King County Superior Court
RULES FOR CONDUCT OF COUNSEL AND PARTIES PRO SE WHILE IN TRIAL
Judge Julie Spector

I realize that different judges have different rules and different requirements for their respective courtrooms. It is really not fair to expect counsel and parties pro se to follow the rules, if they don't know what the rules are. For this reason, I am providing you with this document before trial. If there are any of these rules you don't understand or have problems with, I'll be glad to discuss them with you. Very few rules are totally inflexible.

A. General

1. Be on time for court.
2. Make your objections briefly and on legal grounds (no testifying objections or speeches).
3. Stand to object or address the Court.
4. Do not make sidebar remarks, either direct or indirect. Try the lawsuit, not the opposing counsel.
5. Do not respond to opposing counsel's objection, unless asked by the Court to do so.
6. Do not argue with the Court.
7. Do not talk at the same time as the Court, opposing counsel, or a witness. The videotape equipment can only accurately and concisely record one voice at a time.
8. Do not use racist, sexist, obscene or profane language in court (unless, of course, eliciting or quoting from the facts of the case).
9. No food, beverages (except water) or chewing gum is allowed in the courtroom.
10. Turn off all electronic devices such as cell phones, pagers, PDAs, alarm watches, etc.

B. Voir Dire

1. Do not attempt to ingratiate yourself with jurors by telling personal anecdotes, establishing mutual friendships or acquaintances, etc.
2. Do not argue your case or attempt to pledge the jury on voir dire.

C. Testimony

1. Have all exhibits marked and logged with the Clerk before trial begins, in accordance with pre-trial order.
2. Have your witnesses in the witness room and ready to testify when needed.
3. Address witnesses as "Mr.", "Mrs.", "Dr.", or "Ms." Etc. No first names, except for children.
4. Do not make editorial comments after a witness's answer.
5. Do not ask repetitive questions.
6. Limit bench conferences to only unavoidable circumstances. Jurors don't like them.
7. The Court must be notified in advance of any firearms in the courtroom, for evidentiary purposes or otherwise. Firearms must be secured and unloaded at all times. Never point firearms in the direction of witnesses, jurors, parties, counsel or any other person in the courtroom.
8. Ask leave of the Court to approach a witness on the stand.

9. At the end of each court day, be prepared to advise the Court and opposing counsel the witnesses you plan on calling the following day.
10. All witnesses are to be provided with copies of any Orders on Motions in Limine prior to their testimony, and an explanation regarding those Orders and their limitations on testimony.

D. Argument

1. Stay in the record. If you don't have plenty to argue in the record, you shouldn't be trying the case.
2. Don't try to answer opposing counsel's argument in an objection.