

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF PHILADELPHIA COUNTY
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA
TRIAL DIVISION - CIVIL

_____ TERM, _____

No. _____

**STANDING CASE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES
COMPULSORY ARBITRATION PROGRAM**

****IMPORTANT****

PLEASE READ THESE GUIDELINES CAREFULLY.

Information about your case is given.

You are receiving this document because you were identified as a party in a filing of a civil action in the Compulsory Arbitration Program.

1. ARBITRATION HEARING: This matter is listed for an Arbitration hearing on _____ at _____. The hearing will be held at the Compulsory Arbitration Center located at 1880 JFK Blvd., 5th Floor, Philadelphia PA 19103.

2. SERVICE: The party who started this action must serve the Writ of Summons or Complaint and a copy of these Standing Case Management Guidelines pursuant to the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure pertaining to service of original process. See P.A.R.C.P. Rule 400, et. seq. Pursuant to Philadelphia Rule of Civil Procedure *205.4, upon completion of service, proof of service must be filed promptly utilizing the Civil Electronic Filing System at: <https://fjdefile.phila.gov/> or the Civil Filing Center, Room 296, City Hall.

Note: The Court will not hear the case and may dismiss the matter if proper service is not completed and if proof of service is not filed. In addition, if a complaint is not timely filed, the Court can enter a non-suit on the motion of the defendant or a non-pros on the Court's own motion pursuant to Pennsylvania Rule of Civil Procedure 218.

3. DEFENDANT: If you have been served with a Writ of Summons or Complaint pursuant to Paragraph 2 of these Guidelines, then you are the Defendant in this matter. You (or your attorney, if you are represented by an attorney) are required to file an Answer or other responsive pleading. A Defendant risks having Judgment entered against them if they do not respond to a Complaint within 20 days of service. Failure to respond may result in loss of a Defendant's money or property

4. ARBITRATION HEARING PROCEDURE: The Arbitration hearing will be conducted by a Board of three (3) arbitrators. The arbitrators are lawyers who have been certified by the Court to serve as arbitrators to decide the case. Parties should be prepared to present/try their case before the panel, which includes Opening Statements, Direct and Cross Examination of witnesses, presentation of documentary evidence (in accordance

with Philadelphia County's 20-day Rule *1305(b)) and Closing Arguments. The arbitrators will rule on any objections raised during the hearing and render a decision at the conclusion of the hearing, entitled Report and Award of Arbitrators (the Award). Parties will receive notice of the Award by email or mail depending on whether an e-filing account has been set up. If there is not such an account, the Award will be mailed to the party's address the Court has on file.

5. DISCOVERY: All of the discovery tools allowed under the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure are also available for Arbitration cases. Discovery is the process that allows parties to request evidence or documents from the opposing party according to P.A.R.C.P. 4000 through 4025. The parties can utilize interrogatories, requests for production of documents, requests for admissions and depositions, as appropriate, for any case.

The Court has approved standard Discovery for motor vehicle and premises liability cases that are in the Compulsory Arbitration Program. The applicable Discovery can be found in the forms section of the Courts' website under Arbitration at: <https://www.courts.phila.gov/forms/>.

Additional Discovery is permitted under limited circumstances. Please see the overview of the Compulsory Arbitration program for further detail, specifically pages 5 and 6: <https://www.courts.phila.gov/pdf/manuals/civil-trial/compulsory-arbitration-center.pdf>.

6. FILINGS OF PETITIONS AND MOTIONS: All petitions, motions, and responses must be prepared in compliance with Philadelphia Rules of Civil Procedure *206.1 and *208.3 and filed utilizing the First Judicial District's Electronic Filing System or the Civil Filing Center, Room 296 City Hall. Such filings are governed by the "45-day Rule" as set forth in Philadelphia Rule of Civil Procedure *1303(h) which requires the filing of petitions and motions not less than 45 days prior to the date of the scheduled Arbitration hearing. The Discovery motion procedure outlined in Philadelphia Rule of Civil Procedure *208.3(a) must be followed if there is a dispute over Discovery. See Notice to the Bar for more information regarding Discovery motion procedure posted at: <https://www.courts.phila.gov/pdf/notices/2021/NTB-Trial-Division-Civil-Protocol-for-Discovery-Motions-Filed-on-or-After-March-15-2021.pdf>.

The Miscellaneous Arbitration Application may be utilized to seek leave of Court to file a Petition/Motion within 45 days of the Arbitration hearing date. The requisite application can be found in the forms section of the Courts' website under Arbitration at: <https://www.courts.phila.gov/forms/>.

7. APPEAL OF AN AWARD: Either party can appeal the Award as of right and receive a new trial before a judge and/or jury. To take an appeal, a party must file a Notice of Appeal within 30 days of the date indicated on the docket that notice of the Award given. The Notice of Appeal form can be found in the forms section of the Courts' website under Appeal Filing Forms at: <https://www.courts.phila.gov/forms/>.

An appeal by one party applies to all parties. Within 10 days of the appeal being filed, either party can request and pay for a jury trial on appeal, if not previously requested. If a case is appealed, the parties will receive a Case Management Order outlining deadlines, the scheduling of a Pre-Trial Settlement Conference, and an anticipated month in which the case will be called to trial. If no Appeal is taken, the Award will become final and may be reduced to judgment upon the filing of a Praecipe to Enter Judgment on the Award.

8. CONTINUANCES: Applications for continuances of an Arbitration hearing are governed by Philadelphia Rule of Civil Procedure *1303(c) and shall be reviewed by the Director of the Arbitration Center or the Director's designee. Arbitration continuance applications must be filed utilizing the First Judicial District's Electronic Filing System or the Civil Filing Center, Room 296 City Hall. The Continuance/Deferral Application can be found in the forms section of the Courts' website under Arbitration at: <https://www.courts.phila.gov/forms/>.

Note: There is no hearing or oral argument regarding the continuance request and the granting or denial of an application is not subject to judicial scrutiny or review.

9. SETTLEMENTS: The parties shall provide notification to the Arbitration Center of any settlement prior to the Arbitration Hearing date. Settlement letters are to be electronically filed through the Court's Electronic Filing System at: <https://fjdefile.phila.gov/>. To file, parties should access the "Existing Case" section of the Electronic Filing System. Select "Conference Submissions" as the filing category. Select "Settlement Letter" as the document type and upload your letter. Once received by the Court, you will be notified of the acceptance of your e-filing. If you do not have access to the Electronic Filing System, settlement letters can be faxed to 215-686-9594 or call the Arbitration Center a

A detailed overview of the First Judicial District's Compulsory Arbitration Program can be found at:

<https://www.courts.phila.gov/pdf/manuals/civil-trial/compulsory-arbitration-center.pdf>

BY THE COURT:

**DANIEL J. ANDERS
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE
TRIAL DIVISION**