

**THE HONORABLE BRUCE MANNING
DISTRICT JUDGE, FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
CIVIL PRACTICE POINTERS & PREFERENCES**

I. Contact with Chambers

- Counsel may contact Judge Manning’s law clerk with questions related to procedural matters not covered by the rules or any applicable orders. Counsel should have the court file number at hand when calling chambers. Clerks will not answer substantive legal questions.
- Guidance on many procedural points is provided in Judge Manning’s scheduling orders. Attorneys are encouraged to consult the applicable scheduling order before calling chambers with questions.

II. Motion Practice

- Hearings on dispositive motions are generally scheduled for one hour; non-dispositive motions are ordinarily scheduled for 30 minutes. Extra time may allowed upon request on a case-by-case basis.
- Parties should call Judge Manning’s clerk as soon as possible in advance of a hearing to inform the Court that a contested motion is resolved or partially resolved.
- No discovery dispute may be brought before the Court unless the parties have conferred and made a good faith effort to settle their dispute as contemplated by Minn. R. Civ. P. 37.01(b) and Minn. Gen. R. Prac. 115.10. The party raising an unresolved discovery issue shall first arrange a telephone conference with the Court and the other party or parties to determine if the dispute can be resolved without a formal motion. In the event a telephone conference is scheduled, the party requesting the telephone conference may submit to the Court, seventy-two hours before the conference, a letter, no longer than two pages, outlining with specificity the issue(s) to be addressed with the Court. The other party or parties may submit a responsive letter subject to the same length and specificity conditions twenty-four hours before the conference. The correspondence must be filed with the Court as well as courtesy copied by email to the clerk. No motion or submission other than these letters shall be filed before the telephone conference. Only if the telephone conference does not resolve the dispute may a formal motion be scheduled.
- Judge Manning disfavors requests for continuances on the date of trial.

III. Pretrial Procedures

- Attorneys may not discuss the facts of the case or similar hypotheticals, or disputed issues of law during *voir dire*.
- Judge Manning typically holds a pretrial conference 4 to 6 weeks before the scheduled trial block at which time he will hear argument on any motions in limine.

IV. Trial

- Trial days are generally scheduled from 9 a.m. to noon with one 20 minute break, and continue from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. with a second 20 minute break.
- Attorneys should remain behind counsel's table when examining witnesses unless there is a specific reason to approach the witness. Permission is required to approach a witness during cross-examination.
- Attorneys should stand and state the basis for making any objection. Attorneys may request to approach the bench if they wish to argue the objection.