COURTROOM PROCEDURES

Judge Jerry B. Hodson

Courtroom 616
Multnomah County Circuit Court
Department 3

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Judicial Staff

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I. Communicating with the Judge and Staff

- Communications with Judge Hodson's staff can be done via phone, email, fax, or hand delivery.

- Deliveries should be made to the judicial assistant, Room 612. If no one answers the door, the delivery may be slipped under the door, or may be delivered to the clerk in courtroom 616.

- Please do not deliver originals to our office, unless otherwise specified in the UTCR. You must file the original document with the clerk in Room 210 and hand deliver or mail separately a courtesy copy to the judge's chambers in Room 612.

- Do not file the judge's copy with the original filing with the court clerk, as it will not be delivered to the judge's chambers.

- Use prudence in communicating directly with Judge Hodson via email. Most communications should be directed to his staff, and opposing counsel should be included on all communications.

II. General Courtroom Procedures

- The clerk will ask you to rise at the beginning of most court sessions, but will frequently ask you to remain seated for efficiency.

- Cell phones must be silenced in the courtroom.

- There is a digital recording device in the courtroom that creates the official record of proceedings. You may order copies of a recording or a transcript through the Court's Records Department. Alternatively, you may arrange to hire a court reporter to maintain the official record and provide transcripts.

- The courtroom acoustics are not very good. Wireless microphones are available for use.

- If you are not using a wireless microphone please ensure that you are near a fixed microphone when speaking, or project your voice so that it is picked up by the digital recording device.

- Assistive listening devices are available for all parties, witnesses, jurors, and attorneys.

- Feel free to move around the courtroom, but please also respect the personal space of jurors, opposing counsel, and witnesses.

- We welcome the use of technology in the courtroom. Feel free to contact the court clerk in advance of a hearing or trial to discuss logistics.

- Usually a trial day begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 4:45 p.m. with a fifteen minute recess in the morning and afternoon and a lunch break from noon to 1:30 p.m.

- For purposes of security, the doors to the courtroom will be locked during the noon hour, and when court is not in session.

- Parties are discouraged from remaining in the courtroom during the noon hour because it impacts the clerk's lunch break. If special circumstances justify an exception, check with the clerk for approval.

III. Pretrial procedures

- In cases assigned for trial at daily call, parties are required to submit all jury instructions, verdict forms, trial memoranda, motions to suppress, and motions in limine to Judge Hodson's chambers by noon the business day before trial.

- Please also send all jury instructions and verdict forms in an electronic format (preferably Word) to Judge Hodson's staff as soon as possible.

- Judge Hodson will prepare a draft set of jury instructions from the parties' submissions and provide copies to the parties for review.

- Provide witness and exhibit lists to the clerk the morning of trial. The witness list should include expert witnesses, no matter where they reside.

- Once you receive the other party's jury instructions and verdict form please review them promptly and discuss them with opposing counsel before trial or during a break in trial in order to try to narrow the areas of disagreement.

- In cases pre-assigned for trial, the parties should confer regarding a pretrial schedule and communicate that schedule to Judge Hodson's staff for approval.

- In complex cases or lengthy trials, Judge Hodson prefers to set aside time before trial for hearing pretrial motions and reviewing jury instructions, with a set schedule for the prehearing exchange of these materials, as well as the exchange of exhibit lists.

- Please confer regarding a realistic trial schedule, accommodations needed for witness schedules, stipulation to the admissibility of noncontroversial exhibits, and similar matters.

I.V. Trial procedures

- In small civil cases, please consider an agreement to use a six or eight person jury.

- Judge Hodson will ask you to read your witness list to the jurors during voir dire to make sure that jurors do not know any of your witnesses.

- The clerk will provide you with a list of the prospective jurors prior to voir dire, and will explain where the prospective jurors will be seated.

- In civil cases, Judge Hodson reads an introductory instruction to prospective jurors that includes a very general, short description of the nature of the case. Please confer regarding an agreed upon case description.

- Judge Hodson then asks prospective jurors a series of questions to provide counsel with background information, before turning the time over to counsel.

- Please pose your questions to the jury panel as a whole, with follow-up questions to specific jurors, rather than asking the same question of each juror.

- Juror challenges for cause are addressed during questioning of prospective jurors and before passing the panel for cause.Peremptory challenges are addressed in chambers after questioning of prospective jurors is complete.

- Judge Hodson generally informs alternate jurors that they are alternates, but he is willing to consider other methods of addressing alternate jurors.

- Judge Hodson generally allows jurors to ask questions during trial. The clerk will collect written juror questions after the redirect examination of a witness, and the judge will review these questions with counsel in chambers. Counsel will be allowed to ask follow-up questions. Click on this link to view Judge Hodson's **Juror Questions** instruction.

- Bench conferences are usually held in chambers.

- The judge is very protective of the jurors' time. As many objections and other legal issues as possible should be dealt with prior to jury selection or at a time during trial when jurors are not kept waiting.

- Confer with opposing counsel regarding reviewing the files of experts during convenient breaks in the trial.

- If you are not a lawyer and are representing yourself at trial, you may want to click on this link to review Judge Hodson's **Outlines for Self Represented Litigants**.