

General Rule 3 – Courthouse and Courtroom Conduct

OKLAHOMA NORTHERN DISTRICT COURT – REDLINE VERSION

LGNR3-1 Soliciting, loitering, and disruptive behavior

The solicitation of business relating to bail bonds or to employment as counsel is prohibited. Loitering in or about federal court facilities is prohibited. Any behavior which impedes or disrupts the orderly conduct of the business of the court is prohibited. Signs, placards, or banners may not be brought into a court facility.

NEW RULE TO COVER BASIC BEHAVIOR IN COURT FACILITIES.

LGN3-2 Professional Conduct for Attorneys

Attorneys practicing in this Court are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Oklahoma Rules of Professional Conduct, as adopted by the Oklahoma Supreme Court, as the standard of conduct of all members of the Oklahoma Bar Association. See, Title 5 O.S.A. Ch.1, App. 3A. As set forth in the preamble:

A lawyer's conduct should conform to the requirements of the law, both in professional service to clients and in the lawyer's business and personal affairs. A lawyer should use the law's procedures only for legitimate purposes and not to harass or intimidate others. A lawyer should demonstrate respect for the legal system and for those who serve it, including judges, other lawyers and public officials. While it is a lawyer's duty, when necessary, to challenge the rectitude of official action, it is also a lawyer's duty to uphold legal process.

In this spirit, all lawyers should become familiar with their duties and obligations, as defined and classified generally in the Oklahoma Rules of Professional Conduct, any interpretive decisions, applicable statutes, and the usages, customs, and practices of the bar.

MOVED FROM ATTORNEY RULES

LGNR 3-3 Courtroom Behavior

(a) For Attorneys. The purpose of this rule is to emphasize, not to supplant, certain portions of those ethical principles applicable to the lawyer's conduct in the courtroom. In addition to all other requirements, therefore, lawyers appearing in this Court shall adhere to the following:

- (1) Be punctual in attendance at Court.
- (2) Refrain from addressing anyone in Court by first names -- use last names only.
- (3) Refrain from leaving the courtroom while court is in session, unless it is absolutely necessary, and then only if the Court's permission has been obtained first.

- (4) At all times, counsel for plaintiff shall occupy the table nearest the jury box and counsel for defendant shall occupy the table furthestmost from the jury box.
- (5) Ascertain that only one lawyer is standing at a time, unless an objection is being made.
- (6) Bench conferences will be kept to a minimum. Counsel should anticipate issues which will arise during the trial and inform the Court and opposing counsel at the earliest opportunity. Permission must be obtained from the Court to approach the bench, a witness, an exhibit, or the clerk.
- (7) Refrain from employing dilatory tactics.
- (8) Hand all papers intended for the Court to see to the clerk who, in turn, will pass them up to the judge.
- (9) Hand to the clerk any exhibits offered into evidence.
- (10) Advise clients, witnesses, and others concerning rules of decorum to be observed in court.
- (11) Use the lectern when interrogating witnesses or addressing the jury, unless otherwise permitted by the Court. Appropriate exceptions to this rule shall be made for disability or infirmity.
- (12) Never conduct or engage in experiments or demonstrations unless prior permission is granted by the Court.
- (13) Refrain from conducting a trial when they know, prior thereto, that they will be necessary witnesses, other than as to merely formal matters such as identification or custody of a document or the like. If, during the trial, it is discovered that the ends of justice require the lawyers' testimony, they should from that point on, if feasible and not prejudicial to their client's case, leave further conduct of the trial to other counsel. If circumstances do not permit withdrawal from the conduct of the trial, lawyers should not argue the credibility of their own testimony.
- (14) Avoid disparaging personal remarks or acrimony toward opposing counsel and remain wholly uninfluenced by all ill feeling between the respective clients. Attorneys should abstain from any allusion to personal peculiarities and idiosyncrasies of opposing counsel.
- (15) Rise when addressing or being addressed by the Court. Appropriate exception will be made for disability or medical infirmity.
- (16) Refrain from assuming an undignified posture. Counsel should always be attired in a proper and dignified manner and should abstain from any apparel or ornament calculated to attract attention to themselves.
- (17) At all times exemplify conduct consistent with their obligation as an officer of the Court.
- (18) In making representations to the Court, know or honestly believe them to be supported by fact.
- (19) Any judicial officer may have additional rules of behavior. Individual judge's rules may be obtained from the clerk's office or our public website.

EXISTING RULE IN ATTORNEY RULES. THIS SECTION MOVED TO CONDUCT SINCE IT WOULD APPLY TO PRO SELF REPRESENTED PARTIES. ADDED (19) TO COVER INDIVIDUAL JUDGES RULES.

(b) All Persons in the courtroom.

- (1) No tobacco, e-cigarettes or "vaping" in any form in any form will be permitted at any time.
- (2) No propping of feet on tables or chairs will be permitted at any time.

- (3) No water bottles or other beverage containers, bottles or cups, or edibles shall be brought into the courtroom, except with permission of the marshal or courtroom deputy clerk.
- (4) No gum chewing or reading of newspapers or magazines (except as a part of the evidence in a case) will be permitted while Court is in session.
- (5) No talking or other unnecessary noises will be permitted while Court is in session.
- (6) Everyone must rise when instructed to do so upon opening, closing, or declaring recesses of Court. Appropriate exception shall be made for disability or medical infirmity.
- (7) Any attorney who appears in court intoxicated or under the influence of intoxicants, drugs, or narcotics may be summarily held in contempt.

EXISTING RULE IN ATTORNEY RULES. THIS SECTION MOVED TO CONDUCT.

- (8) **LGnR3-3 Enforcement.** The United States Marshals Service and Court Security Officers are authorized to enforce these rules. An attorney violating these rules may be subject to discipline, including disbarment, in accordance with LGnR 4.

NEW RULE ADDED ON ENFORCEMENT