OC FAMILY LAW SOLUTIONS · NOVEMBER 2026

FLS Trial Procedures

Orange County Family Law Solutions | Judge James L. Waltz (Ret.)

Standing process for trials before Judge Waltz — not a court order.

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Scope

> When Judge James L. Waltz (Ret.) is appointed as a temporary assigned family law judge, the following procedures apply to trials in all matters assigned to Judge Waltz for all purposes.

1. Process

Trial Readiness Conference ("TRC")

- A TRC is scheduled approximately three weeks prior to trial.
- Friday at 3:00 p.m. – by Zoom.
- Motions in Limine exchange will be negotiated or scheduled by the court, as needed.
- Hearing on MIL's per agreement or order of court.

Trial process

- Trial days: Tuesday – Thursday.
- 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Comfort breaks: mid-morning and mid-afternoon.
- Lunch: noon to 1:00.
- Order of proof: By agreement and if no agreement, petitioner presents first. Order of proof is not legally significant, and no party has any advantage based on the order of proof.
- Any witness may be called out of order based on the convenience of the witness.
- Witness(es) may appear by Zoom.
- Closing arguments: timing and form (oral or in writing) by agreement, and if no agreement, court to decide.
- After closing arguments, the court will take the matter under submission and publish rulings/orders by minute order.

2. Trial Documents

Statement of Issues

- Five weeks prior to trial, and not later than the preceding Friday at 5:00 p.m. the parties shall exchange a complete list of issues to be tried and include therein proposed findings of fact, proposed rulings and orders. See generally OCLR 709(c).

Trial Brief

- Required; see CRC 5.394 for content; due 5 court days prior to trial.

Witness list

- Each party to comply with FC § 217 and exchange 21 calendar days prior to trial.

Trial exhibits

- Trial exhibits (and log) shall be exchanged 21 calendar days prior to trial.

Current Income and Expense Declaration

- Unless not applicable, party IED is due 21 calendar days prior to trial. See generally CRC 5.260, OCLR 702; compare FC § 3667.

3. Trial Exhibits

Redaction

- Redact all confidential information from trial exhibits, e.g. social security numbers and/or financial account numbers. See CRC 1.20(b) and FC § 2024.5(a).

Trial exhibit numbering scheme

- The court uses the federal model for marking trial exhibits; all trial exhibits are numbered - not lettered.
- Petitioner is reserved trial exhibit numbers 1-499;
- Respondent is reserved trial exhibit numbers 500-999;

Pagination

- To eliminate delay and confusion, any multi-page trial exhibit must include page numbers.
- If the multi-page trial exhibit is without internal pagination, add page numbers using any practical means.
- Organize the trial exhibits into a three-ring notebook(s) with easy flow page lifters suitable for a three-ring binder (see Wilsonjones easyflow II-page lifters);
- White notebooks for Petitioner.

- Black notebooks for Respondent.

Trial exhibits – Four Copies

- Judge's copy; Petitioner's copy; Respondent's copy; Witness copy.
- Divide trial exhibits by Tabs and three-hole punch each trial exhibit: Do not over-fill notebooks; Use a large three-hole punch (13/32 diameter) for easy page turning.
- Inventory trial exhibits within a trial exhibit log. Within the trial exhibit log, Identify each trial exhibit by a trial exhibit number and include a very brief description, such as "bank statement", "photo," "e-mail," or "text message."
- Similar trial exhibits (e.g. photo) will be distinguished by separate trial exhibit numbers.
- The trial exhibit description has no legal significance.

Custody of exhibits

- Custody of marked trial exhibits is governed by California Rules of Court, rule 2.400(c)(2). Absent a filed stipulation approved by the court, the temporary judge shall keep all marked exhibits and deliver them, properly marked, to the clerk at the conclusion of the case. If the parties file such a stipulation and the court approves it, each side's counsel shall retain that party's marked set as custodian until the case is final (including any appeal) plus 60 days, after which the exhibits may be destroyed upon written notice to the parties; a self-represented party's marked set shall be held by the clerk or by Orange County Family Law Solutions. Working and witness copies may be returned or destroyed after the ruling once the official set is in custody.
- The court will not otherwise store trial exhibits.