

RULE 215.3 – STATUS CONFERENCES

- (1) **DISCRETIONARY** – After the filing of a complaint, a party may file a pleading designated as an Administrative Application for Status Conference. A status conference may be requested for the purpose of setting a discovery deadline; exchanging information regarding witnesses and expected testimony; settlement discussions; discussion of special requests or problems or for facilitating the case to trial. Following the conference the Court may issue such order as may facilitate the resolution of issues raised at the conference and may assign the case for trial to a particular trial term.
- (2) **MANDATORY** – An Administrative Application for Status Conference shall be filed in all cases that are estimated to last longer than five days (jury selection through a reasonable period of jury deliberation) as soon as it is known or believed that the trial of the case may exceed that period of time. In such instances, the case will be assigned to a judge for case management purposes and eventual trial. At the conference, the assigned judge (in consultation with the Civil Court Administrator's Office), shall identify the civil trial term that accommodates the parties, witnesses, counsel and the court's schedule. The case will be listed for trial for the identified trial term by order of court and will be given a priority status. The scheduling order shall identify the estimated length of trial and any other special considerations.
- (3) The Administrative Application for Status Conference shall be in paragraph form and shall set forth the complete factual and procedural history of the case and the reasons necessitating the conference. A copy of the Application shall be served on all opposing counsel and pro se parties and no response shall be required. An original and one copy of the Application shall be filed with the Prothonotary. The Prothonotary shall forward the original to the Court Administrator's Office for assignment to a judge and shall retain the copy in the file. The Court Administrator's Office, under the direction and supervision of the Civil Calendar Judge, shall promptly assign the Application for Status Conference to a judge who has had prior significant involvement with the case or if no judge has had prior significant involvement, to a judge on a rotating basis.

COMMENT: This rule is meant to allow counsel and the Court to discuss and shape the course of an action and to set reasonable deadlines and parameters following that discussion so as to prevent premature listing of the case and avoid unnecessary delays. The rule is also meant to obtain Court intervention in, and oversight of, cases during their pretrial stages with a view of moving the case more expeditiously to settlement or trial.

This rule is not meant to substitute for Dauphin County Rule 4019, Discovery Disputes, nor should an actual formal discovery conflict be the cause or subject of the status conference.