

Rice Early Case Management (ECM) Timelines
(What to Expect)
(updated 5/26/2021)

Initial Case Management Conferences (ICMCs) will be scheduled the first Tuesday available, approximately 21 to 28 days after the initial case filing. Please keep this in mind when timing the filing of your case.

Initial Motion Management Conferences (IMMCs) will be scheduled the first Tuesday available, 28-35 days after the initiating party contacts court administrations for a motion hearing date. The motion hearing date will be at least 130 days from the date the initiating party contacts court administrations. Please keep these timelines in mind when timing your contact with court administration to start a new motion process.

Cases settling before ICMC/IMMC: If a full resolution is reached prior to the ICMC or IMMC, the ICMC or IMMC may be treated as a final hearing, with a record being made of the parties' agreement and final decrees or orders being signed at (if prepared by parties or counsel) or following the ICMC or IMMC. You do not need to cancel an ICMC or IMMC and request a different final hearing date as long as both parties appear and ready to proceed with the agreement.

Early Neutral Evaluation (ENE) Status Conferences: If opting into ENE at an ICMC or IMMC, an ENE Status Conference will be scheduled approximately 90 days from the date of the ICMC or IMMC. If a full resolution is reached during ENE, the ENE Status Conference may be treated as a final hearing, with a record being made of the parties' agreement and final decrees or orders being signed at (if prepared by parties or counsel) or following the ENE Status Conference. You do not need to cancel an ENE Status Conference and request a different final hearing date as long as both parties appear and are ready to proceed with the agreement. If full agreement is not reached, the ENE Status Conference will proceed similar to a Scheduling Conference and the next dates and steps in the case will be set.

ENE Process Completion Timelines: Social ENE processes are to be completed within 45 days of the date of the ICMC or IMMC. Financial ENE processes are to be completed within 60 days of the date of the ICMC or IMMC. In exceptional and rare circumstances, the ENE providers may request an extension of the deadlines to complete FENE or SENE.

Rice County ICMC and IMMC Continuance Policy:

- (a) only one continuance allowed per case per process (ICMC or IMMC),
- (b) the request must be based on the agreement of the parties,
- (c) the request must be made in writing (stating parties have conferred and agree), and
- (d) the ICMC or IMMC will be scheduled at the next available time for an ICMC or IMMC (not at the attorneys'/parties' date requested)—preferably the very next week.

If a party feels that the other party is unreasonably withholding consent to a continuance, that should be noted in a letter from the aggrieved party to the scheduled ICMC/ICMC judge, along with the reason for the requested continuance. The judge can either approve the continuance over the party's objection, once given time to respond in writing, or can hold a telephone conference with the parties to determine the issue.