

**STANDING ORDERS IN SUITS FOR DIVORCE AND SUITS AFFECTING THE
PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP FOR THE 79TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
AND THE JIM WELLS COUNTY COURT AT LAW - CALENDAR YEAR 2020**

The Presiding Judges for the 79th Judicial District Court of Texas and the Jim Wells County Court at Law establish these procedures, rules and orders in Suits for Divorce and Suits Affecting the Parent-Child Relationship for the 79th Judicial District Court sitting in Jim Wells County and the Jim Wells County Court at Law. This order is a standing order for the 79th Judicial District Court and the Jim Wells County Court at Law that applies in every divorce suit and every suit affecting the parent-child relationship filed in Jim Wells County, Texas. The 79th Judicial District Court and the Jim Wells County Court at Law have adopted this order because the parties and their children should be protected and their property preserved while the lawsuit is pending before the court.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. **NO DISRUPTION OF CHILDREN:** Both parties are **ORDERED to refrain** from doing the following acts concerning any children who are subject of this case:

- (a) Removing the children from the State of Texas, acting directly or in concert with others, without the written agreement of both parties, unless by previous court order the children are already residing outside of Texas.
- (b) Disrupting or withdrawing the children from school or daycare facility where the children are presently enrolled, without the written agreement of both parents or an order of this Court.
- (c) Hiding or secreting the children from the other parent or changing the children's current place of abode, without the written agreement of both parties or an order of this Court.
- (d) Disturbing the peace of the children.

2. **CONDUCT OF THE PARTIES DURING THE CASE:** Both parties are **ORDERED** to refrain from doing the following acts:

- (a) Using vulgar, profane, obscene, or indecent language, or a coarse or offensive manner to communicate with the other party, whether in person, by telephone or in writing.
- (b) Threatening the other party in person, by telephone, or in writing to take unlawful action against any person.

FILED AT _____ O'CLOCK ____ M R. DAVID GUERRERO
JAN 06 2020
DISTRICT CLERK JIM WELLS CO, TEXAS BY _____ DEPUTY

- (c) Placing one or more telephone calls, at an unreasonable hour, in an offensive or repetitious manner, without a legitimate purpose of communication, or anonymously.

3. **PRESERVATION OF PROPERTY AND USE OF FUNDS DURING DIVORCE CASE:** If this is a divorce case, both parties to the marriage are **ORDERED** to refrain from doing the following acts:

- (a) Destroying, removing, concealing, encumbering, transferring, or otherwise harming or reducing the value of the property of one or both of the parties.
- (b) Misrepresenting or refusing to disclose to the other party or to the Court, on proper request, the existence, amount or location of any property of one or both of the parties.
- (c) Damaging or destroying the tangible property of one or both of the parties, including any document that represents or embodies anything of value, and causing pecuniary loss to the other party.
- (d) Tampering with the tangible property of one or both of the parties, including any document that represents or embodies anything of value, and causing pecuniary loss to the other party.
- (e) Selling, transferring, assigning, mortgaging, encumbering, or in any other manner alienating any of the property of either party, whether personal property or real estate property, and whether separate or community, except as specifically authorized by this order.
- (f) Incurring any indebtedness, other than legal expenses in connection with this suit, except as specifically authorized by this order.
- (g) Making withdrawals from any checking or savings account in any financial institution for any purpose, except as specifically authorized by this order.
- (h) Spending any sum of cash in either party's possession or subject to either party's control for any purpose, except as specifically authorized by this order.
- (i) Withdrawing or borrowing in any manner for any purpose from any retirement, profit-sharing, pension, death or other employee benefit plan or employee savings plan or from any individual

retirement account or Keogh account, except as specifically authorized by this order.

- (j) Signing or endorsing the other party's name on any negotiable instrument, check, or draft, such as tax refunds, insurance payments, and dividends, or attempting to negotiate any negotiable instrument payable to the other party without the signature of the other party.
 - (k) Taking any action to terminate or limit credit or charge cards in the name of the other party.
 - (l) Entering, operating or exercising control over the motor vehicle in the possession of the other party.
 - (m) Discontinuing or reducing the withholding for federal income taxes on wages or salary while this suit is pending.
 - (n) Terminating or in any manner affecting the service of water, electricity, gas, telephone, cable television, or other contractual services, such as security, pest control, landscaping, or yard maintenance at the other party's residence or in any manner attempting to withdraw any deposits for service in connection with such services.
 - (o) Excluding the other party from the use and enjoyment of the other party's residence.
 - (p) Opening or redirecting the mail addressed to the other party.
4. **PERSONAL AND BUSINESS RECORDS IN DIVORCE CASE:** Records means any tangible document or recording and includes e-mail or other digital or electronic data, whether stored on a computer hard drive, diskette or other electronic storage device. If this is a divorce case, both parties to the marriage are ORDERED to refrain from doing the following acts:
- (a) Concealing or destroying any family records, property records, financial records, business records or any records of income, debts, or other obligations.
 - (b) Falsifying any writing or record relating to the property of either party.
5. **INSURANCE IN DIVORCE CASE:** If this is a divorce case, both parties to the marriage are ORDERED to refrain from doing the following acts:

- (a) Withdrawing or borrowing in any manner all or any part of the cash surrender value of life insurance policies on the life of either party, except as specifically authorized by this order.
- (b) Changing or in any manner altering the beneficiary designation on any life insurance on the life of either party or the parties' children.
- (c) Canceling, altering, or in any manner affecting any casualty, automobile, or health insurance policies insuring the parties' property or persons including the parties' minor children.

6. **SPECIFIC AUTHORIZATIONS IN DIVORCE CASE:** If this is a divorce case, both parties to the marriage are specifically authorized to do the following:

- (a) To engage in acts reasonable and necessary to the conduct of that party's usual business and occupation.
- (b) To make expenditures and incur indebtedness for reasonable attorney's fees and expenses in connection with this suit.
- (c) To make expenditures and incur indebtedness for reasonable and necessary living expenses for food, clothing, shelter, transportation and medical care.
- (d) To make withdrawals from accounts in financial institutions only for the purposes authorized by this order.

7. **INVENTORY IN DIVORCE CASES:** In contested divorce cases, each party shall file with opposing counsel not later than 60 days from Respondent's appearance but in no event less than 30 days prior to a final trial setting, an inventory, signed under oath by that party, setting forth a description and value of all property (real and personal, community and separate) owned or claimed by either or both of the parties and a list of all debts and liabilities (stating the creditor and amount) owed by either or both parties. Inventories shall not be filed with the Court except upon order of the Court. When a party files an inventory with opposing counsel, the party shall file a certificate of compliance with the District Clerk certifying that the inventory has been filed with the opposing counsel. Failure of a party to timely file an inventory as required, both as to time and form, may subject that party to sanctions upon the motion of a party or the Court.

8. **SERVICE AND APPLICATION OF THIS ORDER:**


- (a) The Petitioner shall attach a copy of Article II of this Standing Order to the original petition and to each copy of the petition. At the time the petition is filed, if the Petitioner has failed to attach a copy of this order to the petition and any copy of the petition, the

Clerk shall ensure that a copy of Article II of this Standing Order is attached to the petition and every copy of the petition presented. The clerk may charge an appropriate fee to the Petitioner for providing copies of Article II of this Standing Order in addition to the filing fees.


- (b) This order is effective upon the filing of the original petition and shall remain in full force and effect as a Temporary Restraining Order for fourteen days after the date of the filing of the original petition. If no party contests this order by presenting evidence at a hearing on or before fourteen days after the date of the filing of the original petition, this order shall continue in full force and effect as a Temporary Injunction until further order of the court. This entire order will terminate and will no longer be effective once the court signs a final order of the case is dismissed.
9. **EFFECT OF OTHER COURT ORDERS:** If any part of this order is different from any part of a Protective Order that has already been entered or is later entered, the Protective Order provisions prevail. Any part of this order not changed by some later order remains in full force and effect until the court signs a final decree or the case is dismissed.
10. **INFORMAL PRE-TRIAL SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE:** All parties involved in a suit for the dissolution of a marriage and/or in a suit affecting the parent/child relationship (excluding child protective services cases and Title IV-D cases) shall engage in an informal settlement conference at least seven (7) days prior to a scheduled final hearing. The parties shall make a diligent effort to identify and resolve all contested issues prior to the final hearing. Failure to engage in an informal settlement conference may lead to the imposition of sanctions and/or postponement of the final hearing.
11. **PARENT EDUCATION FOR DIVORCING PARENTS:** Except for good cause shown or in cases where a party fails to appear and has defaulted, the parents, in all proceedings seeking a dissolution of a marriage joined with a suit affecting the parent-child relationship, shall attend and successfully complete an educational program for divorcing parents approved by the Court. In its discretion, the Court may also refer parents involved in modification or enforcement litigation, or a child involved in any type of custody litigation, to an education course or for counseling. Proof of completion of an approved educational program for divorcing parents must be filed with the clerk of the court prior to the granting of a final judgment.
12. **BOND WAIVED:** It is **ORDERED** that the requirement of a bond is waived.

Signed on the date indicated below to be effective on January 1, 2020 and to expire on December 31, 2020. This Order is executed in duplicate originals. One original each shall be filed with the Jim Wells County District Clerk and the Jim Wells County Clerk.

Date: 01/06/2020


Richard C. Terrell
Judge Presiding
79th Judicial District Court

Date: 12/20/2019


Michael V. Garcia
Judge Presiding
Jim Wells County Court at Law

GENERAL STANDING ORDERS FOR THE 79TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT AND
THE JIM WELLS COUNTY COURT AT LAW
CALENDAR YEAR 2020

FILED AT _____ O'CLOCK _____ M
R. DAVID GUERRERO
JAN 06 2020
DISTRICT CLERK JIM WELLS TEXAS
DEPUTY

The Presiding Judges for the 79th Judicial District Court of Texas sitting in Jim Wells County and the Jim Wells County Court at Law establish these procedures, rules and orders in the 79th Judicial District Court and the Jim Wells County Court at Law.

ARTICLE I. ATTORNEY *AD LITEMS*, GUARDIAN *AD LITEMS*
AND *AMICUS* ATTORNEYS IN CIVIL CASES

A. QUALIFICATIONS, APPOINTMENT AND DUTIES

1.01. An attorney who desires to accept appointment as an attorney *ad litem*, guardian *ad litem* or an *amicus* attorney must be a member of and in good standing with the State Bar of Texas. The attorney must have demonstrated proficiency and commitment in providing services as an attorney *ad litem*, guardian *ad litem* or an *amicus* attorney. Additionally, attorneys who desire to accept appointments on behalf of incapacitated persons (as that term is defined under Texas Estates Code (TEC) Sec. 1002.017) must also be certified by the State Bar of Texas under TEC Sec.1054.201.

An attorney who desires to accept appointment as an attorney *ad litem*, guardian *ad litem* or an *amicus* attorney shall comply with all requirements mandated by law to accept such appointments, including but not limited to the following:

- (a) An attorney who desires to accept appointment as an attorney *ad litem* for a proceeding under Texas Family Code (TFC) Title 5 (The Parent-Child Relationship and the Suit Affecting the Parent-Child Relationship), Subtitle E (Protection Of The Child) shall also comply with the minimum continuing legal education requirements mandated by TFC Sec. 107.004(b) and (b-1).
- (b) An attorney who desires to accept appointment as an attorney *ad litem* for a parent under Texas Family Code (TFC) Sec. 107.013 shall also comply with the minimum continuing legal education requirements mandated by TFC 107.0131(1)(J).

1.02. Each attorney who desires to accept appointments as an attorney *ad litem*, a guardian *ad litem* or *amicus* attorney shall submit a letter of intent to accept such appointments to the Court Manager for the county in which the attorney desires to accept appointments. The attorney must also specify the types of cases to which

the attorney desires appointments under section 1.07 of these rules. If required by other provisions of these rules, the letter of intent must also be accompanied with any additional documentation that establish the attorney is eligible for appointments under these rules.

- 1.03. The trial court shall comply with the provisions of Texas Government Code (TGC) Sec. 37.004 for the appointment of an attorney *ad litem*, guardian *ad litem* or *amicus* attorney and shall maintain appointment lists in accordance with these provisions.
- 1.04. The trial court shall promptly inform appointees of an appointment. Appointees may be informed by telephone, fax, email, in person or by any other means likely to give the appointee notice of the appointment.
- 1.05. In addition to duties mandated by law, individuals appointed shall make every reasonable effort to do the following from the date of appointment:
 - (a) contact and interview the client as soon as practicable; and,
 - (b) contact all parties or their legal counsel of record as soon as practicable to obtain all agreed upon discovery, if applicable, and discuss resolution of all disputed issues and claims.
- 1.06. Individuals appointed shall represent the client until the case has been disposed or dismissed, appeals are exhausted, or the appointed individual is relieved of duties by the trial court.
- 1.07. The trial court shall establish four (4) appointment lists as follows:
 - (a) Torts;
 - (b) Suits by a Governmental Entity to Protect the Health and Safety of a Child;
 - (c) Enforcement Actions in Suits Affecting the Parent/Child Relationship Cases; and,
 - (d) All other cases.

The trial court shall prepare the appointment lists of individuals eligible and qualified to accept appointments as attorney *ad litem*, guardian *ad litem* or *amicus* attorney on or before the first day of January of each year and shall post the list at the courthouse of the county in which the court is located and on any Internet website of the court.

B. COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES OF APPOINTED ATTORNEYS

PAID BY TRIAL COURT

- 1.20. In cases where the Court is required to provide for the compensation of an appointed attorney *ad litem*, guardian *ad litem* or *amicus* attorney, attorneys shall be compensated at an hourly rate set by the Court. Due to the complexity and/or uniqueness of a given cause, the Court may award hourly compensation in excess of the established fee in the interest of justice. Attorneys shall be compensated in accordance with the following fee schedule:

Flat Fee Schedule:

CPS:

Adversary, Status, Permanency (before and after final order), and Final hearings: \$275.00

Appeal: Itemize

Child Support:

Enforcement, Final, Compliance and Deferred Commitment hearings: \$275.00

Appeal: Itemize

Mental Health:

Probable Cause, Commitment and Modification hearings: \$275.00

Appeal: Itemize

Hourly fees for vouchers that are itemized: \$60.00-\$100.00

The Flat Fee Schedule is based upon the amount of time typically expended by an attorney on a routine case that does not involve unique factual or legal issues. Although itemization is not required on a request for a payment of a flat fee, attorneys are still advised to maintain a detailed record involving the legal services provided. Attorneys are reminded that it is the Court's responsibility to insure that indigent parties are provided adequate legal representation as provided by law. In the event of a complaint is made against an appointed attorney regarding legal representation, the Courts will be requesting this type of information from the attorney.

- 1.21. Except as provided by Rule 1.22, prior court approval is required for reimbursement of investigative, expert and other litigation expenses. Requests for approval of litigation expenses shall be filed in the trial court setting forth good cause for the incurrence of these expenses. The request may be submitted *ex parte*. The request must include:
- (a) a description of the type of investigation to be conducted, the type of expert to be retained, or the type of any other litigation expense;
 - (b) specific facts that show that the investigation will result in discovery of admissible evidence, that the services of an expert are reasonably necessary to assist in the preparation of the client's case, or the incurrence of any other litigation expenses is necessary to adequately represent the client; and
 - (c) an itemized list of anticipated expenses for each investigation, expert or other litigation related expense.
- 1.22. Appointed attorneys, both trial and appellate, shall be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary incidental expenses such as copying, telephone, mileage, etc., incurred without prior approval of the Court. Appointed attorneys will not be reimbursed for mileage for travel to and from Court hearings and trials.
- 1.23. Not later than thirty (30) days after the case is disposed by the trial court or all appeals are exhausted, the appointed attorney shall prepare and submit to the trial court a voucher for the payment of fees and expenses on a form provided by the trial court. The voucher shall include all services provided to a single client, regardless of the number of cases disposed. In cases in which final disposition may be prolonged or which require a significant amount of the attorney's time, the Court may consider periodic requests for payment.
- 1.24. The trial court shall determine the reasonableness of the amount requested based upon the time and labor required, the complexity of the case, and the experience and ability of the appointed counsel. If the trial court disapproves the requested amount, the trial court shall make written explanation for such findings.
- 1.25. In the event that the trial court disallows part or all of any fees or expenses submitted, appointed counsel may file written objections to the trial court's action and request a hearing to show the trial court reasons that justify the amount requested on or before the expiration of thirty (30) days from the day that the trial court disallowed the fee or expense. **APPOINTED COUNSEL MUST TIMELY REQUEST A HEARING UNDER THIS RULE. IF APPOINTED COUNSEL FAILS TO TIMELY REQUEST A HEARING, THE APPOINTED COUNSEL**

SHALL BE DEEMED TO HAVE WAIVED ANY OBJECTIONS TO THE TRIAL COURT'S AWARD OF ATTORNEY *AD LITEM*, GUARDIAN *AD LITEM* OR *AMICUA* ATTORNEY FEES OR EXPENSES.

C. COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES OF *ATTORNEY AD LITEMS*, GUARDIAN *AD LITEMS* AND *AMICUS* ATTORNEYS NOT PAID BY TRIAL COURT

- 1.30. Compensation of attorney *ad litem*, guardian *ad litem* and *amicus* attorneys that are not required to be paid by the trial court shall be in accordance with the provisions of Texas law.

D. REMOVAL AND REINSTATEMENT FROM APPOINTMENT LIST

- 1.40. An attorney appointed as attorney *ad litem*, guardian *ad litem* or *amicus* attorney under these rules may be removed from the appointment list if the attorney:
- (a) fails to comply with the duties required of attorneys imposed by the provisions of these rules;
 - (b) submits a claim for services not performed or expenses that have not been incurred;
 - (c) fails to maintain compliance with each of these rules;
 - (d) has been found by a Court to have provided ineffective assistance;
 - (e) has violated a rule of professional responsibility;
 - (f) has been convicted of or received a deferred adjudication for any criminal offense, other than an offense punishable by a fine only;
 - (g) is under indictment or being formally charged with a criminal offense, other than an offense punishable by a fine only; and,
 - (h) for any good cause shown to the Court.
- 1.41. Prior to removing an attorney from the appointment list, the Court shall notify the attorney in writing of the grounds that form the basis for the removal and provide the attorney an opportunity to respond. The attorney may file a response to the grounds for removal on or before the expiration of ten (10) business days from the date of the receipt of the Court's notice under this rule.
- 1.42. An attorney who has been removed from the appointment list may apply for reinstatement once the circumstances that led to the removal have been rectified.

ARTICLE II. RULES OF ADMINISTRATION FOR THE 79TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT AND THE JIM WELLS COUNTY COURT AT LAW

- 2.01. All civil cases within the concurrent civil jurisdiction of the 79th Judicial District Court sitting in Jim Wells County and the Jim Wells County Court at Law shall be filed with the District Clerk.
- 2.02 The District Court and the County Court at Law shall be in session at least once per week and at all other intervals that will result in efficient court administration.
- 2.03 The Judges of the District Court and County Court at Law shall coordinate any plans for judicial vacation, sick leave, attendance at educational programs, and similar matters to ensure availability of the Courts to the public at all times.
- 2.04 All cases within the concurrent jurisdiction of the 79th Judicial District Court sitting in Jim Wells County and the Jim Wells County Court at Law shall be assigned to the Jim Wells County Court at Law by the Jim Wells County District Clerk. The following cases shall be assigned to the Jim Wells County Court at Law:
- a. All cases under Titles I, II, IV and V of the Texas Family Code.
 - b. All civil cases in which the matter in controversy exceeds \$500 but does not exceed \$200,000. If a party (1) fails to plead an amount in controversy that would be within the jurisdiction of the Jim Wells County Court at Law or (2) fails to state in the pleading that the amount in controversy is within the jurisdictional limits of the Jim Wells County Court at Law, then the District Clerk shall assign the case to the 79th Judicial District Court.
 - c. All appeals of final rulings and decisions of the division of workers' compensation of the Texas Department of Insurance regarding workers' compensation claims, regardless of the amount in controversy.

This rule applies to all cases filed in Jim Wells County, those transferred to Jim Wells County on a change of venue, and those cases in Jim Wells County ordered reassigned by a recusing or transferring Judge. Nothing herein will prevent Judges from exchanging benches, sitting for another Judge, or transferring cases between themselves, when allowed by law or these local rules.

- 2.05 In the event of the assignment of a case to a Court that does not have subject matter jurisdiction, the Judge shall transfer, either *sua sponte* or on the motion of any party, said case to Court with subject matter jurisdiction as long as venue is proper in Jim Wells County.
- 2.06 A civil case may be transferred from one Court to another having jurisdiction:
- (1) upon motion of a party, for good cause shown;
 - (2) in the event the Judge is disqualified to hear or recuses himself or herself from hearing the case;
 - (3) when the case should be transferred in the interest of justice;
 - (4) to facilitate docket control as provided by law or by Court rules; or
 - (5) when at least one common party and substantially similar questions of fact or law appear in each case.

If a case is transferred under (5) above, the case having the higher cause number shall be transferred to the Court having jurisdiction over the case with the lowest cause number.

- 2.07 Cases assigned to a specific Court shall remain pending in that Court until final disposition, provided that any case may be transferred to another Court by Order of the Judge of the Court in which the case is pending with the consent of the Judge of the Court to which the case is transferred.
- 2.08 The Judge of the District Court and the Judge of the County Court at Law may act for the other in any case in which the Courts have concurrent jurisdiction regardless of which Court a case was assigned.

ARTICLE III. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

- 3.01. Pre-trial Hearings and Bench Trial Settings. Pre-trial and trial settings for non-jury civil and criminal cases may be set by the Court *sua sponte* or upon request to the Court Manager. Such request shall be made by the requesting party utilizing the Setting Request Form provided on the Court's website. A party seeking a setting for a temporary injunction hearing in conjunction with a temporary restraining order must contact the Court Manager for a hearing date. Pre-trial hearings in

criminal cases will be scheduled and conducted in accordance with Texas Code of Criminal Procedure (CCP) Art. 28.01.

3.02. Civil Jury Trial Settings. Civil jury trial settings may be requested by submitting a Setting Request Form requesting a Docket Control Conference. All Docket Control Conferences shall be set by the Court and shall be conducted telephonically by the Court Manager with all parties or their legal counsel participating.

3.03. Approvals for Court Orders and Judgments. All proposed orders or judgments concerning rulings of the Court in civil cases shall be submitted to opposing counsel or *pro se* party for approval as to form only. All signatures must be original. An attorney may sign on behalf of another attorney with a notation that the order was signed "with permission" of said attorney. If approval cannot be obtained within seven (7) business days, the parties may submit proposed orders directly to the Court for consideration. The transmittal correspondence to the Court shall include:

- (a) the date on which the proposed order was submitted to opposing counsel and the manner of transmittal,
- (b) a statement as to whether or not opposing counsel has communicated with counsel concerning the proposed order, and
- (c) if communication was had, a brief summary of the contents of said communication.

3.04. Exhibits. Counsel shall meet before commencement of trial or a hearing and, if possible, reach an agreement concerning the admissibility of exhibits. Prior to trial or hearing, all exhibits shall be marked numerically and an exhibit list shall be furnished to the Court reporter. Exhibits must be clearly marked on the front of the exhibit and include the cause number. If an exhibit consists of more than one page, each page shall be Bates stamped or numbered. All Sensitive Data, as defined in Rule 21c of the Texas Rule of Civil Procedure and Rule 4.1 of the Rules Governing Electronic Filing in Criminal Cases, contained in exhibits or witness statements shall be redacted prior to admission into evidence.

It is the intent of this rule that all evidence shall be submitted in an electronic format suitable for electronic filing and storage. The party who offers the exhibit is responsible for submitting the exhibit in the format required by this rule. Exhibits must not be password protected, encrypted, or protected by rights management.

All exhibits shall be in the proper electronic format and provided to the Court Reporter prior to the commencement of the trial. Each exhibit shall be contained in a single file (i.e., one exhibit per file name).

All video and/or audio exhibits which contain a statement made by a party or witness shall be transcribed by the party offering same and a copy of the transcription shall be provided to all opposing parties in a timely manner. In criminal cases, transcriptions of video and/or audio statements by a party or a witness shall be made and disclosed in accordance with the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.

3.05. Courtroom Decorum. All persons in the Courtroom shall be attentive to the proceedings and cause no distraction. The following is hereby prohibited in the Courtroom unless authorized by the Court:

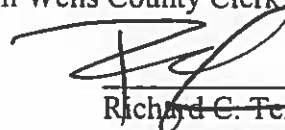
- (a) Talking unless involved in a matter presently being heard by the Court.
- (b) Sitting on railings, tables, desks, chair arms, propping feet on furniture, or fixtures, or leaning on the Court's bench.
- (c) Sleeping, reclining, or slouching in Courtroom seats.
- (d) Possession or consumption of beverages, food, chewing gum, and candy.
- (e) Use of tobacco products.
- (f) Use of communication devices, computers, recording devices, etc. All such devices must be turned off unless authorized by the Court.
- (g) Wearing attire or accouterments that contain any commercial or campaign advertising that may create a bias or prejudice for or against a party or participant in a proceeding before the Court, or that may disrupt the orderly proceedings of the Courtroom.
- (h) Gestures, facial expressions, sounds, signs, or other action indicating approval or disapproval of any proceedings should be avoided.
- (i) Reading newspaper, magazines, books, etc.

All persons in the courtroom shall be attired in a manner reflecting the dignity of the Court. All attorneys shall be dressed in appropriate business attire (blue jeans, running shoes, etc. are not business attire). All male attorneys must wear either a suit or a blazer and slacks with a tie. All female attorneys must wear either a dress, full length pants or skirt with blouse or other appropriate professional attire. All parties, witnesses and spectators shall be dressed appropriately. Shorts, beachwear, flip flops, and other similar recreational clothing is strictly prohibited.


Attorneys shall address each other formally and without familiarity. The use of first names shall be avoided.

Signed on the date indicated below to be effective on January 1, 2020 and to expire on December 31, 2020. This Order is executed in duplicate originals. One original each shall be filed with the Jim Wells County District Clerk and the Jim Wells County Clerk.

Date: 01/06/2020


Richard C. Ferrell
Judge Presiding
79th Judicial District Court

Date: 12/20/2019


Michael V. Garcia
Judge Presiding
Jim Wells County Court at Law