



711 City-County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Telephone: 412-350-5904

Standard Operating Procedures *for* Judge Patrick M. Connelly

Revised: December 29, 2025

JUDGE CONNELLY'S STAFF

- Erin Liddell, Judicial Administrative Assistant
- Alicia Loy, Esquire, Judicial Law Clerk
- Mallory Friday, Esquire, Judicial Law Clerk

COMMUNICATION TO THE COURT

The preferred and most efficient method of communication to the court is to email as instructed below. If you are unable to email you may call chambers at 412-350-5904.

When communicating with the court via email about a particular case, **ALL** parties must be included on the email unless directed otherwise. The email addresses of the other parties/opposing counsel must be included either in the "To" or the "Cc" boxes so that they are visible to the court. Please **do not** "Bcc" the other parties/opposing counsel on your communications.

The court will not entertain argument via email, nor will it tolerate unprofessional or disparaging communications whether directed towards court staff or the opposition.

Judge Connelly's staff **cannot** provide legal advice. If you require legal advice, please contact an attorney.

- For **general inquiries or administrative** questions contact:
 - Erin Liddell, Judicial Administrative Assistant: eliddell@alleghencourts.us
- For **Petitions for Settlement Approval** please review the section titled *Petitions for Settlement Approval* below before emailing your question to:
 - Alicia Loy, Esquire - Judicial Law Clerk: aloy@alleghencourts.us
- For **Housing cases** assigned to Judge Connelly contact:
 - Mallory Friday, Esquire - Judicial Law Clerk: mfriday@alleghencourts.us
- For **Calendar Control Questions** please review the section titled *Calendar Control Motions* below before emailing your question to:
 - civilcalcontrolmotions@alleghencourts.us
- For **Trial related matters** please review the section titled *Trial Procedures* below before emailing your question to:
 - ConnellyChambers@alleghencourts.us

CALENDAR CONTROL MOTIONS¹

➤ CONTESTED MOTIONS

Calendar Control Motions are being held **IN-PERSON** in Courtroom 711, City County Building, 414 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219. Generally speaking during an active trial term including the carry-over week, calendar control motions will be heard Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. At all other times, calendar control motions will be heard Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. Please see the calendar linked below for the dates that calendar control motions will be heard.

[Calendar Control Motions - Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania](#)

Any party wishing to present a calendar control motion for argument shall select a date from the calendar linked above, making sure to adhere to the local rules on service to the opposing parties. You **do not** need to have your chosen date approved by the court, simply choose your date in accordance with the local rules and follow the procedures listed below for emailing that information to the court to be added to the list for your chosen date.

It is the responsibility of the moving party to notify all parties of the date of the argument. **Your motion MUST have a Notice of Presentation attached with the date, time, and location of the argument as well as a Certificate of Service indicating opposing parties have been served.**

VERY IMPORTANT! READ THIS! Your motion must be added to the motions list for the date you picked. To do this please email your motion as a PDF document and your **proposed order as a separate Microsoft WORD document** to civilcalendarcontrolmotions@alleghenycourts.us Opposing parties must be copied on this email, if there is no available email address for opposing parties please state that in your email to the court.

VERY IMPORTANT! READ THIS! The subject line of all emails regarding motions should contain “contested, uncontested, or EMERGENCY” with the case name and docket number. **You must include in the body of the email the following information:** current trial date or arbitration date (if requesting an initial trial date or arbitration date please indicate that in the email), the name of your motion, and the date of presentation of your motion. **If you do not include all of this information in your email to the court your email may be rejected!**

Judge Connelly uses electronic copies of your motion, order, and responses. On rare occasions technical issues can result in a delay in your motion being heard, it is suggested that you bring a hard copy of your motion, order, or response with you to argument in the unlikely event there are technical issues your motion can still be argued.

- You are required to file your motion with the Department of Court Records **before** emailing to the court.

¹ Please see Local Rule 208.3(a) as to what qualifies as a Calendar Control Motion to be heard by the Calendar Control Judge.

- All orders will be filed by the court and will be available on the docket generally in 1-3 days from the date of argument. Please check the docket to see if the order has been filed prior to contacting the court.
- If a motion was initially filed as contested but is later determined to be uncontested prior to the scheduled argument date, please notify the court by replying to the original email chain making sure all parties are copied on this email. If you do not have access to the original email chain you must include in the body of your email the presentation date. The order will then be signed as uncontested without the need for the parties to appear.
- If your presentation date changes or if the motion becomes resolved or withdrawn, please notify the court by replying to the original email chain so that your motion can be moved appropriately. If you do not have access to the original email chain you must include in the body of your email the presentation date, along with the new presentation date (if being rescheduled), and you must include all parties on this email.

➤ **MOTIONS TO WITHDRAW AS COUNSEL (for cases on a trial list only)**

Motions to withdraw as counsel should be filed and served on opposing counsel and the client. The client should have adequate notice and the opportunity to appear before the court and be heard. For this reason, these motions *cannot* be submitted as uncontested and must be scheduled as a contested motion for presentation in accordance with these Standard Operating Procedures.

➤ **EMERGENCY CONTESTED MOTIONS:**

If you have a contested emergency motion that cannot be scheduled on a calendar control motions date due to the time restrictions involved, please email civilcalcontrolmotions@allegheycourts.us to request an alternative date for argument. Please indicate in the subject line 'EMERGENCY' and include in the body of the email the reason for the emergency and the timeframe in which the motion needs to be heard. Once you receive a date and time from the court, you can then follow the procedures for filing and submitting contested motions.

➤ **REMOTE HEARING REQUESTS:**

If you have an **exigent** circumstance a remote hearing request can be submitted. Please email civilcalcontrolmotions@allegheycourts.us to request a hearing by Advanced Communication Technology (Microsoft TEAMS) and indicate what the exigent circumstance is. **You are not guaranteed a remote hearing.** Judge Connelly reviews all remote appearance requests and will either grant or deny the request. Further instructions will be provided via email after your request has been received. Remote hearing requests are for **exigent** circumstances **only!**

➤ **UNCONTESTED MOTIONS:**

You are **required** to file your motion with the Department of Court Records before emailing the court. Please state in the Notice of Presentation that the motion is being submitted in accordance with Judge Connelly's Standard Operating Procedures and that a presentation date is not necessary.

After your motion has been filed it should be emailed to civilcontrolmotions@allegheycourts.us for signing. **All parties should be copied on this email, if a party does not have an email address please state that in your email.** Please put in the subject line of the email UNCONTESTED with the docket number and case name; in the body of the email please list all parties in the case and their email addresses, or other contact information if email is not available, **and state that the motion is uncontested, consented to, or unopposed.** Please provide your proposed order as a separate **Microsoft WORD Document** for electronic signing.

If a motion is identified as uncontested, the order will be signed and filed without argument being scheduled, no appearance by any party will be necessary. The order should be available on the docket within 3-5 days of being emailed.

➤ **EMERGENCY UNCONTESTED MOTIONS:**

If you have a time sensitive or emergency uncontested motion please indicate EMERGENCY in the subject line of the email and in the body of the email indicate the date the order must be signed by and the reason why.

VERY IMPORTANT! READ THIS!

All motions should meet the following requirements, if these requirements are not followed your email may be rejected:

- The subject line of all emails regarding motions should be titled as contested, uncontested, or EMERGENCY with the docket number and case name.
- All parties who have email addresses should be copied on the email to the court; if email addresses are not available please state that in the email.
- The body of the email should include the current trial date or arbitration date (if requesting an initial trial date or arbitration date please state that in your email), the name of the motion and the date of presentation of your motion.
- All motions should have a Notice of Presentation and Certificate of Service attached. If you are submitting an uncontested motion, please state in the Notice of Presentation that the motion is being submitted in accordance with Judge Connelly's Standard Operating Procedures and that a presentation date is not necessary.
- Notice of electronic service should be displayed on the Certificate of Service.
- All motions and orders must be emailed, and the proposed order must be provided as a separate Microsoft Word Document.

All matters or questions regarding calendar control motions should be emailed to civilcontrolmotions@allegheycourts.us if you are unable to email please call 412-350-5904.

PETITIONS FOR SETTLEMENT APPROVAL

Petitions for Settlement Approval for wrongful death or survival actions shall be submitted to Judge Connelly electronically at civilcontrolmotions@allegheycourts.us along with a Proposed Order in Microsoft Word format.

The Petition must be filed on the docket unless you are requesting sealing. If the parties wish to have the Petition and Order sealed, they **must** file a Motion to Seal and present the same to Judge Connelly in accordance with these Standard Operating Procedures – these motions should not be presented to General Motions. The Motion to Seal should contain appropriate grounds for sealing and the legal basis upon which the request is based. If the Motion to Seal is denied, you will be instructed to file your Petition on the docket. When submitting the Motion to Seal to the Court, you must send the Petition and Proposed Order to Chambers via the aforementioned email address for review contemporaneous with the Motion to Seal.

When submitting a Petition, include whether and how each beneficiary was served notice of the Petition and settlement. If the decedent had both a surviving spouse and issue, indicate whether the children were those of both the decedent and the surviving spouse.

Pursuant to Local Rule 2206, Petitions for Settlement Approval where a minor or incapacitated person has an interest shall be presented to Orphan's Court for signature, then presented to Judge Connelly for signature. After the Orphan's Court judge has signed the Order, Judge Connelly will obtain the Petition and Order from Orphan's Court for signature.

After submission of the Petition to the Court, the Court will reach out if a hearing is required or questions need to be addressed. The Order shall be on the docket within 4 weeks of the submission date. **If you have not heard anything from the Court about your Petition within that amount of time, please check the docket prior to contacting chambers.**

Questions regarding Petitions for Settlement Approval should be directed to Judge Connelly's Law Clerk, Alicia Loy, Esq., by emailing aloy@allegheycourts.us or calling 412-350-4057.

TRIAL PROCEDURES

➤ **PRE-TRIAL PROCEDURES**

- ***Pretrial Conciliation***

Counsel must be present for any Pretrial Conciliation as scheduled by the Court. The parties and/or any designated representative need not be physically present for the conciliation, but must be immediately available by telephone at the time designated for the Pretrial Conciliation for negotiation purposes.

If the Court finds that the parties were not prepared to negotiate, or failed to negotiate in good faith, at the Pretrial Conciliation, then the Court reserves the right to reconvene the Conciliation within 48 hours, with all principals physically present. This rule is meant to ensure that all parties

are prepared to, and in fact will, negotiate in good faith at the Pretrial Conciliation, as scheduled by the Court.

Any request for a change in time of the Conciliation must be made in writing to ConnellyChambers@allegheycourts.us and will only be considered if the Court is able to accommodate the change, and all parties agree to the change.

- ***Motions in Limine***

As soon as counsel learns that the case has been assigned to Judge Connelly for trial, counsel must email pretrial motions, briefs, and responses to ConnellyChambers@allegheycourts.us for the Court's consideration. These motions must be filed on the docket before the Court issues its rulings.

The parties shall meet and confer regarding resolution of any Motions in Limine prior to presentation to the Court.

The Court will normally hold a hearing on pretrial motions. The timing of that hearing will depend on the number and complexity of the motions.

- ***Pretrial Conference***

Judge Connelly will schedule a pretrial conference in cases assigned to him for trial. Counsel is expected to advise the Court on the status of settlement discussions.

Counsel must also be prepared to identify and discuss the nature of the trial, any unusual legal or evidentiary issues, matters that must be decided prior to trial, plans for visual aids/technology, stipulations, usage of deposition testimony, other forms of evidence to be introduced at trial, and schedule.

➤ **JURY TRIAL PROCEDURES**

- ***Electronic Exhibits***

It is the responsibility of the party using an electronic exhibit (including videos) to ensure they are able to display the exhibits to the Court and jury. Litigants may arrange time with Chambers to test the Courtroom technology in advance of the trial by emailing ConnellyChambers@allegheycourts.us. Parties intending to use any audio-visual and/or other equipment during trial must ensure that such equipment is set up in the Courtroom and is ready for use before the trial session in which the equipment will be employed.

- ***Exhibit Binders***

Prior to the start of trial, each party must prepare a tabbed exhibit binder containing each exhibit that the party plans to show to any witness, to introduce through any witness, or otherwise to introduce into evidence. Plaintiffs are to mark their exhibits with numbers. Defendants are to use letters.

Each side should have at least four (4) copies of their exhibit binders: for themselves, the Court, opposing counsel, and the witness. Parties should exchange exhibit binders prior to trial. The binders for the witnesses shall remain on the witness stand throughout the entirety of the trial.

Including an exhibit in an exhibit book does not impose an obligation to introduce the exhibit at trial. Unless instructed otherwise, the proponent of the exhibit shall be its custodian and shall comply with Rules regarding retention, filing and other custodial responsibilities.

- ***Witness Lists***

At the commencement of trial, each party shall provide to the Court and the Court Reporter a complete list of potential witnesses, together with a list of any unusual names of other individuals, places or things likely to be referenced during testimony. The list should also include the name of any witness whose testimony will be presented by deposition or videotape, and the approximate length of that testimony.

- ***Opening and Closing Statements***

Opening statements **should not exceed 45 minutes**. Closing arguments **should not exceed 1 hour**. The Court may shorten or lengthen these limits in appropriate cases.

- ***Objections During Trial***

When making objections to questions or testimony during trials, the basis for the objection shall be described briefly. Argument concerning objections shall be conducted outside of the jury and/or witnesses, usually at sidebar. Whenever an objection is stated, examination of a witness shall be suspended and shall not continue until the objection is resolved or counsel is directed to go forward. This procedure is not intended to discourage parties from fully stating on the record their objections to or disagreements with the Court's rulings. It is intended only to have such matters conducted outside the hearing of the jury.

- ***Charge/Verdict Slip***

Counsel shall confer on points for charge and a proposed verdict slip at the earliest feasible point so that a joint submission for each is provided to the Court. A written supplement may be provided by each party to address points and matters upon which the parties are unable to agree. The Court will hold a charging conference to resolve any matters to which the parties have not agreed. The parties shall email Microsoft Word versions of all proposed final instructions to Chambers at ConnellyChambers@alleghencycourts.us .

- ***Miscellaneous Courtroom Management***

When a Court Reporter is present, witnesses and counsel are instructed to speak loudly and slowly. When reading from a text or document, witnesses and counsel are reminded to speak slowly. During jury deliberations, counsel shall provide the Law Clerks with a cell phone number. Counsel

and their clients are free to leave the Courtroom but must be readily available to return when the Court contacts them.

Counsel shall confer in an attempt to agree as to what exhibits, photos, etc. may go out with the jury.

➤ **NON-JURY TRIAL PROCEDURES**

No later than 15 minutes before the time scheduled for the start of trial, counsel and *pro se* litigants shall have appeared in the Courtroom, executed all necessary waivers to proceed with a non-jury trial, addressed their envelopes (provided by the Court's Law Clerk) for receipt of the verdict, given the foregoing items to the Court's Law Clerk, and shall be prepared to meet with the Court at a pretrial conference to address the possibility of settlement, to determine stipulations, and to consider any unusual question of law or procedure that is anticipated to arise during the course of the trial.

During the pretrial conference, the Court will accept, but will not normally require, copies of any particularly significant case law and/or statutes. The Court will also accept brief memoranda on pertinent points of law, though copies of significant case law. All parties shall provide opposing parties with copies of all submissions before presenting them to the Court.

As to any documents counsel would like the Court to see, kindly pass such documents through the Law Clerks to the Court.

Brief Opening and Closing Statements may be made by each side.

➤ **POST-TRIAL MOTION PROCEDURES**

The filing party must serve a copy of its post-trial motion on the opposing party and on the Court consistent with the applicable Pennsylvania and Allegheny County rules.

The filing party is reminded to consult the Allegheny County Rules of Civil Procedure regarding the party's obligations to order the needed portions of the trial and/or related transcripts.

If the trial and/or related transcripts are not necessary in order to prepare a brief, the moving party must file a brief at the time the party files its post-trial motion. If one or more transcripts are needed to prepare a brief, the Court will allow the moving party time to file a brief after the party receives the required transcript(s).

The non-moving party may file a response no more than fourteen days after the moving party has filed its motion and brief.

Depending on the circumstances of the case, the Court may decide the motion with or without a hearing. The Court may also hold a conciliation.