

LCRLJ 43.1  
COURTROOM PRACTICE AND DECORUM

(a) Examination of Witnesses and Arguments

(1) During opening statement, examination of witnesses and arguments, counsel should remain at counsel table unless otherwise authorized by Court.

(2) Do not approach a witness without asking permission of the Court. When permission is granted for the purpose of working with an exhibit, resume the examination from counsel table when finished with the exhibit.

(3) Rise when addressing the Court and when making objections as this calls the Court's attention to you.

(b) Objections to Questions and Evidence

(1) When objecting, state only that you are objecting and specify the ground or grounds of objection. Do not use objections for the purpose of making a speech, recapitulating testimony or attempting to guide the witness.

(2) Argument upon the objection will not be heard until permission is given or argument is requested by the Court.

(c) Decorum

(1) Address all remarks to the Court. Colloquy or argument between attorneys is not permitted.

(2) In a jury case, if there is an offer of stipulation, first confer with opposing counsel and obtain the Court's permission before submitting it to the jury.

(3) Counsel during trial shall not exhibit familiarity with witnesses, jurors, or opposing counsel. The use of first names or nicknames is to be avoided. During jury argument, no juror shall be addressed individually or by name.

(4) During the argument of opposing counsel, remain seated at the counsel table and be respectful. Never divert the attention of the Court or the jury.

(d) Witnesses and Ruling of the Court

(1) Witnesses shall at all times be treated with fairness, consideration and respect.

(2) No person shall ever by facial expression or other conduct exhibit any opinion concerning any testimony which is being given by a witness, or as to a ruling by the Court. Counsel will admonish their clients and witnesses about this very common occurrence.

(e) Court Hours and Promptness

(1) The Court will make every effort to commence proceeding at the time set. Promptness is expected from counsel and witnesses.

(2) Counsel should make every effort to schedule witnesses in order to ensure full utilization of the trial day.

(f) Exhibits

(1) All exhibits should be pre-marked for identification prior to trial. The Judicial Assistant assigned to each Judge will cooperate with counsel in facilitating the marking and management of the exhibits.  
(Amended effective Sept. 1, 2009)

(2) Documents and other exhibits should be shown to opposing counsel before their use in Court.

(3) Ordinarily, exhibits should be offered in evidence when they become admissible rather than at the end of counsel's case.

(4) Marking on exhibits should only be made after receiving the Court's permission to do so.

(g) Opening Statements. Confine your opening statement to what you expect the evidence to show. It is not proper to use the opening statement to argue your case or instruct as to the law.

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