, the order will be the only notice of subsequent court dates. The order will contain applicable deadlines, dates, and instructions.
- Mediation: All domestic cases must be mediated before trial unless the case is settled.

Discovery

- Extension of Dates in Scheduling Order: The discovery cutoff is set in the scheduling order. The court encourages counsel and litigants to communicate and work together. Except for trial, scheduled dates may be extended by written stipulation if there is no interference with mediation, trial dates, or filing deadlines. It is expected, however, that the parties began engaging in discovery before receiving the scheduling order. The court will rarely reopen discovery after it closes.
- Please refer to the applicable provisions of the scheduling order for additional instructions.

Motion Practice

- Motion Title: All motions must have a title succinctly stating the requested relief. Motions titled “motion,” or containing a similar title, may be dismissed by the court.
- Judge’s Copy of Motions or Briefs: Parties must deliver a copy of their motion and brief, labeled “judge’s copy” directly to chambers no later than noon on the Thursday before the scheduled hearing date. Please print the hearing date on the top of the first page or attach a copy of the notice of hearing or praecipe. This includes those matters designated as an e-file case. The court does not accept faxed or emailed filings.
- Responsive Pleadings: Parties must file all responsive pleadings by noon on the Monday (or sooner) before the Wednesday motion call. You must provide a copy, marked “Judge’s Copy,” directly to chambers. Judge’s copies left with the county clerk, or slipped under the door to chambers, may not be considered.
- Adjourned Motions: Please notify chambers immediately upon motion adjournment. All judge’s copies will be discarded after motion call for space limitations. For matters repraeiciped to another date, you will need to resubmit new judge’s copies. Additionally, it is your responsibility to notify the opposing party of the motion cancellation. A party may only repraecipe a motion twice before the court dismisses the motion without prejudice.
- Abandoned Motions: Unless excused by the court, the moving party must appear for the motion. Failure to appear may result in a \$100 financial penalty under MCR 2.119(E)(4) and will result in dismissal of the motion. To be excused by the court, the moving party must call chambers by 4pm on the Tuesday immediately before the motion’s scheduled hearing date and advise the clerk that the motion has been adjourned or withdrawn.
- Praecipis filed late: The court will not consider motions filed with untimely, or improper, praecipis. You may repraecipe the motion for hearing on a subsequent motion day. If it is not on the motion call list, please contact the case assignment office. It is your responsibility to notify the opposing party.
- Motions for Summary Disposition: The moving party shall set the matter during the court’s regular motion call docket and comport with the applicable provisions of the Michigan Court Rules. Please deliver the judge’s copy of the motion, and any permissible responsive filings, to the judge’s staff attorney.
- Motions for Reconsideration: Parties must file the motion and briefing in conformity with the Michigan Court Rules. It is the responsibility of the moving party to provide a copy of the motion and briefing to chambers.
- Motions to Settle Orders: Parties must file a motion and provide the relevant portion of the hearing’s transcript along with a proposed order. Parties may consult circuit court administration to review videos of hearings.
- Judge Online: The court will not permit participation at motion call by Judge Online, or otherwise by phone, unless the requesting party is on active duty deployment or for other good cause.
- Emergency Motions: The court may consider an emergency motion at any time. The motion must state the reason for the request and be delivered to chambers for consideration. For emergency consideration, it is the responsibility of the moving party to bring the motion directly to chambers and present it to one of the court clerks. The moving party or, if represented, an attorney must remain at the courthouse when requesting emergency relief.
- Evidentiary Hearing: A party must file a motion to request an evidentiary hearing. Requests for hearing before a referee may be made at the Early Intervention Conference without filing a motion.

- Service Issues: The court will not generally adjourn a moving party's motion based on a respondent's claim of improper service. The respondent should contact the moving party to ask for an adjournment of the motion or raise service issues in the response.

Check-In Procedure

- The court hears domestic motions only on Wednesday mornings beginning at 8:30am. Per Local Court Rule 2.119(C), the court may dismiss a praeciped motion if the moving party has not checked in by 9:30 am. If counsel for the opposing party has not checked in by 9:30, the court will call the motion for hearing upon request of the moving party.

Personal Protection Orders:

- A party petitioning the court for a PPO must appear at chambers with their petition and follow the instructions of the PPO office.

Trials/Evidentiary Hearings

- The court will enforce all requirements regarding court filings addressed in the scheduling order.
- Adjournments: After issuing a scheduling order, the court will not adjourn trial dates in DO cases without a motion. The court will consider a stipulated adjournment for the first trial date in DM cases. It is the responsibility of the parties to obtain a trial date from chambers and submit the proposed adjournment order to chambers before the scheduled trial date. Court staff will not modify the trial date until it receives an appropriate order. The court will deny all requests to adjourn a case beyond time guidelines.
- Trial Briefing: The scheduling order identifies requirements for trial briefing. Noncompliance with the briefing requirements may result in the court not considering it. Parties must file trial briefs, identifying uncontested and contested issues, in all cases.
- Trial Exhibits: The parties, or their attorneys, shall mark exhibits prior to trial. Plaintiff shall use numbers and Defendant shall use letters. Exhibit exchange and filing must comply with the scheduling order's provisions.
- Written Closing Arguments: Upon stipulation placed on the record during a domestic trial, the parties may submit written closings and findings of fact, in lieu of oral closing arguments, following the conclusion of trial.

Judgments of Divorce

- Settlements: Parties may place settlements on the record without a motion by notifying the clerk and requesting a hearing time at least 24 hours in advance. If presenting a signed settlement, only Plaintiff and (if applicable) Plaintiff's counsel need to appear.
- Default Judgments: A party must file and obtain a default against the non-moving party, from the county clerk, before presenting a default judgment to the court. Please verify entry of default by the county clerk and proper service before appearing for the default judgment hearing. The party moving for a default judgment must comply with all applicable court rules before appearing for the default judgment hearing.
- Judgments: When requesting entry of a consent judgment, the moving party must present the judgment to the clerk when they arrive at court. Unless otherwise modified by the court, parties must submit all other judgments no later than 21 days after the judgment is granted.

Courtroom Policies

- No children are allowed in the courtroom unless given permission by the judge's staff.
- Hats and sunglasses are not allowed to be worn in the courtroom unless given specific permission by the judge's staff. All parties must appear in appropriate attire.