

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA

Plaintiff, :
Case No. :
Defendant. :
:

**NOTICE OF ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION
and
CASE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

(LITIGANTS' BILL OF RIGHTS)

S.D. Ga. LR 16.7

Litigants in this Court may wish to utilize procedures that are available to assist the speedy and efficient resolution of civil cases. This notice **must** be furnished by plaintiff's counsel to his client and served with the complaint upon all defendants. Counsel for each party represented shall ensure that the notice is filled out, signed by the party, and returned to the Clerk's office (1) by counsel for the plaintiff within 15 days of filing the complaint, and (2) by counsel for the defendant with the answer or other responsive pleading.

Notice to Parties and Counsel

1. If all parties in a case elect to do so, a civil case in this Court can be referred to non-binding mediation. The purpose of such is to assist the parties in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of their respective positions and to facilitate settlement.

Do you wish to use such a procedure and for your lawyer to meet with opposing counsel and a Judge of this Court to establish a mediation plan for this case?

(answer yes or no)

2. If the parties in a case elect to do so, a civil case in this Court can be referred to binding or non-binding arbitration. In some instances, arbitration may be quicker, cheaper, and less formal than litigation. Its outcome can be binding or purely advisory, depending on the parties' agreement. The parties can also agree to tailor the rules of procedure.

Do you wish to consider such a procedure and for your lawyer to meet with opposing counsel and a Judge of this Court to establish an arbitration plan for this case?

(answer yes or no)

3. If all parties in a case consent and the Court concurs, the right to proceed before a United States District Judge may be waived, and the case can be presided over by a United States Magistrate Judge.

Would you like to **consider** use of a Magistrate Judge and receive more information on this alternative?

(answer yes or no)

4. After the complaint and answer are filed in a case, the rules of this Court normally allow four (4) months for the completion of discovery. If discovery continues for a longer period of time, it will be because the attorneys have requested an extension of time from the Court.

5. If justified by the complexity or difficulty of a case, the Court will consider the entry of a special case management order. After hearing from the parties, this order would supersede the Local Rules and provide new dates for the different aspects of discovery, amendments to the pleadings, the filing of motions, conferences with the Court, and preparation for the ultimate pretrial order and trial of the case.

The lawyers for all of the parties are encouraged to consult concerning the need for such a case management order.

6. At the completion of discovery and before trial, each party will be required to participate in the filing of a pretrial order. In most cases, there will also be a pretrial conference with the presiding Judge. At the conference, the Court will inquire about the prospects for

settlement of the case. Normally the Court will require the client to be present in person or by telephone.

By Order of the Court.

Clerk of Court

I have reviewed with my attorney the above notice and have indicated my desired responses to paragraphs 1, 2, and 3.

This _____ day of _____, 20_.

Name and signature of party or Representative

Certificate of Counsel

I have furnished a copy of this notice to the party represented by me (including any insurance company assisting with the cost of defense) and discussed with my client responses to paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 which have been noted. I have also served opposing counsel with a copy of this completed notice.

This _____ day of _____, 20_.

Attorney for _____

NOTE: If there is unanimity among the parties that the case should be referred to mediation, arbitration, or a Magistrate Judge, counsel for the plaintiff shall so notify the Clerk, who will then inform the presiding District Judge of the parties' interest in one or more of these procedures.