

## **COURTROOM RULES**

### **Dress and Conduct**

Attorneys and parties shall conduct themselves with decorum and civility.

Attorneys are required to dress in a professional manner. Parties also are expected to appear dressed in a manner appropriate for federal court. (E.g., shorts, T-Shirts, tank tops, strapless tops, tennis shoes, and sandals are not allowed.)

Witnesses, jurors and spectators are expected to dress in a manner consistent with the dignity of the Court. The following minimum standards apply:

1. Men should wear shirt with a collar and long pants. (Jeans are acceptable).
2. Women should wear a dress, or a blouse and skirt or long pants. (Jeans are acceptable).
3. All laypersons should wear shoes in the courtroom.
4. Shorts, T-Shirts, and revealing clothing are not acceptable. (Anything that reveals the midriff or underclothing).
5. Hats or caps must be removed while in the courtroom.

Deviations from the above standards by laypersons (other than those who are in custody at the time of the proceeding) should be brought to attention of court personnel and approved by the Court prior to entering the courtroom.

Food, including chewing gum, is not allowed in the courtroom, except for throat lozenges when necessary.

Stand when you speak. Do not refer to any party or attorney by their first name. Always use surnames. Always address the Court only; do not address or argue with opposing counsel in the presence of the jury. If counsel must confer with one another, please request permission of the Court for a moment to do so privately and quietly.

Remain behind the podium when addressing the Court or speaking to the jury.

### **Argument on Motions**

In most cases, Judge Gonzales will grant a request for oral argument. Telephone hearings may be set for out-of-town counsel if the motion is non-dispositive. In these instances, if one side will need to appear by telephone, Judge Gonzales will require both sides to appear by telephone. (Appearance via cellular telephone will not be approved). When appearing via telephone, and to ensure an accurate record, counsel should identify themselves by name when speaking and avoid interrupting or speaking while other speakers are being heard. Counsel is required to appear in-person for dispositive motions.

### Opportunities for Young Lawyers

Judge Gonzales is aware of the current trend that clearly shows more cases are resolved without going to trial. As a result, there are fewer opportunities for attorneys to “stand up” in court, particularly for young, less experienced lawyers (lawyers practicing less than five years). Judge Gonzales strongly encourages litigants and firms to seek opportunities for young lawyers to appear at hearings before the court and make oral argument, especially on motions and responses that young lawyers drafted or significantly contributed to drafting. In instances where Judge Gonzales will be ruling on a motion or response handled by a young lawyer, Judge Gonzales is inclined to weigh in favor of granting requests for oral argument in court. Judge Gonzales understands that in some circumstances having a young lawyer present oral arguments may not be appropriate and/or in the best interests of the client. Even so, Judge Gonzales believes it is important to provide young lawyers with substantive speaking opportunities to gain experience in court, as the benefits of such experience will accrue to the young lawyer, their clients, and the legal profession in general.

After the conclusion of a case, Judge Gonzales generally will be available to visit with any young lawyers who wish to receive feedback relating to their in-court appearances.

### Other Courtroom Rules

Counsel’s mobile devices shall be on silent mode before entering the courtroom; telephone calls are not allowed in courtroom while court is in session.

Please provide two weeks advance notice when you require teleconferencing, intend to utilize the courtroom’s video displays, or have other presentation technology questions.