Pretrial

Civil Cases

Final pretrial conferences are generally conducted on the date and time set out in the Case Management and Scheduling Order. The form of a Joint Final Pretrial Order is explicitly set forth in the Court's Case Management and Scheduling Order. Please review the Case Management and Scheduling Order before attempting to draft the proposed Joint Final Pretrial Order. Status conferences are scheduled at various times during the pretrial period, and the Court encourages counsel to discuss with each other and their clients all forms of ADR options. The Court especially encourages the use of facilitative mediation. You may contact chambers for a list of suggested facilitators.

Motions in limine are generally to be filed no later than five weeks before the final pretrial conference so that responses can be filed in accordance with E.D. Mich. LR 7.1 and the motions will be ready for decision at the time of the final pretrial conference. Filing deadlines generally are stated in the Case Management and Scheduling Order. Alternately, decisions on motions *in limine* may be deferred until trial.

Deadlines for filing proposed *voir dire* questions and jury instructions are set forth in the Case Management and Scheduling Order. Deadlines for submission of proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law in bench trials are set forth in the Case Management and Scheduling Order, but generally must be submitted at least one week before trial.

Criminal Cases

The final pretrial conference is conducted on the record. Counsel of record must attend; stand-ins are not allowed except in extraordinary circumstances, and then only with prior permission of the Court, and with the consent of the client. Deadlines are established at that point for filing jury instructions and proposed *voir dire* questions. Discussion on the manner of jury selection is held on the record. Defendants must be present for the final pretrial conference. The Court establishes a plea cut-off date, set forth in the Criminal Trial Notice and Scheduling Order, which is enforced. The parties may comply with the plea cut-off date by signing and submitting a Rule 11 agreement on or before the deadline; it is not necessary that a guilty plea be made on the record before the plea cut-off date.

Special Cases

Social Security appeals and *pro se* prisoner Civil Rights cases are generally referred to the magistrate judge for case management.

General Rule

In all cases, requests for special arrangements such as audio-visual equipment, demonstrative aids, interpreters, and accommodations for witnesses with disabilities, should be made at or before the final pretrial conference. Exhibits must be pre-marked and an exhibit list must be furnished to the Court on a form which is established by the Court. Request for authorization to bring electronic equipment (computers, etc.) into the courtroom should be made at or before the final pretrial conference.