



CIRCUIT JUDGE PREFERENCES:

Judge Susan M. Sabers

ATTORNEY CONTACT

1. **Generally, how do you prefer attorney contact?** Email.
2. **How do you prefer to receive briefs?** Email with hard copy also sent via U.S. Mail.
3. **Would you like to receive copies of pleadings and affidavits related to a brief or motion?** Yes, via email with hard copy also sent via U.S. Mail.
4. **How do you prefer to receive proposed orders?** Email.

CIVIL SCHEDULING AND PRACTICE

5. **What is the preferred method for setting a civil motions hearing, other than in open court?** Attorney conference call with Court Administration and all attorneys must agree to date.
6. **Do you want courtesy copies of the main statutes or cases relied upon in briefs or motions?** No.
7. **Who should be contacted to request/schedule a telephonic appearance?** Court via email.
8. **Do you require a motion or want some form of notice if the parties have stipulated to an extension of a deadline in a scheduling order?** No.
9. **Should stipulations between counsel on evidentiary issues and/or legal issues be submitted to you in writing?** Yes. Typically only those stipulations relevant to trial issues need to be submitted.
10. **What is the preferred method for scheduling a civil jury trial?** Attorney conference call with Court Administration and all attorneys must agree to date.
11. **Do you require pretrial conferences and what agenda do you have for pretrial conferences?** Yes. Pretrials make good sense in matters set for

jury trials, but I rarely require them for court trials unless significant motions or evidentiary matters are ripe for discussion.

12. **Do you have a standard pretrial order?** No.
13. **Do you have any requirements for court trials that are different from your jury trial expectations?** Yes. In divorce cases, I send out a pretrial letter setting forth additional requirements, including a request for a joint property spreadsheet.
14. **How do you conduct voir dire?** I ask a few very basic questions as to overall ability/willingness to serve, but leave the majority of questioning to counsel.
15. **Do you require a pretrial brief?** No. I certainly welcome the additional information where warranted, but do not impose a blanket requirement in all cases.
16. **Do you require pretrial findings of fact and conclusions of law in a court trial?** No. I nearly always wait until after trial, and most often only request findings/conclusions from one side.
17. **Is there anything else you would like attorneys to know about how you conduct civil matters?** I encourage the parties to stipulate, before trial, to the admission of as many exhibits as possible. We then make a record on those exhibits so that counsel can use them freely (and immediately). I do not require counsel to request to approach witnesses or, once an exhibit is received, to request to publish to the jury. If you have any questions about protocol, I am routinely accessible via email.

CRIMINAL SCHEDULING AND PRACTICE

18. **What is the preferred method for setting a criminal motions hearing, other than in open court?** Attorney conference call with Court Administration and all attorneys must agree to date.
19. **What is the preferred method for seeking a reset of a routine criminal court appearance?** This depends on case-specific factors, including how many resets have previously been allowed.
20. **When a suppression motion is filed, do you require or request a pre-evidentiary brief to lay out the issues to be argued?** Yes.
21. **Do you have any standard sentences or sentencing policies of which attorneys should be aware?** No.
22. **If answer to previous question is yes, please provide examples.** (e.g., no suspended imps in certain situations, fine paid in full on day of sentencing, etc.) No Response.
23. **Is there anything else you would like attorneys to know about how you conduct criminal matters?** No Response.

COURTROOM PROTOCOL

24. Does the Court prefer that lawyers:

- a. **Stand when addressing the court:** No.
- b. **Ask permission to approach an adverse witness:** No.
- c. **Ask permission to approach their own witness:** No.
- d. **Ask permission before moving about the well of the courtroom:** No.
- e. **Ask permission to publish an admitted exhibit to the jury:** No.

25. Do you allow lawyers to have cell phones in your courtroom? Yes.

26. Do you mind if lawyers check email, etc while waiting in the gallery for their case to be called? No.

27. Is there anything else you would like attorneys to know about your preferred courtroom protocol? If you have questions about protocol, please feel free to ask. I recognize that attorneys have difficult jobs and do my best to not create additional hurdles for them. If there is an issue that would help you be more comfortable while in my courtroom, please let me know.

DOMESTIC CASES

28. Are there any special issues that arise in your courtroom in domestic cases that you would like the Bar to be aware of? No Response.

29. Do you have a standard pretrial order? Yes.

30. Do you require:

- a. **Pre-trial conference:** No.
- b. **Pre-trial mediation:** No.
- c. **Asset/Debt spreadsheet** (if so, please provide a copy of the required form): Yes.
- d. **Pre-trial brief:** No.
- e. **Pre-trial submission of proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law:** No.

31. If the parties stipulate to temporary or final matters, how do you prefer attorneys proceed? I am always willing to make a record on any issues of concern. But, generally speaking, written stipulations nearly always suffice.

32. Is there anything else you would like attorneys to know about how you conduct domestic cases? I am willing to meet with counsel in chambers when they feel they have particularly sensitive issues to discuss outside the presence of their clients. Again, feel free to ask questions about protocol-related issues.

COURTHOUSE

33. **Does your courtroom/courthouse have any of the following:** (please list all applicable counties)
- a. **Separate tables for counsel:** Yes.
 - b. **Accessibility for attorneys, parties and witnesses who use wheelchairs:** Yes.
 - c. **Podium:** Yes.
 - d. **Microphone system:** Yes.
 - e. **Photocopier:** Yes.
 - f. **Free internet access or law library for visiting lawyers:** Yes.
 - g. **Screen for video presentation:** Yes.
 - h. **Computer or television for video presentations:** Yes.
34. **Is there anything not previously addressed that you would like attorneys practicing in your court to know?** No Response.