

Rule 5.03 | COURTROOM DECORUM

(a) The purpose of this rule is to state, for the guidance of those heretofore unfamiliar with the traditions of this Court, certain basic principles concerning courtroom behavior and decorum. 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 Code of Professional Responsibility 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) Stand as Court is opened, recessed or adjourned.
- (2) Stand when the jury enters or retires from the courtroom.
- (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 Clerk's desk or the witness 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) Avoid disparaging personal remarks or acrimony toward opposing counsel and remain wholly detached from any ill feeling between the litigants or witnesses.
- (8) Refer to all persons, including witnesses, other counsel and the parties by their surnames and not by their first or given names.

(9) 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.

(10) Counsel should request permission before approaching the bench; and any documents counsel wish to have the Court examine should be handed to the Clerk.

(11) Any paper or exhibit not previously marked for identification (see Rule 3.07) should first be handed to the Clerk to be marked before it is tendered to a witness for his examination; and any exhibit offered in evidence should, at the time of such offer, be handed to opposing counsel.

(12) 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.

(13) In examining a witness, counsel shall not repeat or echo the answer given by the witness.

(14) Offers of, or requests for, a stipulation should be made privately, not within the hearing of the jury.

(15) In opening statements and in arguments to the jury, counsel shall not express personal knowledge or opinion concerning any matter in issue; shall not read or purport to read from deposition or trial transcripts, and shall not suggest to the jury, directly or indirectly, that it may or should request transcripts or the reading of any testimony by the reporter.

(16) Counsel shall admonish all persons at counsel table that gestures, facial expressions, audible comments, or the like, as manifestations of approval or disapproval during the testimony of witnesses, or at any other time, are absolutely prohibited.