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66TH DISTRICT COURT POLICIES

as of 12/01/2025

Settings - Civil

Time Limits – Temporary Orders are limited to 30 minutes per side. A “full-day” bench trial is two and a half hours per side. A “half-day” bench trial is approximately an hour and thirty minutes per side.

To set a hearing, please email the court coordinators at grivera@co.hill.tx.us and/or psvacina@co.hill.tx.us. You will be provided with the Court’s available dates and should work with the other side to get an agreed date. Please e-file a notice of hearing with the date filled in. **The coordinator does not add the case to the court calendar until a completed notice of hearing is submitted.**

To set a trial, please email the court coordinator at grivera@co.hill.tx.us and/or psvacina@co.hill.tx.us. You will be provided with the Court’s available dates and should work with the other side to get an agreed date. Please e-file a Scheduling Order with the trial date and mediation details filled in. If, after several attempts, you are not able to get an agreed date, please e-file a proposed scheduling order with a letter describing your efforts.

Proof of Notice - If you want to go forward on a motion/hearing without the other side present, you must tender proof of notice to the court either by filing your proof of notice or by offering it as an exhibit for the court reporter.

Jury Trials – A status conference will be held on the first Wednesday of the month the Civil Jury trial is scheduled. A formal pre-trial hearing is required; the date will be provided by the coordinator but is generally 9:00 am the second Wednesday of the month before the jury trial begins. A Jury Trial Discovery Control Plan and Scheduling Order must be completed and signed when the trial is set. The scheduling order specifies the many tasks that must be

completed at or before the pre-trial hearing, including expert challenges, proposed jury charges, pre-marked exhibits, witness lists, etc.

Dispositive Motions – All potentially dispositive civil/family motions (summary judgment, plea to the jurisdiction, plea in abatement, etc.) must be filed AND HEARD at least 30 days before trial. The purpose of the hearing date in a summary judgment is to set the deadlines for the response. Unless otherwise notified by the court, the parties are not to attend on the hearing date, the case will be considered by submission

Mediation - Mediation is required before trial. If mediation has not been attempted, you are limited to up to 2 HOURS per side at a bench trial and up to 4 HOURS per side at a jury trial. Failure to timely mediate will not be considered adequate grounds for a continuance and will result in the foregoing time limits being imposed at trial.

Ex Parte Relief - TROs, etc.

Attorneys shall e-file requests for ex parte relief electronically without coming to the courthouse in person. If you file a motion requesting ex parte relief and submit your proposed order through e-filing, please call or e-mail the court coordinator to let him know that you want action taken on the request. If you do not contact the coordinator to alert her that you want the request addressed, it will remain in the e-filing queue without action.

Please do not request TROs that contain items that are in the standing orders. The court will reject TROs that largely overlap the standing orders. Please put only the few items of genuine concern in the TRO so that the court can tell what relief you're actually requesting.

Continuances - Requests (even if agreed) to continue a trial date beyond the 1-year anniversary date of filing requires a verified motion for continuance and hearing.

Property Division - If you are asking the Court to divide property, you must provide a proposed property division which lists all assets and debts. The court prefers an editable format, such as an Excel spreadsheet.

Spousal Support or Payment of Expenses - If you are asking the Court to order spousal support or divide expenses, you must provide a financial information statement listing income and expenses.

Child Interviews

If Tex. Fam. Code §153.009 requires the Court to interview a child, the court will arrange a time with counsel/parties to conduct the interview. Contact the court coordinator at psvacina@co.hill.tx.us or grivera@co.hill.tx.us the week before your trial date to ensure the court is aware of the request. Do NOT bring a child to court without prior express permission from the Court.

Signing Temporary Orders - Temporary Orders may be signed by the Court without the necessity of a hearing under the following circumstances: (1) The order is accompanied by a letter that notifies the opposing counsel/party of their right to object to the order within ten days of the date that the letter was mailed; (2) the submitting attorney certifies that the order and letter were sent to the opposing counsel via eFile, or to the opposing party at their last known address and/or email address if there is previous correspondence with the opposing party via that email; and (3) no objection is filed