Conferences

Civil Cases

The Court routinely issues its Notice of Scheduling Conference after the Answer is filed. If there is more than one named Defendant, the court typically schedules the conference after all of the Defendants have filed Answers, unless to do so will cause significant delay. The parties are required to submit a Rule 26(f) plan no later than one week prior to the initial scheduling conference. If a dispositive motion is filed in lieu of an Answer, the Court generally will hold the initial scheduling conference after the Judge issues his ruling on the motion, this may occur the same day as the motion hearing if the Judge rules from the bench.

At the initial scheduling conference, the Court expects the parties to be prepared to discuss the case and the issues, the Court's subject matter jurisdiction, the parties' interest in state court evaluation and/or facilitation, and any other standard procedural/scheduling issues. The Court expects counsel to discuss alternative dispute resolution (ADR) options with their clients and to agree to some form of ADR. The Court's standing scheduling order is completed at the initial scheduling conference based on counsels' input. Typically, the parties are expected to exchange witness lists six (6) weeks prior to the close of discovery, which is usually set at four (4), six (6) or nine (9) months after the initial scheduling conference. The deadline for filing dispositive motions is generally set at three (3) weeks after the close of discovery. The Final Pretrial Order is usually due twelve (12) weeks after the dispositive motion cutoff date. The Final Pretrial Order must be submitted through the document utilities function of the CM/ECF (Case Management/Electronic Case Filing) system. The final pretrial conference is generally scheduled one (1) week after the Final Pretrial Order is due, and trial is scheduled two (2) weeks from the final pretrial conference.

Subsequent status conferences are held as needed or at the request of the parties. In jury cases, settlement conferences are held upon the parties' request and at the final pretrial conference. The Court requires the parties to attend settlement and pretrial conferences. Settlement conferences requested in non-jury cases are referred to a different district judge or to the magistrate judge assigned to the case.

Scheduling and status conferences are generally held on Wednesdays. Scheduling and status conferences may be conducted by telephone for out of state counsel only, if arranged in advance. All final pretrial conferences are typically held on Mondays.

Criminal Cases

The Court will issue a scheduling order. Requests to modify or enlarge the calendar dates shall be made by motion. A final pretrial conference is conducted by the Court. The final pretrial conference is generally held one (1) week prior to the start of trial.