

TEN COMMANDMENTS OF ETIQUETTE AND DECORUM IN TRIALS

1. Never lean against or across the rail of the jury box at any time that the jury is present in the jury box.
2. Stand whenever addressing the Court and whenever the judge and/or jury enters or leaves the courtroom. U.C.C.C.R. 3.02 and 3.08.
3. All comments, statements, remarks, etc., are to be addressed to the Court, and there shall be no cross-talking between opposing attorneys in the presence of the jury. U.C.C.C.R. 3.02. Bench conferences are not a part of the record. If a party wishes to make a record outside the presence of the jury, a request should be made to the court.
4. Only one (1) attorney per side shall be "assigned" to a witness and that attorney will be responsible for both the examination of the witness and for making any objections during that witness' testimony. U.C.C.C.R 3.02.
5. It is necessary to request permission to approach a witness. A reasonable distance shall be maintained at all times between the interrogator and the witness unless the use of a document or exhibit requires that the interrogator and the witness are in close proximity. Once a document or exhibited is admitted into evidence, the document may be displayed on our Elmo system for viewing by all persons in the court.
6. Any request that a document be marked, that a witness be brought into the courtroom, or any other request which requires the action of Court personnel and/or support staff is to be addressed to the Judge and not directly to the court staff member, if the request is made at a time when the jury is present in the courtroom. In other words, lawyers are to avoid giving direct instructions to court personnel in the presence of the jury but rather are advised that those request should be made of the Court.
7. The court may set a reasonable time limit for voir dire. Voir Dire is not to be used to make an opening statement or closing argument. In other words, the Court is of the opinion that voir dire is to be used to ask questions and not to make speeches or arguments. U.C.C.C.R 3.05
8. Speech making is to be avoided at the times that objections are made. For example, if a question is objectionable because it lacks relevance, then, the objection should be simply stated "objection your honor, irrelevant." While the Court recognizes that at times speech making is desirable for strategic reasons, it is discouraged and, for the most part, will not be permitted.
9. Please remember to speak slowly, clearly and audibly and to remind your witnesses, when necessary, to do the same.
10. The Court may exercise its discretion pursuant to Rule 611 of the Rules of Evidence and intervene sua sponte to deal with matters affecting the interrogation of witnesses and the presentation of evidence.