

RULES OF DECORUM
COUNTY COURT AT LAW NO. 2

1. **GENERAL POLICY** - Judges and attorneys have a duty to uphold the highest standards of conduct to earn and promote public respect for the judiciary, legal profession and the American system of justice. All officers of the court, parties, witnesses and the public shall at all times conduct themselves with dignity so as not to interfere with the court's business.

2. **THE TEXAS LAWYERS CREED** – The standards of professional conduct in Section IV of the Texas Lawyer's Creed, as promulgated by the Texas Supreme Court and the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, are adopted and incorporated herein by reference as guidelines for participating in litigation in the Courts of Parker County, Texas.

3. **DECORUM REQUIRED OF ALL PERSONS** - All persons in attendance while the court is in session shall be attentive to the proceedings and cause no distraction. The bailiff of the Court shall enforce these rules of conduct and decorum. All persons entering the court shall comply with the following:
 - a) Timeliness – Participants in all proceedings shall appear promptly at all settings. The Court will not tolerate tardiness. If you are going to be late, it must be communicated to the Court in advance through the court coordinator.
 - b) No food or drink allowed unless authorized by the Court.
 - c) All attorneys are required to provide notice of all court settings to their clients. Notice to the attorney will be considered notice to the client.
 - d) Cell phones must be off or on silent.
 - e) No tobacco or vape pen use in any form is permitted in the courtroom.
 - f) No food items will be allowed in the courtroom.
 - g) No gum chewing in the courtroom.
 - h) No talking or unnecessary noise which interferes with the court proceeding will be tolerated.
 - i) No gestures, facial expressions or sounds indicating approval or disapproval of any person, act, testimony or proceeding shall be permitted.
 - j) Treat everyone with respect.
 - k) No one shall sit on railings, tables, desks, chair arms, place feet on furniture or fixtures, nor prop chairs back.
 - l) No children are permitted in the courtroom without permission of the Court, unless they are the court proceeding is for adoption or name change of the child or the child is the subject of a CPS proceeding.
 - m) All persons in attendance shall be suitably attired. Except by special permission of the court, male officers of the court shall wear coats and ties; the attire of the female officers shall be equally suitable. All parties or their representatives shall dress in suitable attire (for example: males in collared shirts and long pants; females in dresses or pants with suitable top). This means that the following clothing WILL NOT BE PERMITTED in the courtroom:
 - shorts
 - flip flops
 - tank tops
 - hats

- sunglasses
- cut offs
- capris
- any clothing which is deemed profane, vulgar or risqué by the court.

4. **DECORUM FOR COUNSEL AND PRO SE PARTIES** – All counsel/pro se parties in the courtroom during trials and other proceedings shall be attentive to the proceedings and shall refrain from any action which may disrupt the proceedings. All counsel/pro se parties are anticipated to follow the rules set forth herein. Failure to follow these rules, may result in removal from the courtroom.

- a) Counsel/pro se parties shall rise and remain standing while addressing the Court.
- b) Counsel/pro se parties shall address all statements, requests, and objections to the Court and not opposing counsel.
- c) Counsel/pro se parties shall avoid addressing each other with familiarity, shall use appropriate titles and shall avoid first names while the Court is in session and during official proceedings.
- d) Counsel/pro se parties shall address the Court as “your Honor” or “Judge.”
- e) Counsel/pro se parties shall not argue objections in the presence of the jury without prior leave of court.
- f) Counsel/pro se parties shall remain behind the counsel table or podium while examining witnesses.
- g) Counsel/pro se parties shall not make interrupt or talk over opposing counsel, except when stating formal objections.
- h) Counsel/pro se parties shall not make or insinuate derogatory or insulting remarks about opposing counsel, parties, or witnesses.
- i) Counsel/pro se parties shall request leave of Court to approach the bench or to approach the witness.
- j) Counsel/pro se parties shall not lean on the bench unless necessary to prevent jurors from overhearing bench conferences.
- k) Counsel/pro se parties shall not engage in personal discussions with the Court or each other during trial while in the presence of jurors, parties or witnesses.
- l) Counsel/pro se parties shall instruct parties not to directly contact the judge concerning pending matters. There shall be no ex parte communication with the judge.
- m) Counsel shall advise their clients and witnesses of these rules to avoid embarrassment and delay.