

JUDGE'S PROCEDURAL RULES AND POLICIES

Workers' Compensation Automation and Integration System (WCAIS) is the official repository for all documents related to a Dispute (matter pending) before a Workers' Compensation Judge. All documents, including evidence and briefs, that would have been submitted to a Workers' Compensation Judge by mail or in person prior to WCAIS should now be uploaded into WCAIS. If Social Security numbers appear on any such document, the first five numbers should be redacted before the document is uploaded, unless otherwise specified below. Requests, such as Requests for Continuance and Subpoenas, should also be made through WCAIS.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE JUDGE'S SPECIAL PROCEDURES DURING THE GOVERNOR'S EMERGENCY DECLARATION DUE TO COVID-19.](#)

FIRST EVENTS

1. **What is the first event (i.e. pretrial, hearing, conference call) and what will occur?** There is a first hearing, at which the moving party will be expected to present evidence if possible. If no evidence will be offered, a trial schedule will be established.
2. **List any documents required at the first Event:** If there are Bureau documents in WCAIS, I will enter them as judge exhibits before the hearing. If they do not already appear in WCAIS, the parties should upload them.
 - a. **Should docs be uploaded as Exhibits or Letters to the Judge?** Exhibits [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
 - b. **Should docs be uploaded before or after the first Event?** Choose an item. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

SUPERSEDEAS PROCEDURES

1. **What are your procedures for supersedeas hearings?** [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
 - a. **Will testimony be heard?** Yes While testimony is not normally taken at supersedeas hearings, I will certainly hear it if a party wishes to present it.
 - b. **Is additional time generally granted to obtain medical evidence?** Yes
 - c. **Under what circumstances will you reconsider a supersedeas order?** If new or additional evidence becomes available.
 - d. **Do you generally use written orders for denials?** Yes [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
 - e. **What is required for employee's counsel to obtain interim fee approval?** A WCAIS request can be submitted, & the fee agreement should be in evidence
 - f. **Describe any other procedures for supersedeas hearings:** [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
 - g. **Describe procedures for special supersedeas hearings, if different:** [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

HEARINGS

1. **Describe the structure of your hearings and whether you are willing to change your hearing format:** I have serial hearings – ideally, no more than three, although I understand that some cases require more time and evidence.
 - a. **Are you willing to change the hearing format upon request?** Choose an item. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
2. **Are you willing to allow counsel to participate by telephone?** Yes If circumstances such as distance or emergencies so require; this will be decided on a case by case basis.
3. **What procedure do you follow if a party fails to appear at a hearing?** I normally issue an interlocutory order that functions as a rule to show cause why relief should not be granted for the opponent & relist in 30-45 days.

4. **Do you have special procedures for psychological injury cases?** No Not specifically, but I will close the courtroom or schedule a slotted hearing upon request.

WITNESSES/EXHIBITS

1. **What are your rules regarding taking testimony?** Click or tap here to enter text.
- a. **Do you prefer testimony at a hearing or by deposition?** Hearing Click or tap here to enter text.
- b. **If a counsel wishes to bring a witness to a hearing, do you require prior notice?** No **If yes:**
- i. **How much notice do you require?** While I do not require prior notice, it will be much appreciated. A week would be good.
2. **Under what circumstances will you permit a party or witness (including an expert witness) to testify by deposition, phone, or videoconference, rather than appear at the hearing?** An expert witness will ordinarily be permitted to testify by deposition. A party or fact witness may be permitted to testify by telephone, on a case by case basis, if distance is an issue or if there is an emergency.
3. **What is your procedure regarding the order of testimony with respect to submission of medical evidence, particularly when cross petitions are filed?** The party who filed first should submit evidence first, barring an unusual circumstance.
4. **Do the parties need to upload the Bureau and WCOA documents as exhibits or will you admit them electronically as Judge exhibits?** Judge Click or tap here to enter text.
5. **Do you require counsel to upload exhibits to WCAIS before or after the hearing?** After Evidence may be uploaded before or after hearings, so long as it is uploaded before briefs are submitted. EVIDENCE IS MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION ONLY AT HEARINGS AND WILL NOT BE ADMITTED UNTIL IT IS UPLOADED TO WCAIS. IF IT IS NOT UPLOADED TO WCAIS, IT WILL NOT BE ADMITTED AND WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED IN MY DECISION. If you rely on staff to upload, please check yourself to confirm that it is done when you submit your brief. **If before:**
- a. **What is the latest day before the hearing that they may be uploaded?** Click or tap here to enter text.
6. **Do you require counsel to bring exhibit hard copies to the hearing?** No The only exceptions are items that may not reproduce well, such as payroll logs, payment screens, etc.
7. **When will you rule on objections to exhibits?** At the hearing at which the evidence is offered or shortly thereafter.
8. **What is your procedure for handling discovery disputes, e.g. do you employ telephone conferences, do you prefer to attend certain depositions, etc.?** I no longer do telephone conferences without a court reporter present. I will schedule a conference after hearings so as to utilize a court reporter, or I will schedule the matter for my next hearing date.
9. **What is the last day to file written preservations of deposition objections?** Any time before or with briefs, unless a ruling is desired before briefs are submitted.

COMPROMISE & RELEASES (C&Rs)

1. **Describe your procedures regarding the review of C&R Agreements:** Click or tap here to enter text.
- a. **Are you willing to allow amendments of existing petitions or do you require the filing of a separate Petition Seeking Approval of a C&R Agreement?** Amendments Click or tap here to enter text.
- b. **Are parties required to provide a draft of the C&R Agreement before the hearing?** No **If yes:**
- i. **How far in advance of the hearing do you need to receive it?** Click or tap here to enter text.

- c. **Should the parties upload the C&R Agreement, including the fee agreement and any other attachments, before or after the hearing?** After, except while we are doing telephonic or video hearings. Click or tap here to enter text.
- d. **Should child support docs be uploaded as a separate exhibit?** No Click or tap here to enter text.
- e. **What other exhibits should be uploaded as part of the C&R Agreement or as separate exhibits (i.e., waiver of appeal, medical bills, etc.)?** Whatever the parties desire to be part of the agreement should be uploaded together with the C & R Agreement.
- f. **Should they be a part of the C&R Agreement or separate exhibits?** Part of the C&R Agreement. Click or tap here to enter text.
- g. **When should SSNs and other confidential information be redacted from the C&R Agreement and Act 109 documents?** When the agreement is uploaded to WCAIS.
- h. **Will you sign bench orders?** Yes Click or tap here to enter text.
- i. **Describe any other procedures you have for C&R Agreements:** Click or tap here to enter text.

STIPULATIONS (STIPs) RESOLVING DISPUTES

- 1. **What are your usual procedures regarding the submission, review, and adoption?** Stipulations should be uploaded as a WCAIS exhibit, regardless of whether they are submitted at a hearing.
- 2. **Should the fee agreement be part of the stip or separate exhibit?** Part of Stipulation Click or tap here to enter text.
- 3. **Should child support documents be uploaded as a separate exhibit?** No Click or tap here to enter text.
- 4. **What other exhibits should be uploaded (i.e. medical bills, etc.)?** Whatever the parties desire to be part of the stipulation should be uploaded with it in one exhibit.
 - a. **Should they be part of the stip or a separate exhibit?** Click or tap here to enter text.
- 5. **When should SSNs and other confidential information be redacted from the stip and Act 109 documents?** When uploaded to WCAIS.
- 6. **Describe any other procedures you have for stips:** Click or tap here to enter text.

BRIEFS AND POST-HEARING SUBMISSIONS

- 1. **Will you close a case via WCAIS submission or is a final hearing required?** Final Hearing Except in unusual circumstances.
- 2. **What are the time requirements for submissions and what procedures are taken when time requirements aren't met?** A briefing schedule is set forth at the final hearing. Requests for extensions of time may be made via a WCAIS request. I do not follow up to request briefs if not submitted.
- 3. **Describe any preferences regarding the format and content of submissions:** Brevity is key. Please do not regurgitate the testimony, as I will read the evidence myself. Please do not use shouty capitals. Simply tell me what, if any, law is applicable and why you think your client should prevail.

MANDATORY MEDIATIONS

- 1. **List the offices where you conduct mandatory mediations:** Philadelphia; if requested, I will do mediations in Upper Darby.
- 2. **Do you require all participants to attend in-person?** No

- a. **Under what circumstances do you permit attendance by phone?** Counsel should be present. Other parties may be available by telephone
3. **Do you require a Mediation Statement? Yes If yes:**
 - a. **What information do you require in that Statement?** A summary of the case, any potential impediments to settlement, and demands and offers.
 - b. **What documents, if any, must accompany the Statement?** None.
 - c. **How far in advance of the mediation must the parties submit the Statement and accompanying documents?** Preferably 24 hours.
4. **After you approve a Mediation Request, how long until it's scheduled?** I try to fit voluntary mediations into openings in my schedule; usually a few weeks.
5. **Are you willing to conduct more than one session per Dispute?** Yes [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
6. **If the party wants to request cancellation or postponement of a mediation on a Dispute assigned to you, should they contact you or the mediating Judge?** Please contact the hearing judge. **If you:**
 - a. **What is the latest day before the mediation that cancellation or postponement, absent an emergency, can be requested?** The more time, the better, but the day before the mediation is acceptable (with the understanding that if I am not in or unable to check WCAIS/email you may not get an answer).
7. **What else should the parties know or do before the mediation?** [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

VOLUNTARY MEDIATIONS

1. **Do you conduct Voluntary Mediations?** Yes [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
2. **List the offices where you conduct voluntary mediations:** Philadelphia or Upper Darby.
3. **Do you mediate Disputes assigned to you for hearing and decision?** No [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
4. **Do you mediate Disputes in which one or both parties are unrepresented? Yes If yes:**
 - a. **Describe any special procedures:** [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
5. **Do you require parties to execute an agreement to mediation? No If yes:**
 - a. **Describe the matters addressed by the agreement:** [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
6. **Do you require all participants to attend in-person? No**
 - a. **Under what circumstances do you permit attendance by phone?** Counsel should attend. Other parties may be available by telephone.
7. **Do you require a Mediation Statement? Yes If yes:**
 - a. **What information do you require in that Statement?** See above
 - b. **What documents, if any, must accompany the Statement?** None
 - c. **How far in advance of the mediation must the parties submit the Statement and accompanying documents?** See above
8. **After you approve a Mediation Request, how long until it's scheduled?** This is completely dependent on my schedule.
9. **Are you willing to conduct more than one session per Dispute?** Yes [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
10. **If the party wants to request cancellation or postponement of a mediation on a Dispute assigned to you, should they contact you or the mediating Judge?** For voluntary mediations, please contact the mediating judge.

11. **What is the latest day before the mediation that cancellation or postponement, absent an emergency, can be requested?** Preferably 24 hours.
12. **What else should the parties know or do before the mediation?** Please determine whether there are unpaid medical bills and if so, the amounts. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

REQUESTS/MISCELLANEOUS

1. **How far in advance do you require Requests for continuances, changes in hearing times, and extensions to be uploaded into WCAIS?** Preferably 24 hours
2. **Under what circumstances do you conduct conference calls?** No
3. **Under what circumstances do you accept faxes and e-mails from parties?** We do not accept faxes in the Philadelphia office. I accept e-mails regarding mediation requests and for clarification of issues and special circumstances.
4. **Do you adhere strictly to duration listed for a Hearing or Mediation?** Additional time is fine.
5. **What is the best way to contact you in an urgent situation?** Contact my assistant, Chandra Hammond, at 215-560-2488. You may also email me at sacraig@pa.gov, keeping in mind that if I am on the bench, mediating, or out of the office, I may not see it.
6. **What is your snow/emergency cancellation policy (i.e., do you follow a specific school district closing schedule, etc.)?** We follow the Philadelphia School District