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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

THE TRAVELERS INDEMNITY COMPANY)
OF CONNECTICUT, et al.,)
)
Plaintiffs,)
)
v.)
)
HUDSON INSURANCE COMPANY,)
)
Defendants.)

Case No.: 1:18-cv-00720 - DAD - JLT
SCHEDULING ORDER¹ (Fed. R. Civ. P. 16)
Pleading Amendment Deadline: 10/5/2018
Discovery Deadlines:
Initial Disclosures: 9/4/2018
Non-Expert: 4/12/2019
Expert: 6/28/2019
Mid-Discovery Status Conference:
1/18/2019 at 8:30 a.m.

Non-Dispositive Motion Deadlines:
Filing: 7/9/2019
Hearing: 8/6/2019

Dispositive Motion Deadlines:
Filing: 3/15/2019
Hearing: 5/7/2019

Pre-Trial Conference:
9/9/2019 at 2:30 p.m.
Courtroom 5

Trial: 11/5/2019 at 1:00 p.m.
Courtroom 5
Court trial: 2-3 days

¹ The Court finds the information provided by the parties in the Joint Scheduling Report sufficient to schedule the action without a hearing. Therefore, the conference set for August 21, 2018 is **VACATED**.

1 **I. Magistrate Judge Consent:**

2 **Notice of Congested Docket and Court Policy of Trailing**

3 Due to the District Judges' heavy caseload, the adopted policy of the Fresno Division of the
4 Eastern District is to trail all civil cases. The parties are notified that for a trial date set before a District
5 Judge, the parties will trail indefinitely behind any higher priority criminal or older civil case set on the
6 same date until a courtroom becomes available. The trial date will not be reset to a continued date.

7 The Magistrate Judges' availability is far more realistic and accommodating to parties than that
8 of the U.S. District Judges who carry the heaviest caseloads in the nation and who must prioritize
9 criminal and older civil cases over more recently filed civil cases. A United States Magistrate Judge
10 may conduct trials, including entry of final judgment, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(c), Federal Rule of
11 Civil Procedure 73, and Local Rule 305. Any appeal from a judgment entered by a United States
12 Magistrate Judge is taken directly to the United States Court of Appeal for the Ninth Circuit.

13 The Fresno Division of the Eastern District of California, whenever possible, is utilizing United
14 States Article III District Court Judges from throughout the nation as Visiting Judges. Pursuant to the
15 Local Rules, Appendix A, such reassignments will be random, and the parties will receive no advance
16 notice before their case is reassigned to an Article III District Court Judge from outside of the Eastern
17 District of California.

18 Therefore, the parties are directed to consider consenting to Magistrate Judge jurisdiction to
19 conduct all further proceedings, including trial. **Within 10 days** of the date of this order, counsel
20 **SHALL** file a consent/decline form (provided by the Court at the inception of this case) indicating
21 whether they will consent to the jurisdiction of the Magistrate Judge.

22 **II. Pleading Amendment Deadline**

23 Any requested pleading amendments are ordered to be filed, either through a stipulation or
24 motion to amend, no later than **October 5, 2018**. Any motion to amend the pleadings shall be heard by
25 the Honorable Dale A. Drozd, United States District Court Judge.

26 **III. Discovery Plan and Cut-Off Date**

27 The parties are ordered to exchange the initial disclosures required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(a)(1)
28 on or before **September 4, 2018**.

1 The parties are ordered to complete all discovery pertaining to non-experts on or before
2 **April 12, 2019** and all discovery pertaining to experts on or before **June 28, 2019**.

3 The parties are directed to disclose all expert witnesses, in writing, on or before **May 20, 2019**,
4 and to disclose all rebuttal experts on or before **June 17, 2019**. The written designation of retained and
5 non-retained experts shall **be made pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. Rule 26(a)(2), (A), (B), and (C) and**
6 **shall include all information required thereunder**. Failure to designate experts in compliance with
7 this order may result in the Court excluding the testimony or other evidence offered through such
8 experts that are not disclosed pursuant to this order.

9 The provisions of Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(4) and (5) shall apply to all discovery relating to experts
10 and their opinions. Experts must be fully prepared to be examined on all subjects and opinions
11 included in the designation. Failure to comply will result in the imposition of sanctions, which may
12 include striking the expert designation and preclusion of expert testimony.

13 The provisions of Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(e) regarding a party's duty to timely supplement
14 disclosures and responses to discovery requests will be strictly enforced.

15 A mid-discovery status conference is scheduled for **January 18, 2019** at 8:30 a.m. before the
16 Honorable Jennifer L. Thurston, U.S. Magistrate Judge, located at 510 19th Street, Bakersfield,
17 California. Counsel **SHALL** file a joint mid-discovery status conference report one week before the
18 conference. Counsel also **SHALL** lodge the status report via e-mail to JLTorders@caed.uscourts.gov.
19 The joint statement **SHALL** outline the discovery counsel have completed and that which needs to be
20 completed as well as any impediments to completing the discovery within the deadlines set forth in this
21 order. Counsel may appear via teleconference by dialing (888) 557-8511 and entering Access Code
22 1652736, provided the Magistrate Judge's Courtroom Deputy Clerk receives a written notice of the
23 intent to appear telephonically no later than five court days before the noticed hearing date.

24 **IV. Pre-Trial Motion Schedule**

25 All non-dispositive pre-trial motions, including any discovery motions, shall be filed no later
26 than **July 9, 2019**, and heard on or before **August 6, 2019**. Discovery motions are heard before the
27 Honorable Jennifer L. Thurston, United States Magistrate Judge at the United States Courthouse in
28 Bakersfield, California. For these hearings, counsel may appear via teleconference by dialing (888)

1 557-8511 and entering Access Code 1652736, provided the Magistrate Judge's Courtroom Deputy
2 Clerk receives a written notice of the intent to appear telephonically no later than five court days before
3 the noticed hearing date. All other non-dispositive hearings SHALL be set before Judge Drozd.

4 **No motion to amend or stipulation to amend the case schedule will be entertained unless it**
5 **is filed at least one week before the first deadline the parties wish to extend.** Likewise, no written
6 discovery motions shall be filed without the prior approval of the assigned Magistrate Judge. A party
7 with a discovery dispute must first confer with the opposing party in a good faith effort to resolve by
8 agreement the issues in dispute. If that good faith effort is unsuccessful, the moving party promptly
9 shall seek a telephonic hearing with all involved parties and the Magistrate Judge. It shall be the
10 obligation of the moving party to arrange and originate the conference call to the court. To schedule
11 this telephonic hearing, the parties are ordered to contact the Courtroom Deputy Clerk, Susan Hall, at
12 (661) 326-6620 or via email at SHall@caed.uscourts.gov. **Counsel must comply with Local Rule 251**
13 **with respect to discovery disputes or the motion will be denied without prejudice and dropped**
14 **from the Court's calendar.**

15 Per the agreement of the parties, their cross-motions for summary judgment **SHALL** be filed no
16 later than **March 15, 2019**. The oppositions to cross-motions for summary judgment **SHALL** be filed
17 no later than **April 16, 2019**. Any reply briefs shall be filed no later than **April 30, 2019**. The hearing
18 on the dispositive motions shall be no later than **May 7, 2019**, in Courtroom 5 at 9:30 a.m. before the
19 Honorable Dale A. Drozd, United States District Court Judge. In scheduling such motions, **counsel**
20 **shall comply with Fed. R. Civ. P. 56 and Local Rules 230 and 260.**

21 **V. Motions for Summary Judgment or Summary Adjudication**

22 **At least 21 days before** filing a motion for summary judgment or motion for summary
23 adjudication, the parties are **ORDERED** to meet, in person or by telephone, to confer about the issues
24 to be raised in the motion.

25 The purpose of the meeting shall be to: 1) avoid filing motions for summary judgment where a
26 question of fact exists; 2) determine whether the respondent agrees that the motion has merit in whole
27 or in part; 3) discuss whether issues can be resolved without the necessity of briefing; 4) narrow the
28 issues for review by the court; 5) explore the possibility of settlement before the parties incur the

1 expense of briefing a motion; and 6) to develop a joint statement of undisputed facts.

2 The moving party **SHALL** initiate the meeting and **SHALL** provide a complete, proposed
3 statement of undisputed facts **at least five days before** the conference. The finalized joint statement of
4 undisputed facts **SHALL** include all facts that the parties agree, for purposes of the motion, may be
5 deemed true. In addition to the requirements of Local Rule 260, the moving party shall file the joint
6 statement of undisputed facts.

7 In the notice of motion the moving party **SHALL** certify that the parties have met and conferred
8 as ordered above, or set forth a statement of good cause for the failure to meet and confer. **Failure to**
9 **comply may result in the motion being stricken.**

10 **VI. Pre-Trial Conference Date**

11 **September 9, 2019** at 2:30 p.m. in Courtroom 5 before Judge Drozd.

12 The parties are ordered to file a **Joint Pretrial Statement pursuant to Local Rule 281(a)(2).**
13 The parties are further directed to submit a digital copy of their pretrial statement in Word format,
14 directly to Judge Drozd's chambers, by email at DADorders@caed.uscourts.gov.

15 Counsels' attention is directed to **Rules 281 and 282 of the Local Rules** of Practice for the
16 Eastern District of California, as to the obligations of counsel in preparing for the pre-trial conference.
17 The Court will insist upon strict compliance with those rules. In addition to the matters set forth in the
18 Local Rules the Joint Pretrial Statement shall include a Joint Statement of the case to be used by the
19 Court to explain the nature of the case to the jury during voir dire.

20 **VII. Trial Date**

21 **November 5, 2019** at 1:00 p.m. in Courtroom 5 before the Honorable Dale A. Drozd, United
22 States District Court Judge.

- 23 A. This is a Court trial.
24 B. Counsels' Estimate of Trial Time: 2-3 days.
25 C. Counsels' attention is directed to Local Rules of Practice for the Eastern District of
26 California, Rule 285.

27 **VIII. Settlement Conference**

28 A Settlement Conference is scheduled for **February 7, 2019** at 9:00 a.m., located at 510 19th

1 Street, Bakersfield, California. Notwithstanding the requirements of Local Rule 270(b), the settlement
2 conference will be conducted by Magistrate Judge Thurston. The Court deems the deviation from the
3 Local Rule to be appropriate and in the interests of the parties and justice and sound case management
4 based upon the location of the underlying incident. **If any party prefers that the settlement**
5 **conference be conducted by a judicial officer who is not assigned to this case, that party is**
6 **directed to notify the Court no later than 60 days in advance of the scheduled settlement**
7 **conference** to allow sufficient time for another judicial officer to be assigned to handle the conference.

8 Unless otherwise permitted in advance by the Court, **the attorneys who will try the case**
9 **shall appear** at the Settlement Conference **with the parties** and the person or persons having **full**
10 **authority** to negotiate and settle the case **on any reasonable terms**²discussed at the conference.
11 Consideration of settlement is a serious matter that requires preparation prior to the settlement
12 conference. Set forth below are the procedures the Court will employ, absent good cause, in
13 conducting the conference.

14 **At least 21 days before** the settlement conference, Plaintiff **SHALL** submit to Defendant via
15 fax or e-mail, a written itemization of damages and a meaningful³ settlement demand which includes
16 a brief explanation of why such a settlement is appropriate. Thereafter, **no later than 14 days before**
17 the settlement conference, Defendant **SHALL** respond via fax or e-mail, with an acceptance of the
18 offer or with a meaningful counteroffer, which includes a brief explanation of why such a settlement
19 is appropriate.

20 If settlement is not achieved, each party **SHALL** attach copies of their settlement offers to
21 their Confidential Settlement Conference Statement, as described below. Copies of these documents
22 shall not be filed on the court docket.

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26 ² Insurance carriers, business organizations, and governmental bodies or agencies whose settlement agreements
are subject to approval by legislative bodies, executive committees, boards of directors or the like may be represented by
a person whose recommendations about settlement are relied upon by the ultimate decision makers.

27 ³ “Meaningful” means the offer is reasonably calculated to settle the case on terms acceptable to the offering
party. “Meaningful” does not include an offer which the offering party knows will not be acceptable to the other party.
28 If, however, the offering party is only willing to offer a settlement which it knows the other party will not accept, this
should trigger a recognition the case is not in a settlement posture and the parties should confer about continuing the
settlement conference via stipulation. However, Judge Drozd requires the parties to participate in a settlement
conference so the Court will not vacate the conference.

1 in both the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the Local Rules of Practice for the Eastern District of
2 California.

3 **XII. Effect of this Order**

4 The foregoing order represents the best estimate of the court and counsel as to the agenda most
5 suitable to dispose of this case. The trial date reserved is specifically reserved for this case. If the
6 parties determine at any time that the schedule outlined in this order cannot be met, counsel are ordered
7 to notify the court immediately of that fact so that adjustments may be made, either by stipulation or by
8 subsequent status conference.

9 **The dates set in this Order are considered to be firm and will not be modified absent a**
10 **showing of good cause even if the request to modify is made by stipulation. Stipulations**
11 **extending the deadlines contained herein will not be considered unless they are accompanied by**
12 **affidavits or declarations, and where appropriate attached exhibits, which establish good cause**
13 **for granting the relief requested.**

14 Failure to comply with this order may result in the imposition of sanctions.

15
16 IT IS SO ORDERED.

17 Dated: August 17, 2018

/s/ Jennifer L. Thurston
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE