

PERTINENT RULES FOR COURT

1. Always remember you are in a Court of law and act accordingly. Show respect for Court personnel, particularly the Judge and the Bailiff. Do NOT talk when other people are talking. If a lawyer interrupts you, you must be quiet.
2. Do NOT chew gum in the courtroom or bring any food or drinks into the courtroom.
3. Turn OFF your pagers, telephones, or other electronic devices. This is imperative.
4. If you need to use the restroom, do so prior to the hearing. Once a hearing has begun, we may not stop for restroom breaks.
5. Do NOT make faces or other gestures to the opposing party, their witnesses and/or their attorneys.
6. Do not talk, laugh or cut up while in the courtroom. Whether it is your case being heard or someone else's, this behavior is DISRUPTIVE.
7. Listen very carefully to the questions you are being asked by both attorneys. Answer only the question. Think about the question before you begin to answer. If you feel like you need to explain your answer, say: "May I explain my answer? I cannot answer that question with a yes or a no."
8. If an attorney stands to object STOP talking. You must not try to talk over any attorney or the Judge.
9. DO NOT react to the testimony with facial expressions. If you need to communicate with your attorney, write him/her a note as to your response to the testimony being given. Writing "That's a lie" is not very helpful. If you believe the testimony is false, write a note stating what actually happened or what you actually saw.
10. Witnesses that are not parties to the lawsuit will very likely be excused from Court proceedings and will only be allowed to be present as each witness testifies. Please do not talk about the case while you are in the hallway or foyer waiting to testify. This is called a "Witness Rule" and if you talk about the case in violation of this rule, you will not be allowed to testify.
11. Speak slowly and distinctly when you testify. Believe it or not, judges may have other things on their mind. If witnesses speak fast or attempt to interrupt, a judge may miss the testimony and your effectiveness as a witness is minimized.
12. Organize your thoughts in your mind before you begin to speak. PLEASE, PLEASE think about the question before you begin to answer.
13. Take your time; speak slowly.
14. Often times the impression you make in Court in terms of how you look, how you speak, and your calm manner in the courtroom means a lot to a judge (who is the trier of fact) more than the words you are saying. Remember first impressions mean everything.
15. Have confidence that your attorney will ask you the right questions. Do not try to "volunteer" information so you can make sure that your "story" is told. Listen to the question you are asked and answer only that question.
16. TELL THE TRUTH!!!!