

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA**

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Guidelines for Courtroom Decorum

[pursuant to Local Rule 2090-2(E)] and amended to incorporate additional requirements for courtrooms with Digital Audio Recording (DAR) equipment

(A) The purpose of these guidelines is to state, for the guidance of those unfamiliar with the traditions of this court, certain basic principles concerning courtroom behavior and decorum. And to set forth additional requirements for courtrooms with DAR equipment. The requirements stated in this rule are minimal, not all-inclusive; and are intended to emphasize and supplement, not supplant or limit, the ethical obligations of counsel under the Rules of Professional Conduct or the time-honored customs of experienced trial counsel. Individual judges of the court may, in any case, or generally, announce and enforce additional prohibitions or requirements; or may excuse compliance with any one or more of the provisions of this rule.

(B) When appearing in this court, unless excused by the presiding judge, all counsel (including, where the context applies, all persons at counsel table) shall abide by the following:

1. Dress in business attire appropriate to the dignity of the court.
2. Stand as court is opened, recessed or adjourned.
3. Stand when addressing, or being addressed by, the court.
4. Stand at the lectern while examining any witness; except that counsel may approach the witness with court permission, for purposes of handling or tendering exhibits.
5. Stand at the lectern while making opening statements or closing arguments.
6. Address all remarks to the court, not to opposing counsel.
7. Counsel must begin all remarks by stating counsel's name and the parties they represent, spelling names as needed.
8. Do NOT speak over another person.
9. Avoid disparaging personal remarks or acrimony toward opposing counsel and remain wholly detached from any ill feeling between the litigants or witnesses.
10. Refer to all persons, including witnesses, other counsel and the parties by their surnames and not by their first or given names.

11. Only one attorney for each party shall examine, or cross examine each witness. The attorney stating objections, if any, during direct examination, shall be the attorney recognized for cross examination.
12. Counsel should request permission before approaching the bench; and any documents counsel wish to have the court examine should be handed to the clerk, or to the court reporter or other court designee if no clerk is present.
13. Any paper or exhibit not previously marked for identification should first be handed to the clerk, or to the court reporter or other court designee if no clerk is present, to be marked before it is tendered to a witness for examination; and any exhibit offered in evidence should, at the time of such offer, be handed to opposing counsel.
14. In making objections counsel should state only the legal grounds for the objection and should withhold all further comment or argument unless elaboration is requested by the court.
15. In examining a witness, counsel shall not repeat or echo the answer given by the witness.
16. Counsel shall admonish and discourage all persons at counsel table from making gestures, facial expressions, audible comments, or the like, as manifestations of approval or disapproval during the testimony of witnesses, or at any other time.
17. Smoking, eating, food and drink are prohibited in the courtroom at all times.
18. Do Not recite personal data and other sensitive information into the record.
 - a. Limit SSN and financial account numbers to the last 4 digits.
 - b. Limit names and birth dates to initials and birth year.
 - c. Exhibits submitted to the court that contain personal identifiers must be redacted.
19. Conversations not necessary to the courtroom proceedings are not permitted while court is in session.
20. For courtrooms equipped with Digital Audio Recording (DAR) equipment:
 - a. Speak clearly and directly into the microphone.
 - b. Be aware that the microphone is recording at all times and conversations not intended to be recorded on the record must take place outside the courtroom.
 - c. If use of portable, clip-on microphones will be required when court is in session, request them from the Electronic Court Recorder Operator (ECRO) before the proceedings begin.