

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DISCOVERY DISPUTES

All discovery issues should be resolved in good faith by counsel in accordance with their obligations to the Court under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the District's Local Rules. Before filing any motion relating to discovery, the parties are required to comply with the following requirements:

1. Counsel for parties to discovery disputes must jointly contact Judge Shea's Chambers by telephone to notify the Court that a dispute exists and provide a brief oral description of the nature of the dispute. Except in extraordinary circumstances, Chambers staff will not entertain such a communication unless counsel for all parties to the discovery dispute are on the telephone when the call is made to Chambers.
2. Within three (3) days of counsel contacting Chambers to notify the Court of the existence of a dispute, each party must provide Chambers via e-mail with a written submission summarizing the nature of the dispute and briefly explaining its position. The written submission shall take the form of a letter and shall be no more than two pages in length. All such communications must be copied to opposing counsel and must include the certification discussed in paragraph 6 below.
3. If the dispute involves a written interrogatory, request for production, request for admission, deposition notice and/or subpoena (the "discovery request"), counsel for the party who served the discovery request at issue will, along with the written submission, provide Chambers via e-mail with a copy of the particular discovery request at issue and the opposing party's written response to that particular request. Judge Shea does not need the entire discovery request and response but requires only the particular portions of the discovery request and response at issue.
4. Other than the written submission and any discovery requests and responses at issue, Judge Shea does not require, and does not want, counsel for the parties to provide him with any briefs, documents, deposition transcripts, correspondence or written argument regarding the discovery issue in dispute.
5. Following a review of the written submission and any discovery requests and responses at issue, the Court will determine whether additional steps, such as a telephonic conference with the Court or additional briefing, are necessary for the Court to resolve the discovery dispute. In some cases, the Court may determine that no additional input is needed and issue an order based only on the letters and relevant discovery requests and objections submitted by the parties. Any such order will reflect the input received from the parties and will allow the parties to docket the materials submitted if they wish to preserve the record on particular points.

6. Before contacting Chambers to notify the Court of a discovery dispute, counsel for parties to any discovery dispute are required by Rule 37(a)(1) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and Local Rule 37(a) to have conferred with one another and to have made a good faith effort to eliminate or reduce the area of controversy. All discovery issues should be resolved in good faith by counsel in accordance with their obligations to the Court under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the District's Local Rules. Judge Shea interprets the good faith conference obligation of the Federal Rules and Local Rules to require counsel to confer either face-to-face or by telephone; exchanges of correspondence are not sufficient in and of themselves to satisfy counsel's good faith conference obligations. **All written submissions describing the nature of the dispute submitted to the Court must include a written certification by each party that they have complied with their good faith conference obligations under the Federal Rules and Local Rules.**
7. Before notifying the Court of a discovery dispute, counsel for all parties to a discovery dispute must also agree upon the issues that they intend to raise with Judge Shea and inform Chambers of those issues at the time of the notification. If the parties cannot in good faith agree upon the issues to be raised with Judge Shea, they shall so notify Chambers.
8. Should the Court schedule a telephonic conference to discuss the dispute with the parties, counsel should agree in advance on which party will be responsible for initiating the telephonic discovery conference. Counsel should not contact Judge Shea's Chambers until counsel for all parties to the discovery dispute are on the telephone. Failure to participate in a scheduled telephonic discovery conference may result in the imposition of sanctions.
9. Should the Court issue any order following the telephonic conference, the party against whom the order is directed shall comply within 14 days pursuant to Local Rule 37(d), unless otherwise ordered by the Court.