

Civil Trial Bootcamp: The Basics from Pre-Trial Preparations to Closing Arguments (EDU240125)

January 25, 2024
Courtyard by Marriott
4 Sebethe Drive, Cromwell
8:15 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

Agenda

Presenters:

Liz Fitzsimmons, Connecticut Trial Firm LLC, Glastonbury
Andrew Garza, Connecticut Trial Firm LLC, Glastonbury
Jonathan Kocienda, Connecticut Trial Firm LLC, Glastonbury
Alexa Mahony, Connecticut Trial Firm LLC, Glastonbury
Ryan McKeen, Connecticut Trial Firm LLC, Glastonbury
Andrew Ranks, Connecticut Trial Firm LLC, Glastonbury

Moderator:

Ryan McKeen, Connecticut Trial Firm LLC, Glastonbury

8:15 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.: Registration and breakfast

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.: Pre-Trial Preparations – Liz Fitzsimmons, Andrew Garza, Jak Kocienda

In this session, experienced presenters delve into various crucial aspects of pre-trial preparations: Andrew Garza covers the elements of a case, pleadings, and written discovery, focusing on case analysis, strategy development, effective drafting, and discovery techniques. Jak Kocienda addresses witnesses, discusses depositions, preparing lay and expert witnesses, coordinating their appearances, and managing client expectations. The session also explores trial evidence, including redacting sensitive information, deciding between full or identified evidence, using exhibit lists, and uploading to judicial websites. Liz Fitzsimmons concludes with insights on creating and utilizing a trial notebook, offering strategies for maintaining organization and efficiency during trial. This seminar aims to equip legal professionals with comprehensive tools and knowledge for successful trial outcomes.

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.: Break

10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.: Trial Management Conference and Trial Motions – Alexa Mahony, Jak Kocienda

In this informative session, Alexa Mahony will lead participants through the exploration of Trial Management Conferences and their intricacies and critical components. The session begins with an introduction to what TMC Conferences are and their importance in the legal process. Mahony will guide attendees through understanding the civil standing order, breaking down the nuances of the TMR (Trial Management Report) with an emphasis on how narratives from this report might be read to a jury. The session also covers practical aspects like securing dates for evidence presentation, Motion in Limine (MIL) arguments, and marking exhibits, along with guidelines on preferred formats for these exhibits. Additionally, the session will delve into the strategies and timing for effective settlement discussions, emphasizing their role and impact in the context of TMC Conferences.

This session continues with trial motions presented by Jak Kocienda, attendees will delve into the critical aspects of various trial motions, crucial for effective courtroom strategy. The session will take an in-depth look at Porter motions, discussing their purpose and application in trial proceedings. A significant focus will be on Motions in Limine (MIL), where Kocienda will explain what these motions are and their strategic importance in shaping the trial by seeking to admit or exclude certain evidence before it is presented to the jury. The session will also cover the practicalities and procedures for requesting the use of audiovisual (AV) equipment in the courtroom, a key element in modern trials for presenting evidence more effectively.

12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.: Lunch

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.: Jury Selection – Andrew Garza

In this dynamic session on jury selection led by Andrew Garza, participants will gain an in-depth understanding of the nuanced process of forming a jury. The session begins by explaining what a jury panel is and the importance of individual voir dire to assess potential jurors. Garza will discuss how to present a neutral case description to the panel and conduct a conflict check by naming lawyers from one's office and potential witnesses. The session also addresses the unique scenario of no judge monitoring during the selection, the role of the court clerk in the process, and strategies for effectively utilizing a limited number of peremptory challenges. Attendees will learn how to handle various challenges, the protocol for excusing jurors by mutual agreement, and the importance of taking turns in questioning. The session emphasizes having a firm grasp of the relevant law, preparing and practicing questions in advance, and staying updated with new laws affecting jury selection.

2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.: Break

2:45 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.: Mechanics of Trial – Liz Fitzsimmons, Jak Kocienda, Alexa Mahony, Andrew Ranks

In the comprehensive session on the mechanics of trial, attendees will be guided through the essential stages and practices of a trial, covered by experts Liz Fitzsimmons, Jak Kocienda, Andrew Ranks, and Alexa Mahony. Fitzsimmons will begin with courtroom decorum. The session will then walk through the trial phases. Kocienda will delve into directed verdicts, explaining how they intertwine with Motions for Summary Judgment. Fitzsimmons will discuss the art of delivering opening statements, followed by Ranks covering examinations, including the order of proof, using depositions, conducting direct and cross-examinations with a focus on impeachment techniques. Attendees will then be guided through crafting impactful closing arguments.

4:15 p.m.:

End of Seminar