Trials

1. **Types of Trials**

   The court handles civil trials, jury or non-jury, with the consent of the parties and an order of reference from the district judge. See, 28 U.S.C. § 636(c). These are set for a date certain. Appeals are to the Court of Appeals.

   The court also handles misdemeanor trials, pleas, and sentencing with the consent of the parties and an order of reference from the district judge. See F.R.Cr.P. Rule 58. Appeals are to the district judge.

2. **Jury Trial Schedule**

   Jury trials commence on Tuesdays and are conducted Monday through Friday. Subject to the Court's availability, trials normally commence at 8:30 a.m. and continue through 1:00 p.m.

3. **Jury Selection**

   The court often selects juries in cases where the trial may be held before another judge. Counsel and the parties must consent in writing prior to selection. Counsel will exchange voir dire questions in advance. The court will meet briefly with trial counsel in chambers the morning of selection to answer any questions and resolve any disputes as to the potential voir dire questions.

   In most cases, the strike method is used. Under this method, the number of individuals who will be the jury (e.g. 12 + 2 alternates) plus the total number of peremptory challenges (e.g. 7 + 11) are seated. Voir dire is conducted on this group and when the group has been passed for cause, peremptory challenges are exercised without additional questioning.

   In both civil and criminal cases, the court asks preliminary questions regarding background information and scheduling issues and then conducts voir dire.