



Policies & Procedures
Harris County Civil County Civil Court at Law No. Two (2)
[Harris Civil Courts at Law](#) | [Civil Court at Law No. 2](#)

Contacting the Court

For all matters relating to hearings, motions, filings, requests for hearings, and case status, contact the Clerks:

Maria De La Rosa
713-274-1349

Angeles Villafranca
713-274-1349

To determine whether the Court has ruled on a motion, please check the case record on the County Clerk's website via the [document search portal](#) or contact the Court staff.

For all matters relating to trials, contact the Trial Coordinator:

Grace Cantada
832-927-1722
grace_cantada@ccl.hctx.net

For all matters relating to record requests and ordering of transcripts, contact the Court Reporter:

Kevin Bruzewski
832-927-1723
kevin_bruzewski@ccl.hctx.net

For Information regarding audio/visual and courtroom security and decorum, contact the Bailiff:

Deputy Anthony Hemmitt
832-927-1724

Motion Dockets

Oral Hearing Dockets

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- The Court conducts oral hearings **Tuesdays** at **9:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.** in 15-minute increments. Call the Court Clerk for available time slot.
- Please advise the Court Clerk if a party is requesting for an in-person hearing.
- Parties must file a Notice of Hearing with a certificate of service and serve all parties.
- Parties must provide five (5) business days' notice.
- A motion must have a certificate of service, be accompanied by a proposed order (filed as a lead document) and filed with or prior to the notice of hearing. Respondent should also file their proposed order as well.
- Records are taken by request only. Fill out the [Court Reporter's Request for Record](#) prior to the hearing and must be E-filed.
- Contact the Court Clerk to pass a hearing. *Hearings may only be passed by the party setting them.*
- All notices of oral hearing need to include the Court's zoom room information.
- The Court allows 10 minutes for late calls.

Participants will use the following information for hearings conducted virtually:

Web address: <https://hccocm.zoom.us/my/hccivil02> | Meeting ID: **308 063 0152** | Phone Access: **(346) 248-7799**

Motions that Require an Oral Hearing

- **Minor Settlements**
- **Any Motion in a case on appeal from the Justice of the Peace Court**
- **Applications for Temporary Restraining Orders (TRO)** may be set by contacting the Clerk for the next available setting. Written notice must be filed with the Court and served to the opposing party by phone, fax, and/or in writing. Proof of attempts to notify opposing counsel must be provided to the Court.
- **Motion for Sanctions**

Submission Dockets

Any motion may be set on submission, with the exception of those listed above, *see Motions that require an Oral Hearing*

- The Court's submission dockets are on **Tuesdays and Fridays at 8:30 a.m.**
- Parties must file a notice of submission with a certificate of service.
- Parties must provide five (5) business days' notice.
- A motion must be accompanied by a proposed order filed as a lead document and filed prior to or with a notice of submission.
- Contact the Court Clerk to pass a hearing. *Hearings may only be passed by the party setting them.*

Summary Judgment motions must be set on the submission docket and require twenty-one (21) days' notice. The Court will consider requests for an Oral hearing on the date of the submission setting.

Requests for oral hearings on cases set on the submission docket must be made in writing and filed on or before the submission date. The clerk will notify all parties if the Court grants the request.

Off-Docket Motions

The following do not require a setting unless otherwise instructed by the Court.

Agreed Motions The motion must have the signatures of all parties or counsel and be filed as "agreed" or "joint", with a Certificate of Conference and a Certificate of Service attached.

Occupational Licenses The petitioner must have their SR-22, proof of insurance, and a certified copy of their driving record before the Judge will review the petition. Please refer to the Texas Department of Public Safety for information on obtaining a certified copy of a driving record. [TXDPS How to Order a Driver Record](#)

Motions for Default Judgment must be submitted 10 days prior to trial and require an oral hearing only if unliquidated damages are requested. A return of service must be on file 10 days prior to the motion, and the following must be included in the motion:

- Affidavit proving up liquidated damages (include last statement or invoice)
- Unliquidated damages cannot be proven up by affidavit and require live testimony at oral hearing.
- Affidavit of attorney's fees including some estimate of time or description of actions taken on the case.
- Certificate of last known address
- Non-Military Affidavit with a copy of the results from <https://scra.dmdc.osd.mil/scra/#/home> or, <https://mla.dmdc.osd.mil/mla/#/home>
 - Results from the search must be within 30 days of the date the motion is filed.

- Certificate of Service

If any of the foregoing is missing or incorrect, the Court may give 30 days to allow submission of the proper documents. If the proper documents are not received, the case will be subject to Dismissal for Want of Prosecution. It is the responsibility of the movant to follow up on their motions for default to check the status.

Motions for Substituted Service must be accompanied by an affidavit that includes the following:

- Documentation or factual affidavit that verifies the Defendant actually resides or is employed at the subject address (e.g., Appraisal District Records, Vehicle Registration, factual affidavit)
- Sufficient attempts (4 attempts for a constable, 4 for a private process server)
- Each attempt at service with date and time
- Last attempt at service must be within 45 days of the filing of the motion.
- Attempts must be at varied times of the day.
- The identity of any persons present at the attempted service and any statements that were made
- The information of cars in the driveway or other indicators the defendant resides or works at the address.

Corporate Agents for service that cannot be found at the registered office of the entity with reasonable diligence, please follow procedures in Tex. Bus. Org. Code §5.251

Motion to Appear Pro Hac Vice must comply with Tex. Gov't Code §82.0361

Additional Due Process and Procedural Requirements

Discovery Disputes

Parties must make several attempts on separate days to conference with opposing parties relating to discovery disputes and include a certificate of conference in their motion. All certificates of conference must state whether counsel have conferred regarding the substance of the relief requested and if the relief is opposed, agreed or agreed in part, along with a statement of what relief was agreed to between the parties. It must also state the number of attempts made to contact the opposing party, the method of attempts, and the results obtained. Insufficient attempts or failure to provide a substantive certificate may result in denial of the motion to compel or the hearing being passed by the Court.

Pre-Judgment Remedies

Pleadings requesting pre-judgment remedies (e.g., garnishment, attachment, sequestration) must be accompanied by verified facts and non-military affidavits in compliance with the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA)

Proposed orders should set out the amount of the bond calculated to protect the interests of the parties (both creditor and debtor), which should typically be the market value of any levied property. The bond amount for the debtor should merely be the amount owed *if less* than the market value.

Trial Dockets

Non-Jury Trials

Non-Jury trials are conducted ***Mondays beginning at 9:00 a.m.*** unless preferentially set. There are no docket positions for non-jury trials. Cases are heard based on the length of trial estimated by the parties. Parties should be prepared to proceed with trial on the date set and should furnish proposed orders to the Court. Trials estimated to last longer than 30 minutes will need to notify the Trial Coordinator upon check-in. The case will be reset to 1:00 p.m. the same afternoon, or for an agreed-upon date in the near future.

- Records are taken by request only. Fill out the [Court Reporter's Request for Record](#) prior to the hearing and must be E-filed.

Pursuant to Tex. Rules Civ. Proc. §509.8(e) and §510.10(c) Justice Court Appeals of **Repair and Remedy and Eviction cases** take precedence or are entitled to precedence in de novo appeals in the County Civil Courts at law and can be set for trial at any time after the eighth day following the filing of the transcript in the county court. Plaintiff should send trial setting notices to Defendant via certified mail, regular mail, and any electronic delivery address on file with the Court, with proof provided at trial.

Courtroom Expectations

- Check-in with Court Staff at least 10 minutes prior to docket start time.
- Notify Court staff if you need to step out and where so that you may be located if necessary.
- Follow proper Court decorum.

Jury Trials

Jury dockets are set on a two-week docket beginning on the first and third Monday of each month.

The date of trial will be determined at the **pre-trial conference** which will be held at **9:30 a.m.** on the **Friday preceding the trial date**. In the event that Friday is a holiday or a dead week, the pretrial conference will be held the Friday preceding the holiday or dead week. Prior to the pre-trial conference, each party is ordered to exchange with all parties their witness list, pre-numbered exhibits, motion in limine, edited page and line excerpts of deposition testimony, proposed jury charge, questions, and instructions, and any relevant case law they may rely upon. Failure to mediate prior to pretrial and Failure to appear at pretrial will result in a dismissal for want of prosecution. Failure to appear at the pretrial conference will result in dismissal.

The Court appreciates all efforts to expedite the trial. The following must be exchanged and discussed among parties prior to pretrial:

- Witness List,
- Exhibit List and pre-marked Exhibits **with numbers**,
 - Agreed exhibits will be pre-admitted. Please bring a copy of the exhibits, tabbed in a three-ring binder, for the Judge, Court Reporter, and opposing counsel.

- Exhibits must be pre-marked, *with numbers*, with inadmissible information redacted (e.g., SSN, account number, and insurance information)
- Original exhibits will be retained by the Court Reporter at the time of trial, please bring copies for the Judge, witnesses, and opposing counsel. The Court will not make copies.
- Exhibits with multiple pages must be bound or stapled.
- If you have any questions regarding exhibits, please contact the Court Reporter
- Motion in Limine, exclude Texas Rules in this motion, [Standing Order in Limine](#),
- Edited pages and line excerpts of deposition testimony, copies of designations, and a condensed or electronic copy of the transcript must be provided to the Court Reporter prior to trial,
- Proposed jury charge, questions, and instructions, [Jury Charge Template](#)
 - Each side must submit a copy of their proposed charge to the Trial Coordinator in Word format prior to trial, and;
- Any relevant case law that may be relied upon at trial.

Mediation is a required prior to docket call or pretrial. Failure to mediate may result in a dismissal..

Courtroom Expectations

- The Court will pull a panel of 18 jurors and 6 jurors will be selected. Each side gets 3 strikes.
- Prior to Voir Dire, the clerks will distribute one jury packet to each side and a seating chart. 15-20 minutes will be allotted per side for voir dire unless Court grants additional time.
- 10 minutes will be allowed for strikes, each side is entitled to three peremptory strikes. Any challenges for cause will be held at the bench on an individual basis.
- All proceedings will be on the record in a jury trial, with the exception of Voir Dire and Motions in Limine. Notify the Court Reporter in advance for the exceptions to be included on the record. [Court Reporter's Request for Record](#)
- Courtroom decorum should be explained to witnesses by counsel before entering the Courtroom.
- Post-verdict motions and opposed judgments must be set for a hearing on the oral hearing docket. *See the Oral Hearing Dockets section of these procedures.*

Continuance

Motions for Continuance should be filed as soon as the grounds for such a motion are reasonably apparent and filed at least two (2) weeks prior to the trial date.

First-time requests of a 30-day continuance that are uncontested, service is obtained or due diligence as to the attempts of service is stated, will be automatically granted. The motion must contain a certificate of service and a certificate of conference.

Continuances after the first will require a showing of good cause, a certificate of conference, and an oral or submission hearing.

Opposed Motions for Continuance must be scheduled for an oral or submission hearing.

Vacation Letters

To assert vacation, attorneys must file their vacation letter with the County Clerk and file a Motion for Continuance with the vacation letter attached and served to all parties. Attorneys with multiple cases must file a separate motion for each case.

The Court will honor Motions for Continuance with vacation letters that are timely filed.

Settlements

Upon settlement of any case, Plaintiff's counsel or self-represented (pro se) plaintiffs should immediately notify the Trial Coordinator in writing (i.e. email) and file a letter or notice of settlement in the case.

Cases that have announced settled and not submitted a final order, will be placed on the Entry Docket (no appearance necessary) within approximately 30 days to allow ample time for parties to submit final documents.

Submit a request in writing to move a case back to a trial docket.

Settlements involving minors must be heard by oral hearing. Please refer to the Motion Dockets section of these procedures for instructions regarding oral hearings. If a Guardian Ad Litem has not been appointed to represent the minor in the case, please file a Motion and Proposed Order or contact the Court. Cases in which the minor has a claim for disfigurement require the minor to appear at the hearing to show the injury.

Entry Docket

Entry dockets are a deadline to submit final orders to the Court. They are conducted without appearance **Fridays** at **10:00 a.m.** The Court allows a one-time extension of Entry dates, any further requests will require an oral or submission hearing.

Final Judgments, Plaintiff's Non-Suit/Dismissal filed on or before the Entry date will be signed by the Court. If no judgment, order, or request for extension is filed, the case will be Dismissed for Want of Prosecution.

Judgments on jury verdicts with objections must be set on the oral hearing docket prior to the Entry date.

Service of Process

All cases are subject to Dismissal for Want of Prosecution if service is not perfected within **180 days** of filing.

Courtroom Decorum

The same etiquette and decorum expected in a physical courtroom is expected in a virtual courtroom.

- Remove hats or caps, except religious hats or materials.
- Attorneys shall observe the letter and spirit of all canons of ethics and advise their clients of decorum.
- Pro-se parties are held to the same standard as attorneys.
- Cell phones must be silent and out of sight.
- No eating.
- No tobacco or vaping product use.
- No driving.

Compliance with Gov. Code 82.037(a)(4) will be expected from all counsel and self-represented (pro se) parties:
“Conduct oneself with integrity and civility in dealing and communicating with the Court and all parties.”

Useful Links

Efiling Procedures and FAQs	https://www.cclerk.hctx.net/Civil.aspx#eFile
Forms	https://www.cclerk.hctx.net/Civil.aspx#CForms
Document Search and Ordering Copies	https://www.cclerk.hctx.net/applications/websearch/CourtSearch.aspx?CaseType=Civil
Court Calendar Search	https://www.cclerk.hctx.net/Applications/WebSearch/CourtSettingsTyler.aspx?CaseType=Civil
Self-Help Legal Resources	https://www.harriscountylawlibrary.org/self-help-information-resources
	https://www.sll.texas.gov/legal-help/
	https://www.texascourthelp.gov/
Harris County Holidays	https://www.harriscountytexas.gov/Residents/Information/Harris-County-Holidays