

**STANDING ORDER IN CIVIL CASES OF
U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE RONALD L. HANNA
FOR THE PEORIA AND ROCK ISLAND DIVISIONS**

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I. Rule 16 scheduling conference

The Court will set a Rule 16 scheduling conference approximately thirty days after the answer or other responsive pleading is filed. The conference will generally be conducted by telephone.

II. Discovery plan

The discovery plan shall be filed with the Court at least three calendar days before the Rule 16 scheduling conference. Although the Court does not require that this plan be in any particular format, the sample plan outlined in “Attachment A” is sufficient and should adhere to Civil Local Rule 5.1.

The dispositive motion deadline should generally be no more than one year after the date of the Rule 16 scheduling conference. If the parties request a dispositive motion deadline that is more than one year after the date of the Rule 16 scheduling conference, then the parties shall set forth with specificity in the discovery plan the reasons for the extended schedule.

If the parties do not agree on one or more of the deadlines contained in the discovery plan, or any other provisions contained therein, a single plan should set forth each party’s respective deadline(s) or provision(s) and their supporting arguments. In no case may the parties file separate plans.

The parties should not request dates for the final pretrial conference or trial in their plan. For cases pending before Judge Michael M. Mihm or Judge Sara L. Darrow, the Court will set pretrial conference and trial dates upon the filing of the discovery plan. For cases pending before Judge Jonathan E. Hawley, the Court will set these dates after the dispositive motion deadline has passed or, if dispositive motions are filed, after the Court rules on those motions.

III. Waiver of the Rule 16 scheduling conference

If the parties agree on all matters contained in the discovery plan, then the parties may waive the Rule 16 scheduling conference. To do so, the parties shall indicate in the discovery that the parties agree upon all matters contained within the discovery plan, and they request that the Rule 16 scheduling conference be cancelled.

IV. Failure of counsel to attend a scheduled telephone hearing

For the convenience of counsel, the Court conducts most hearings by telephone when possible. Counsel's failure to appear for a telephone hearing will be treated as a failure of counsel to appear for an in-person hearing.

If counsel unexpectedly cannot attend a scheduled telephone hearing and cannot file a motion to move the hearing, then counsel may call Judge Hanna's chambers to inform him of the same in advance of the hearing. The Court will attempt to reschedule the hearing in such a circumstance.

Failure to attend a telephone conference call without advance notice to the Court of unavailability may result in that counsel being required to appear in person for all future hearings, even if all other counsel appears by telephone.

V. Joint or agreed motions to move deadlines which do not affect the dispositive motion deadline

Where the parties by agreement wish to move a deadline that does not affect the dispositive motion deadline, the parties shall do so by filing an agreed or joint motion which:

1. Sets forth the deadline the parties seek to move;
2. Sets forth the new deadline requested; and
3. States that the request to move the deadline does not affect the dispositive motion deadline.

The Court will ordinarily grant such motions by text order and without a hearing within approximately 24 hours of the filing of said motion.

VI. Joint or agreed motions to move a deadline which will affect the dispositive motion deadline

Where the parties by agreement wish to move a deadline that will affect the dispositive motion deadline, the parties should do so by filing an agreed or joint motion which:

1. Sets forth the deadline the parties seek to move;
2. Sets forth the new deadline requested;
3. States that the request will affect the dispositive motion deadline;
4. States with specificity the discovery that has been completed prior to the filing of the motion;
5. States with specificity the discovery that needs to be completed; and
6. States why the parties were unable to meet the deadline originally set by the Court.

VII. Discovery disputes

Before filing a motion related to a discovery dispute, the parties shall follow the procedure set forth below:

1. Counsel for the parties shall confer pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 37. Such conferral shall promptly occur after counsel becomes aware of the dispute. Failure to confer within a reasonable period of time after learning of the dispute may be deemed by the Court to constitute a waiver. The Court will not consider counsel to have conferred unless counsel has had at least one telephone call addressing the dispute, in addition to any written exchanges concerning the dispute.
2. If counsel cannot resolve the dispute through conferral, then counsel for the party first raising the dispute shall file a “Motion for Hearing Concerning Discovery Dispute.” The motion must contain a certification by counsel that the parties have conferred as required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 37. The motion should not contain any argument or the nature of the discovery dispute. Any motion that does not certify that the parties have conferred prior to the filing of the motion will be stricken for failure to comply with this Standing Order.
3. When possible, the Court will resolve the dispute during the telephone call without written submissions by the parties.
4. If, after hearing the positions of the parties concerning the discovery dispute, the Court deems it necessary that a written motion and response be filed, the Court will give the parties permission to do so and set deadlines for said filings.
5. The Court will generally set written discovery motions for oral argument and rule from the bench after such argument. Where the Court deems a written order is necessary, the Court will generally issue such an order within two weeks of oral argument on the motion.

The Court will strike any discovery motion filed before the procedure outlined above has been followed.

VIII. Discovery disputes brought to the Court’s attention after the discovery deadline has already passed

The parties may not raise a discovery dispute with the Court after the relevant discovery deadline has passed; all discovery disputes must be brought to the Court’s attention before the relevant discovery deadline passes. Any discovery disputes raised with the Court after the expiration of the relevant discovery deadline shall be deemed waived by the Court, even if the parties agreed to conduct discovery after the relevant discovery deadline has passed. If the parties agree to conduct discovery after the expiration of a deadline set by the Court, they must still file a motion requesting that the Court move that deadline as agreed by the parties in order to avoid any subsequent discovery disputes being deemed waived.

IX. Failure to respond to a motion

Local Rule 7.1(B)(2) provides that a response to a motion must be filed within 14 days after service of the motion. The Rule also provides that if no response is filed in a timely manner, the Court “will presume there is no opposition to the motion and may rule without further notice to the parties.”

The Court routinely grants motions pursuant to this Rule the day after the responsive deadline has passed. Motions to reconsider the grant of a motion to which no response was filed are disfavored by the Court.

X. Emergency motions

Where a party files an emergency motion or a motion that seeks a ruling on the same day as it is filed, counsel filing the motion shall send an email to hanna@ilcd.uscourts.gov and counsel for all parties in the case alerting same to the filing of said motion.

XI. Courtesy copies and attachments or exhibits

Judge Hanna does not require courtesy copies of any filing.

Counsel should limit attachments and exhibits to matters directly relevant to the issue before the Court. Counsel shall not attach as exhibits documents already filed with the Court, such as the complaint, opposing counsel’s motions, etc. Instead, counsel should simply refer to the docket number of the relevant filing and the CM/ECF page number.

For scanned documents, counsel should, whenever possible, perform an optical character recognition (OCR) on the document prior to its filing, thereby making the document searchable.

XII. Filing documents under seal and protective orders

Parties should be mindful that whether a document may be filed under seal must be balanced with the “common law right of public access to judicial records.” *United States v. Corbitt*, 879 F.2d 224, 228 (7th Cir. 1989) (citing *Nixon v. Warner Communications, Inc.*, 435 U.S. 589 (1978)). The Seventh Circuit has found that judicial records should be “open to public inspection unless they meet the definition of trade secrets or other categories of bona fide long-term confidentiality.” *Baxter International, Inc. v. Abbott Labs*, 297 F.3d 544, 545 (7th Cir. 2002). The Seventh Circuit has also noted that “[i]nformation that affects the disposition of litigation belongs in the public record *unless a statute or privilege justifies nondisclosure.*” *United States v. Foster*, 564 F.3d 852, 853 (7th Cir. 2009) (emphasis added).

Accordingly, when seeking to file a document under seal, parties shall state with specificity the legal basis that allows the Court to seal the document. When possible, parties should seek to seal only those portions of a document that may properly be sealed by way of redaction.

The parties cannot agree in a protective order to file under seal documents which otherwise do not meet the legal standards for filing a document under seal. The Court will strike any provision in a proposed protective order that seeks to limit the Court's authority to determine whether a document should be filed under seal.

If good cause exists for entry of a protective order, the Court will generally enter an agreed protective order without a hearing so long as the agreed protective order does not conflict with the limitations on filing documents under seal. Where the parties do not agree on the provisions of a protective order, but good cause exists generally for the entry of a protective order, the Court will enter its Model Protective Order (see Attachment B).

XIII. Settled cases

As an alternative to the procedure set forth in Local Rule 16.1(C), the parties can file a Notice of Settlement and request a deadline for the filing of a stipulation of dismissal. Upon the filing of such Notice, the Court will vacate all scheduled hearings, stay any deadlines, and moot any pending motions.

The parties should not file the settlement agreement with the Court nor seek "approval" of the settlement from the Court, unless the nature of the action is one that specifically requires approval by the Court. Likewise, the Court cannot retain jurisdiction to enforce a settlement agreement unless the case is dismissed without prejudice. The Court cannot and will not retain jurisdiction to enforce a settlement agreement in cases dismissed with prejudice unless the parties seek a consent decree in compliance with Fed R. Civ. P. 65(d).

Prior to filing a notice of dismissal pursuant to Rule 41(a)(1)(A)(i), a joint stipulation to dismiss pursuant to Rule 41(a)(1)(A)(ii), or a motion to dismiss pursuant to Rule 41(a)(2) which seeks to dismiss only some of the parties or some claims, counsel should review *Taylor v. Brown*, 787 F.3d 851 (7th Cir. 2015). In *Taylor*, the Seventh Circuit held that "Rule 41(a) should be limited to dismissal of an entire action." *Id.* at 857 (emphasizing Rule 41(a)'s reference to "an action"). The Seventh Circuit suggests construing a motion to voluntarily dismiss one claim as a motion to amend the complaint under Rule 15(a)(2). *Id.* at 858. Leave to amend under Rule 15(a)(2) will be "freely give[n] . . . when justice so requires."

XIV. Pronouns and Honorifics

Litigants and lawyers may indicate their pronouns (e.g., she/her, he/him, they/their) and honorifics (e.g., Mr., Ms., Mx., Dr.) by emailing a confidential notification to chambers at hanna@ilcd.uscourts.gov, filing a request on the case docket, or adding the information in the name block or signature line of the pleadings.

XV. Contacting chambers

It is never appropriate to email chambers or Judge Hanna without prior permission of the Court or as set forth in this Standing Order. Any email communication between Judge Hanna's chambers and an attorney must have all parties in the case as recipients. All communications to Judge Hanna's chambers off-chain will be forwarded to the other respective parties.

Counsel should ordinarily not telephone chambers for any reason. Should an extraordinary circumstance require a telephone call to chambers, counsel for all parties should be on the telephone call to chambers when the call is placed. *Ex parte* telephone calls to chambers on case-related matters should never occur except for extraordinary circumstances, and it is impossible or impracticable to have all counsel for all parties on the call. In instances where counsel or their agents call chambers *ex parte* absent an extraordinary circumstance, chambers staff have been instructed to inform the person calling that case-related matters may not be discussed *ex parte* by telephone. Anything that counsel or their agents should not say *ex parte* directly to the judge cannot be said to his chambers staff.

In the extraordinary circumstance where it is necessary to communicate with chambers by telephone, those calling chambers should conduct themselves in the same manner as if they were speaking directly to the judge.

SO ORDERED.

Entered this 3rd day of June 2025.

s/ Ronald L. Hanna

Ronald L. Hanna
United States Magistrate Judge

ATTACHMENT A

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
_____ DIVISION

_____, Plaintiff(s),)
)
v.) Case No. X:XX-cv-XXXX
)
_____, Defendant(s).)
)

Discovery Plan

Counsel for Plaintiff(s), _____, and counsel for Defendant(s), _____, having met on _____ for the purpose of formulating a proposed discovery schedule for consideration by the Court, hereby submit the following agreed deadlines for the Court's consideration:

1. Initial disclosures pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(a)(1):
2. Amendment of the pleadings:
3. Joining additional parties:
4. Close of fact discovery:
5. Disclosure of Plaintiff's experts:
6. Disclosure of Plaintiff's expert reports:
7. Plaintiff's experts deposed by:
8. Disclosure of Defendant's experts:
9. Disclosure of Defendant's expert reports:
10. Defendant's experts deposed by:
11. Completion of all discovery:
12. Dispositive motions:

_____, Plaintiff
BY: _____
Attorney's Name, Firm, etc.

_____, Defendant
BY: _____
Attorney's Name, Firm, etc.

ATTACHMENT B

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
_____ DIVISION

[NAME],)	
Plaintiff(s),)	
)	Case No. X:XX-cv-XXXX
v.)	
)	
[NAME],)	
Defendant(s),)	

Protective Order

A party having moved for a protective order pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), the Court finds good cause for the entry of such order to the extent that the dissemination of documents produced in discovery governed by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure shall be limited as set forth, *infra*. Good cause is established due to the fact that the discovery in the case is likely to involve information not otherwise publicly available absent this litigation, personal financial and medical information, and other information treated as non-public, private information by a party or producing non-party. This Order is intended to protect the privacy interests of parties and non-parties, facilitate the quick and efficient production of discovery, and allow for the dissemination of information for purposes unrelated to this litigation when there is a demonstrated need.

1. Scope.

(a) This Order applies to all discovery produced by a party to another party pursuant to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. This Order also applies to discovery produced to a party by a non-party pursuant to a subpoena issued pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 45.

(b) This Order does not apply to discovery produced by a party or non-party pursuant to a request made under a state or federal freedom of information law.

(c) This Order does not apply to transcripts of deposition testimony, unless a party moves after conferral with opposing counsel, that this Order apply to said deposition transcript or a portion thereof.

2. Limitation on disclosure.

(a) Discovery within the scope of this Order as set forth in Section 1 shall not be used or disclosed by the parties, counsel for the parties, or any other persons identified in subparagraph (b) for any purpose whatsoever other than in this litigation, including any appeal thereof.

(b) Discovery subject to this Order may be disclosed to the following persons in the course of this litigation:

(i) **Counsel.** Counsel for the parties and employees of counsel who have responsibility for the action;

(ii) **Parties.** Individual parties and employees of a party, but only to the extent counsel determines in good faith that the employee's assistance is reasonably necessary to the conduct of the litigation in which the information is disclosed;

(iii) **This Court and any other Court before which this litigation is or may be pending and those courts' personnel.**

(iv) **Court Reporters and Recorders used in this litigation.**

(v) **Contractors.** Those persons specifically engaged for the limited purpose of making copies of documents or organizing or processing documents, including outside vendors hired to process electronically stored documents;

(vi) **Consultants and Experts.** Consultants, investigators, or experts employed by the parties or counsel for the parties to assist in the preparation and trial of this action;

(vii) Witnesses at depositions. During their depositions, witnesses in this action to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary.

(viii) Author or recipient. The author or recipient of the document (not including a person who received the document in the course of litigation); and

(ix) Others by Consent. Other persons only by written consent of the producing party.

(c) Prior to a person disclosing discovery subject to this Order to a person listed in Section (b)(ii) (v), (vi), (viii), and (ix), the person making the disclosure must inform the person to whom the discovery is produced that disclosure to and by them is subject to this Order.

(d) Prior to producing specific discovery, a party may seek to further limit disclosure of that discovery than allowed in Section 1(b)(2) by agreement of the parties or further order of the Court. A party may, after conferral with opposing counsel, file a motion seeking additional limitations on disclosure, which shall set forth with specificity the discovery, or categories of discovery, for which additional protection is sought and why.

3. Filing of discovery subject to this Order and use in Court proceedings

(a) This Order does not authorize the filing of any document under seal. A party who wishes to file a document under seal must do so in accordance with Local Rule 5.10 and establish a legal basis for why such document may and should be sealed under applicable law.

(b) This Order does not prohibit or limit the use or disclosure of any discovery during the course of any public court proceedings in this litigation, including hearings and trial.

4. Relief from this Order

(a) A party may disclose discovery subject to this Order by agreement of the parties or further order of the Court.

(b) A party seeking to disclose discovery subject to this Order may, after conferral with opposing counsel, file a motion with the Court seeking relief from this Order. Such motion shall indicate with specificity the discovery, or categories of discovery, which the party seeks to disclose; to whom; and the reason for the requested disclosure, unless such information would reveal attorney-client communications or attorney work product.

5. Conferral

Prior to filing any motion related to this Order, the parties must confer and so certify in any motion related to this Order. A motion which fails to include such certification shall be stricken. Conferral must include at least one telephone or in-person meeting between or among counsel, unless the issue is resolved by the parties through written conferral.

6. Violation of this Order

Any person subject to this Order who intentionally violates the limitations on the disclosure of discovery set forth herein shall be subject to this Court's contempt powers, in addition to any other sanctions allowed under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

SO ORDERED.

Entered [DATE OF ORDER'S ENTRY].

Ronald L. Hanna
United States Magistrate Judge