

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Variances Amongst Texas Courts and Trial Judges	1
1-1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1-2 VARIANCES IN JURY COMPOSITION	
AMONG TEXAS COURTS	1
1-2:1 Texas State District Courts	2
1-2:2 Texas County Courts	2
1-2:3 Texas County Court At Law	2
1-2:4 Texas Statutory Probate Courts	3
1-2:5 Texas Justice Courts.....	3
1-2:6 Agreement of the Parties to Proceed	
With a Smaller Jury	3
1-3 VARIANCES IN LOCAL RULES	5
1-3:1 Methods of Publication by Various	
Counties and Courts.....	5
1-3:2 Statewide Source Available With Compilation	
of All Local Rules.....	6
1-3:3 Limitation On Effect of Local Rules.....	6
1-4 VARIANCES IN COURTROOM PROTOCOL.....	7
1-4:1 Presenting Pretrial Motions and Proposed	
Jury Charges Prior to Trial	7
1-4:2 Conduct of Voir Dire and Assertion	
of Challenges for Cause.....	8
1-4:2.1 Access to Jury List	8
1-4:2.2 Supplemental Juror Questionnaires	8
1-4:2.3 Time Allotted for Questioning Jury	8
1-4:2.4 Discussion of Case Facts During	
Voir Dire.....	9
1-4:2.5 Allowance for Additional Questioning.....	9
1-4:3 Use of Demonstrative Exhibits During	
Opening Statement	9
1-4:4 Preference for Conduct of Examinations	
and Movement Within the Courtroom	10

Table of Contents

1-4:5	Offering, Showing and Preserving Demonstrative Exhibits During Trial.....	10
1-4:6	Presenting Legal Authority and Bench Briefs During Trial.....	11
1-5	RULE DIFFERENCES FOR EXPEDITED TRIALS	12
1-6	RULE DIFFERENCES FOR JUSTICE COURT TRIALS.....	14
1-7	RULE DIFFERENCES FOR BENCH TRIALS	16
Chapter 2: Special Rules Governing Expedited Trials.....		19
2-1	INTRODUCTION.....	19
2-2	OVERVIEW OF EXPEDITED ACTION RULES	19
2-3	CLARIFYING WHETHER EXPEDITED ACTION RULES APPLY	20
2-4	CONSIDERATIONS ARISING FROM LIMITATION ON DAMAGES.....	21
2-4:1	Consideration of One-sided Limitation On Recovery	21
2-4:2	Consideration of Possible Issue Preclusion	22
2-5	CONSIDERATIONS ARISING FROM LIMITATIONS ON DISCOVERY	23
2-5:1	Direct Effects of Discovery Limitations.....	23
2-5:2	Potential Motions Arising From Limitations On Discovery	24
2-6	LIMITATION ON EXPERT CHALLENGES.....	25
2-7	TRIAL SETTING REQUIREMENTS	26
2-8	LIMITATION ON TRIAL TIME	27
2-9	DEMONSTRATING GOOD CAUSE FOR REMOVAL OR EXCEPTION FROM RULES	28
2-10	OTHER PRETRIAL MOTIONS TO CONSIDER WITH EXPEDITED ACTIONS	30
2-11	POTENTIAL PRETRIAL AGREEMENTS TO CONSIDER WITH EXPEDITED ACTIONS.....	32
Chapter 3: New Rules Governing Justice Court Trials		33
3-1	INTRODUCTION.....	33
3-2	OVERVIEW OF NEW RULES.....	33
3-3	LIMITATION ON CLAIMS AND RECOVERY	35
3-4	PLEADING REQUIREMENTS.....	36
3-5	ANSWER DATE AND DEFAULT JUDGMENT.....	37
3-5:1	No Answer Default Judgment	37
3-5:2	Post-answer Default Judgment	38

Table of Contents

3-6 MOTION TO TRANSFER VENUE..... 39

3-7 LIMITATION ON DISCOVERY40

3-8 SWORN MOTION FOR SUMMARY DISPOSITION40

3-9 RULES GOVERNING JURY DEMAND,
JURY SELECTION AND JURY CHARGE.....41

3-10 QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES BY THE COURT.....41

3-11 VERDICT AND JUDGMENT42

3-12 POST-TRIAL MOTIONS.....42

3-13 APPEAL AND CERTIORARI43

Chapter 4: Procedural Rules Governing Bench Trials47

4-1 INTRODUCTION.....47

4-2 OPTIONAL SUBMISSION ON AGREED
STATEMENT OF FACTS47

4-3 OPENING STATEMENT AND CLOSING
ARGUMENT48

4-4 EFFECT OF ADMISSION OF INCOMPETENT
EVIDENCE49

4-5 EXTENT OF COURT LATITUDE IN QUESTIONING
WITNESSES.....49

4-6 TIMING OF DIRECTED VERDICT MOTION
OR MOTION FOR JUDGMENT50

4-7 DRAFTING THE JUDGMENT50

4-8 FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW.....51

4-8:1 Requesting Findings of Fact and Conclusions
of Law52

4-8:2 Preparing and Filing Findings of Fact
and Conclusions of Law55

4-8:3 Responding to Omitted and Deemed Findings56

Chapter 5: Rules Governing Courtroom Conduct.....59

**PART I: RULES GOVERNING JUDGES AND
INTERACTION WITH JUDGES.....59**

5-1 INTRODUCTION.....59

5-2 EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS GENERALLY59

5-3 LOCAL COURT RULES61

5-4 INHERENT POWER OF THE COURT61

5-5 QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES BY THE COURT.....62

5-6 RECITATIONS OF FACTS IN FILINGS
AND HEARINGS.....63

5-7 CORRESPONDENCE AND COURTESY COPIES
OF COURT FILINGS.....64

Table of Contents

5-8	PRESENTING DOCUMENTS TO THE COURT UNDER SEAL OR IN CAMERA	64
5-9	WHEN TO REQUEST A RECORD.....	66
PART II: RULES GOVERNING WITNESSES AND		
	ATTENDANCE OF WITNESSES.....	67
5-10	COMPELLING ATTENDANCE OF WITNESSES.....	67
5-11	COMPELLING PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS BY TRIAL WITNESSES.....	68
5-12	COMPENSATION OF SUBPOENAED WITNESSES	69
5-13	RESISTING A SUBPOENA	70
	5-13:1 Motion for Protective Order	70
	5-13:2 Written Objections to a Subpoena for Documents Or Things	71
5-14	INVOKING “THE RULE” AND EXCEPTIONS	72
5-15	USE OF INTERPRETER	74
PART III: RULES GOVERNING JURORS AND		
	INTERACTION WITH JURORS	75
5-16	COMMUNICATIONS WITH JURORS.....	75
5-17	AGREED PROVISIONS FOR JURORS	77
5-18	RESTRICTIONS ON OUTSIDE INFLUENCE	77
5-19	RESTRICTIONS ON INTERNET ACCESS.....	79
5-20	CONTINUING WITH TRIAL AFTER LOSS OF JUROR	80
5-21	JURY RULES FOR DIFFERENT COURTS	81
Chapter 6: Final Pretrial Hearing		83
6-1	INTRODUCTION.....	83
6-2	COMMON ISSUES TO CONSIDER FOR FINAL PRETRIAL HEARING	84
	6-2:1 Motion in Limine	84
	6-2:2 Motion to Exclude.....	85
	6-2:3 Objections to Deposition Testimony	85
	6-2:4 Objections to Expert Testimony.....	85
	6-2:5 Offer and Admission of Trial Exhibits.....	86
	6-2:6 Determination of the Anticipated Trial Schedule	86
	6-2:7 Motion for Right to Open and Close	87
	6-2:8 Proposed Charge Questions, Instructions and Definitions	87
	6-2:9 Technology Issues	88
	6-2:10 Voir Dire Issues.....	88
6-3	SETTING THE HEARING TO ALLOW SUFFICIENT TIME FOR ISSUES	89

Table of Contents

6-3:1	Common Texas Practice	89
6-3:2	Local Court Rules.....	89
6-4	EXCHANGE OF FILINGS IN ADVANCE OF HEARING.....	89
6-5	PRESENTING CONTEXT AND ARGUMENT FOR THE COURT	90
6-5:1	Provide Context With a Brief Fact Summary	90
6-5:2	Provide Written Authority in a Professional Manner	91
6-5:3	Whether to Request a Record	91
6-6	OBTAINING RULINGS AND ORDERS FROM THE COURT.....	92
 Chapter 7: Jury Selection		95
7-1	INTRODUCTION.....	95
7-1:1	Progression From the Jury Pool to a Jury	95
7-1:2	Number of Peremptory Challenges Before Equalization	96
7-1:3	Rules Providing for Qualification and Disqualification of Jurors	96
7-1:4	Rules Providing for Exemptions From Jury Service	97
7-1:5	Rules Providing for the Excusing of Jurors	98
7-1:6	Authority of the Court to Summon Additional Jurors for the Panel.....	98
7-1:7	Inclusion of Alternate Jurors	99
7-2	PRELIMINARY VOIR DIRE ISSUES.....	99
7-2:1	Use of Supplemental Juror Questionnaires.....	100
7-2:2	Time Limitations for Voir Dire	100
7-2:3	Motion to Equalize Peremptory Challenges	102
7-2:3.1	Determining Antagonism As a Matter of Law	103
7-2:3.2	Extent of Discretion for Reallocation of Strikes	104
7-2:3.3	Renewing Motion to Equalize Peremptory Challenges	105
7-2:3.4	Reversal for Improper Equalization	106
7-2:4	Challenging the Array.....	106
7-2:5	Jury Shuffle.....	107
7-3	QUESTIONING THE PANEL	108
7-3:1	Form and Content of Voir Dire Discussion	108
7-3:2	Potential Disqualification for Bias Or Prejudice.....	110
7-3:3	Commitment Questions	112

Table of Contents

7-3:4	Rehabilitation of Jurors	117
7-3:5	Preservation of Error on Erroneous Rulings.....	118
7-4	EXERCISE OF CHALLENGES	119
7-4:1	Challenges for Cause and Preservation of Error	119
7-4:2	Exercise of Peremptory Challenges.....	122
7-4:3	<i>Batson</i> Challenges	123
Chapter 8: Opening Statement.....		127
8-1	GENERAL RULES FOR OPENING STATEMENT.....	127
8-2	USE OF VISUAL EVIDENCE DURING OPENING STATEMENT	130
8-3	COMMON OBJECTIONS APPLICABLE TO OPENING STATEMENT	131
8-3:1	Objection to Argument	131
8-3:2	Objection to Violation of Court Order	131
8-3:3	Objection to Misstatement of Law.....	131
8-3:4	Objection to Violation of Rules of Evidence.....	132
8-3:5	Objection to Improper Discussion or Display of Evidence	132
8-3:6	Objections to Improper Forms of Argument	132
8-3:7	Problem With Objection to Misstatement of Fact.....	133
8-4	PRESERVATION OF ERROR.....	133
Chapter 9: Witness Competency		135
9-1	PRESUMPTION OF COMPETENCY	135
9-2	OVERCOMING THE PRESUMPTION	136
9-3	INCOMPETENT WITNESSES	137
9-3:1	Insane Persons	137
9-3:2	Children.....	138
9-4	“DEAD MAN’S RULE” IN CIVIL ACTIONS.....	139
9-4:1	Suits in Which Dead Man’s Rule Applies.....	139
9-4:2	Witness Is a Party	140
9-4:3	Limitations On Dead Man’s Rule	141
9-4:4	Waiver	141
9-4:5	Instruction to Jury	142
9-5	PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE	142
9-5:1	Personal Knowledge Defined	142
9-5:2	The Personal Knowledge Foundation	143
9-5:3	Personal Knowledge and Opinion Testimony	143
9-6	OATH OR AFFIRMATION	144

Table of Contents

9-7 JUDGE’S COMPETENCY AS A WITNESS 145
9-8 JUROR’S COMPETENCY AS A WITNESS..... 146

Chapter 10: Examination of Lay Witnesses 149
PART I- DIRECT EXAMINATION 149
10-1 COMPETENCY OF THE LAY WITNESS 149
10-2 OFFERING AND USING EXHIBITS ON DIRECT
EXAMINATION..... 150
10-3 LEADING QUESTIONS 151
10-4 REFRESHING A WITNESS’S MEMORY 152
10-5 LAY OPINIONS 154
10-6 THE RULE—SEQUESTRATION OF WITNESSES 155
10-7 DISCHARGING OR RETAINING WITNESS
SUBJECT TO RECALL..... 157
10-8 CALLING AND QUESTIONING ADVERSE
WITNESSES..... 157
10-9 USE OF DEMONSTRATIVE AIDS
(SUMMARIES AND CHARTS)..... 157
PART II- CROSS-EXAMINATION OF LAY WITNESSES..... 158
10-10 SCOPE OF CROSS-EXAMINATION 158
10-11 LEADING QUESTIONS 159
10-12 OFFERING AND USING EXHIBITS
ON CROSS-EXAMINATION..... 160
10-13 IMPEACHMENT; PLANNING AND
OBJECTIVES 160
10-14 IMPEACHMENT; SOURCES OF IMPEACHING
FACTS 161
10-15 PRIOR INCONSISTENT STATEMENTS;
CONFRONTATION REQUIREMENT 162
10-16 USE OF DEMONSTRATIVE AIDS..... 163
10-17 ATTACKING COMPETENCY OF THE LAY
WITNESS 164

Chapter 11: Examination of Expert Witnesses..... 165
**PART I- DIRECT EXAMINATION OF EXPERT
WITNESSES..... 165**
11-1 ESTABLISHING QUALIFICATION
AND RELIABILITY..... 165
11-2 BASES OF THE EXPERT OPINION 166
11-3 DISCLOSING UNDERLYING FACTS OR DATA 168
11-4 OPINION AS TO ULTIMATE ISSUE..... 168
11-5 USE OF LEARNED TREATISES WITH EXPERTS 169

Table of Contents

11-6	USE OF DEMONSTRATIVE AIDS AND SUMMARIES	169
PART II- CROSS-EXAMINATION OF EXPERT WITNESSES		170
11-7	CONTROL OF THE EXAMINATION	170
11-8	OBTAINING HELPFUL ADMISSIONS.....	170
11-9	COMMON GROUNDS OF IMPEACHMENT; SOURCES OF IMPEACHING FACTS	170
11-10	ATTACKING THE BASES OF THE EXPERT'S OPINION ...	172
11-11	USE OF LEARNED TREATISE ON CROSS EXAMINATION OF AN EXPERT	172
 Chapter 12: Credibility and Impeachment		175
12-1	WHO MAY IMPEACH; BOLSTERING AND REHABILITATION	175
12-2	METHODS OF IMPEACHMENT	177
12-3	IMPEACHMENT AS TO A COLLATERAL MATTER	178
12-4	ATTACKING WITNESS'S CHARACTER FOR TRUTHFULNESS	180
12-4:1	Limitations On Proof of Character for Truthfulness.....	180
12-4:2	Cross-Examination of the Character Witness	182
12-4:3	Specific Instances of Conduct.....	184
12-5	IMPEACHMENT WITH CERTAIN CONVICTIONS	185
12-5:1	Felony or Crime Involving Moral Turpitude.....	185
12-5:2	Balancing Test	186
12-5:3	Proof of Conviction	188
12-5:4	Time Limit.....	189
12-5:5	Effect of Pardon, Annulment Or Certificate of Rehabilitation.....	191
12-5:6	Rehabilitation	191
12-5:7	Probation.....	192
12-5:8	Innocence	193
12-5:9	Juvenile Adjudications.....	193
12-5:10	Pendency of Appeal.....	194
12-5:11	Notice Requirement.....	194
12-6	RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OR OPINIONS.....	195
12-7	IMPEACHMENT WITH PRIOR INCONSISTENT STATEMENTS	197
12-7:1	The Inconsistency Requirement.....	197
12-7:2	Foundation Requirement	198
12-7:3	Opportunity to Explain Or Deny Prior Statement	199
12-7:4	Extrinsic Evidence of Prior Statement.....	199

Table of Contents

12-7:5 Prior Inconsistent Statements and
the Hearsay Rule.....200

12-8 IMPEACHMENT WITH BIAS OR INTEREST200

Chapter 13: Offering Evidence and Preserving Error203

13-1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE RULES
OF EVIDENCE; DEFINITIONS203

13-1:1 Scope of the Rules of Evidence.....203

13-1:2 Definitions.....204

13-1:3 Purpose of the Rules.....205

13-2 PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS OF
ADMISSIBILITY205

13-2:1 Question of Fact Governing Admissibility205

13-2:2 Question of Conditional Relevancy206

13-3 PRESERVATION OF ERROR207

13-3:1 Error Affecting a Substantial Right207

13-3:2 Preserving Error in Admitting Evidence208

13-3:2.1 Timely Objection208

13-3:2.2 Specific Objection210

13-3:2.3 Objection On the Record211

13-3:2.4 Obtaining a Ruling211

13-3:2.5 Pretrial Rulings.....212

13-3:2.6 Running Objections212

13-3:3 Preserving Error in Excluding Evidence.....213

13-4 LIMITED ADMISSIBILITY213

13-5 REMAINDERS OF WRITINGS AND THE RULE
OF OPTIONAL COMPLETENESS214

Chapter 14: Relevance217

14-1 DEFINITION OF RELEVANCE217

14-1:1 Probative.....218

14-1:2 Materiality.....219

14-2 EXCLUSION OF EVIDENCE FOR PRAGMATIC
REASONS219

14-2:1 The Rule 403 Analysis220

14-2:1.1 Determining the Probative Value of
Evidence220

14-2:1.2 Special Grounds for Exclusion.....222

14-2:1.2a Unfair Prejudice.....222

14-2:1.2b Confusion of Issues223

14-2:1.2c Misleading the Jury.....224

Table of Contents

	14-2:1.2d	Undue Delay and Needlessly Cumulative Evidence	224
14-3	CHARACTER EVIDENCE, DISPOSITION OR PROPENSITY		225
14-4	GENERAL RULES REGARDING ADMISSIBILITY OF CHARACTER EVIDENCE.....		226
	14-4:1	Character As an Element of a Claim Or Defense	226
	14-4:2	Exceptions to Prohibition On Character Evidence....	227
		14-4:2.1 Character of the Accused	228
		14-4:2.2 Character of a Victim	229
		14-4:2.3 Character of a Witness	230
		14-4:2.4 Cross-Examination of Character Witnesses	230
		14-4:2.5 Other Crimes, Wrongs Or Acts	231
14-5	HABIT EVIDENCE		232
14-6	EXCLUSION OF RELEVANT EVIDENCE ON PUBLIC POLICY GROUNDS		233
	14-6:1	Subsequent Remedial Measures.....	233
	14-6:2	Settlement Offers	236
	14-6:3	Offers to Pay Hospital Or Medical Expenses	236
	14-6:4	Pleas and Plea Discussions.....	237
	14-6:5	Liability Insurance.....	238
	14-6:6	Evidence of Previous Sexual Conduct in Criminal Case	238
Chapter 15: Authentication			239
15-1	AUTHENTICATION GENERALLY		239
15-2	AUTHENTICATION ILLUSTRATIONS		240
	15-2:1	Testimony of Witness With Personal Knowledge	240
	15-2:2	Lay Witness Opinion As to Handwriting	242
	15-2:3	Comparison by Trier of Fact Or Expert.....	242
	15-2:4	Distinctive Characteristics and the Like.....	243
	15-2:5	Voice Identification	244
	15-2:6	Telephone Conversations	245
	15-2:7	Public Records Or Reports	246
	15-2:8	Ancient Documents Or Data Compilations	247
	15-2:9	Process Or System.....	247
15-3	SELF-AUTHENTICATING DOCUMENTS		247
	15-3:1	Domestic Public Documents That Are Sealed and Signed	248

Table of Contents

15-3:2	Signed and Certified Public Documents (Not Bearing a Seal)	248
15-3:3	Foreign Public Documents.....	249
15-3:4	Certified Copies of Public Records	250
15-3:5	Official Publications.....	250
15-3:6	Newspapers and Periodicals.....	251
15-3:7	Trade Inscriptions.....	251
15-3:8	Acknowledged Documents	251
15-3:9	Commercial Paper and Related Documents.....	252
15-3:10	Business Records (With Affidavit Or Declaration) ...	252
15-3:11	Presumptions Under Statues Or Other Rules.....	253
Chapter 16: Hearsay-Generally		255
16-1	THE HEARSAY RULE.....	255
16-2	HEARSAY DEFINED	255
16-2:1	Statement.....	256
16-2:2	Out of Court.....	256
16-2:3	Declarant; Statement of a Person	257
16-2:4	Matter Asserted	257
16-3	OFFERED TO PROVE THE TRUTH; NON-TRUTH PURPOSES	258
16-4	HEARSAY EXCLUSIONS; STATEMENTS THAT ARE NOT HEARSAY	259
16-4:1	Prior Statement by Witness.....	259
16-4:2	Prior Inconsistent Statement Given Under Oath	260
16-4:3	Prior Consistent Statement	261
16-4:4	Prior Statement of Identification	262
16-4:5	An Opposing Party's Statement	263
16-4:6	A Statement Adopted by a Party	264
16-4:7	A Statement Authorized by a Party	265
16-4:8	A Statement by Agent or Employee.....	265
16-4:9	Statement by Co-Conspirator of a Party	266
16-4:10	Depositions from Same Proceeding	267
Chapter 17: Hearsay Exceptions.....		269
17-1	HEARSAY EXCEPTIONS GENERALLY	269
PART I- AVAILABILITY OF DECLARANT IMMATERIAL		269
17-2	PRESENT SENSE IMPRESSION	269
17-3	EXCITED UTTERANCE	270
17-4	PRESENT MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, OR PHYSICAL CONDITION.....	271

Table of Contents

17-5	STATEMENTS FOR MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS OR TREATMENT	273
17-6	RECORDED RECOLLECTION.....	274
17-7	RECORDS OF REGULARLY CONDUCTED ACTIVITY	276
17-8	ABSENCE OF ENTRY IN BUSINESS RECORD.....	279
17-9	PUBLIC RECORDS AND REPORTS	280
17-9:1	Activities of Office Or Agency	281
17-9:2	Observed and Recorded Pursuant to Legal Duty.....	281
17-9:3	Factual Findings	281
17-10	RECORDS OF VITAL STATISTICS.....	282
17-11	ABSENCE OF PUBLIC RECORD OR ENTRY	282
17-12	RECORDS OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS	282
17-13	MARRIAGE, BAPTISMAL AND SIMILAR CERTIFICATES.....	283
17-14	FAMILY RECORDS	283
17-15	RECORDS OF AND STATEMENTS IN DOCUMENTS AFFECTING AN INTEREST IN PROPERTY	284
17-16	STATEMENTS IN ANCIENT DOCUMENTS.....	284
17-17	MARKET REPORTS, COMMERCIAL PUBLICATIONS.....	285
17-18	LEARNED TREATISES.....	286
17-19	REPUTATION CONCERNING PERSONAL OR FAMILY HISTORY	287
17-20	REPUTATION CONCERNING BOUNDARIES OR GENERAL HISTORY	287
17-21	REPUTATION AS TO CHARACTER.....	288
17-22	JUDGMENT OF PREVIOUS CONVICTION	289
17-23	PERSONAL, FAMILY OR GENERAL HISTORY, OR BOUNDARIES	289
17-24	STATEMENT AGAINST INTEREST.....	290
	PART II- DECLARANT'S UNAVAILABILITY REQUIRED	291
17-25	UNAVAILABILITY OF DECLARANT.....	291
17-26	FORMER TESTIMONY	292
17-27	DYING DECLARATIONS.....	293
17-28	STATEMENT OF PERSONAL OR FAMILY HISTORY	294
	Chapter 18: Expert Testimony	297
18-1	QUALIFICATIONS	297
18-1:1	Qualifications of Experts Generally.....	297
18-1:2	Special Qualification Requirements for Experts in Healthcare Liability Cases	299

Table of Contents

18-2 PROPER SUBJECT MATTER OF EXPERT TESTIMONY; HELPFULNESS 301
18-2:1 Scientific, Technical or Specialized Knowledge 301
18-2:2 Helpfulness 302
18-3 RELIABILITY 302
18-3:1 Reliability of Scientific Expert Opinions 303
18-3:2 Reliability of Nonscientific Expert Opinions 304
18-3:3 Bases of Opinion and Reliability 305
18-3:4 Burden to Establish Reliability; Procedure for Challenge; Review On Appeal 306
18-4 RELEVANCE 306
18-5 BASES OF EXPERT OPINION 307
18-6 EXPERT OPINION AS TO ULTIMATE ISSUE 309

Chapter 19: The Best Evidence Rule 311
19-1 OVERVIEW OF THE BEST EVIDENCE RULE 311
19-2 WRITINGS, RECORDINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DEFINED 311
19-3 PROVING THE CONTENTS OF A WRITING 312
19-3:1 When a Party Is Not Proving the Contents 314
19-3:2 Evidence That Writing Does Not Record a Matter 314
19-4 ORIGINAL DEFINED 314
19-5 ADMISSIBILITY OF DUPLICATES IN LIEU OF ORIGINALS 315
19-6 EXCEPTIONS TO THE BEST EVIDENCE RULE 316
19-6:1 Originals Lost Or Destroyed 316
19-6:2 Original Not Obtainable Or Outside Texas 317
19-6:3 Original in Possession of Opponent 317
19-6:4 Collateral Matters 318
19-7 SUMMARIES OF VOLUMINOUS DOCUMENTS (FUNCTIONING AS EXCEPTION TO BEST EVIDENC RULE) 318
19-8 CERTIFIED COPIES OF PUBLIC RECORDS 319

Chapter 20: Judicial Notice 321
20-1 JUDICIAL NOTICE OF ADJUDICATIVE FACTS 321
20-1:1 Kinds of Facts 321
20-1:2 Types of Facts Not Subject to Reasonable Dispute 322
20-1:3 Generally Known 322
20-1:4 Capable of Accurate and Ready Determination 324

Table of Contents

20-1:5	When Judicial Notice Is Discretionary Or Mandatory	326
20-1:6	Procedural Aspects of Judicial Notice—Judicial Hearing.....	327
20-1:7	Procedural Aspects of Judicial Notice—Time for Taking Judicial Notice.....	328
20-1:8	Procedural Aspects of Judicial Notice—Instructing the Jury As to the Judicially Noticed Fact.....	329
20-1:9	Judicial Notice and Learned Treatises.....	329
20-2	JUDICIAL NOTICE OF LAW.....	329
20-2:1	Judicial Notice of Federal Or Other State’s Laws	329
20-2:1.1	Procedure for Taking Notice.....	330
20-2:1.2	Effect of Rule 202 Notice.....	331
20-2:2	Determining Foreign Law	331
20-2:3	Judicial Notice of Texas Ordinances and Agency Rules	333
	Chapter 21: Privileges.....	335
21-1	LAWYER-CLIENT PRIVILEGE	335
21-1:1	Purpose of the Privilege.....	335
21-1:2	Who May Claim the Privilege?.....	336
21-1:3	Confidential Communications	336
21-1:4	Made to Further the Rendition of Professional Legal Services	339
21-1:5	Those Who May Be a Party to the Privileged Communication	339
21-1:5.1	Only Communications Between Certain Persons Privileged	339
21-1:5.2	Definitions—Client, Lawyer and Their Representatives.....	340
21-1:5.3	General Rule of Privilege; Joint Client Privilege; Allied-Litigant Doctrine	342
21-1:6	Exceptions to the Attorney-Client Privilege.....	343
21-1:6.1	Furtherance of Crime or Fraud	343
21-1:6.2	Claimants Through the Same Deceased Client	344
21-1:6.3	Breach of Duty by a Lawyer or Client	344
21-1:6.4	Document Attested by a Lawyer.....	344
21-1:6.5	Joint Clients.....	345
21-2	SPOUSAL COMMUNICATIONS PRIVILEGE.....	345
21-2:1	General Rule of Privilege.....	345

Table of Contents

21-2:2	Who May Claim the Privilege	346
21-2:3	Exceptions	346
21-3	PHYSICIAN-PATIENT PRIVILEGE	347
21-3:1	General Rule of Privilege	347
21-3:1.1	Confidential Communications	348
21-3:1.2	Patient Records.....	348
21-3:2	Who May Claim Privilege.....	349
21-3:3	Exceptions to the Physician-Patient Privilege.....	349
21-3:3.1	Proceeding Against Physician; Actions to Collect; Disciplinary Investigations Or Proceedings	349
21-3:3.2	Patient Consent	350
21-3:3.3	Involuntary Civil Commitment.....	351
21-3:3.4	Abuse or Neglect of “Institution” Resident	351
21-3:3.5	Party Relies on Patient’s Condition.....	352
21-4	MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION PRIVILEGE	352
21-4:1	General Rule of Privilege.....	353
21-5	WORK PRODUCT	354
21-5:1	Work Product Defined	354
21-5:2	“Core” and “Other” Work Product.....	355
21-5:3	Exceptions	357
21-6	OTHER PRIVILEGES IN THE TEXAS RULES OF EVIDENCE	358
21-6:1	Required Reports Privileged by Statute.....	358
21-6:2	Communications to Members of the Clergy	358
21-6:3	Political Vote Privilege	360
21-6:4	Trade Secrets Privilege	360
21-6:5	Informer’s Identity Privilege	360
21-7	WAIVER BY VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE	361
21-8	DISCLOSURE UNDER COMPULSION OR WITHOUT OPPORTUNITY TO CLAIM PRIVILEGE	363
21-9	COMMENT ON OR INFERENCE FROM PRIVILEGE CLAIM; INSTRUCTION	364
 Chapter 22: Trial Motions and Trial Amendments		365
22-1	INTRODUCTION	365
22-2	INVOKING THE RULE TO EXCLUDE WITNESSES FROM THE COURTROOM	365
22-3	MOTION FOR MISTRIAL	366
22-4	MOTION TO STRIKE TESTIMONY	368

Table of Contents

22-5	REQUEST FOR INSTRUCTION TO JURY TO DISREGARD TESTIMONY OR COMMENT	368
22-6	REQUEST TO SUPPLEMENT DISCOVERY RESPONSE.....	368
22-7	REQUEST TO SUPPLEMENT EXPERT OPINION	369
22-8	MOTION FOR NONSUIT OR FOR DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC PARTIES OR CLAIMS.....	370
22-8:1	Right of Plaintiff to Nonsuit Entire Case.....	370
22-8:2	Right of Defendant to Nonsuit Counterclaims.....	371
22-8:3	Right to Dismissal of Specific Parties or Claims	371
22-8:4	Necessity and Effect of Order of Dismissal	372
22-8:5	Effect on Expiration of Limitations.....	373
22-8:6	Effect of Nonsuit on Other Issues.....	373
22-8:6.1	Pending Counterclaim for Affirmative Relief Unaffected	373
22-8:6.2	Assessment of Costs or Attorney Fees May Be Ordered.....	374
22-8:6.3	Pending Motion for Sanctions Or Attorney’s Fees Unaffected.....	375
22-8:6.4	Existing Sanctions Order May or May Not Be Affected	376
22-8:6.5	New Motion for Sanctions May Still Be Filed	376
22-8:6.6	Summary Judgment Continues in Effect	377
22-8:6.7	Venue May Be Fixed Depending On State of Record	377
22-8:6.8	Time for Expert Report May Be Affected	378
22-8:6.9	Potential for Claim Preclusion Can Exist	378
22-8:6.10	Potential for Prompt Designation as Responsible Third Party	380
22-8:7	Possibility of Reinstatement After Nonsuit.....	381
22-9	MOTION FOR DIRECTED VERDICT	382
22-10	MOTION TO REOPEN EVIDENCE	383
22-11	MOTION FOR LEAVE TO AMEND OR SUPPLEMENT PLEADINGS	384
22-11:1	Distinguishing Between Amended and Supplemental Pleadings	384
22-11:2	Time Limits for Amendment of Pleadings.....	386

Table of Contents

22-11:3	Motion for Leave to Amend Pleadings	387
22-11:4	Burden On Party Objecting to Motion for Leave	389
22-11:5	Trial Amendment to Pleadings	390
22-11:6	Trial by Consent	391
22-11:7	Post-Verdict Amendment of Pleadings	392
22-11:8	Effect of Amendment On Superseded Pleadings.....	393
Chapter 23: The Jury Charge and the Charge Conference		395
23-1	INTRODUCTION.....	395
23-2	USE OF TEXAS PATTERN JURY CHARGES	395
23-3	STANDARD FOR ENTITLEMENT TO SUBMISSION	396
23-4	ISSUES TRIED BY CONSENT OR ADDED BY TRIAL AMENDMENT.....	397
23-5	RELATIONSHIP OF QUESTIONS, INSTRUCTIONS AND DEFINITIONS	399
23-6	GRANULATED AND BROAD-FORM QUESTIONS	400
23-7	FEASIBILITY OF BROAD-FORM SUBMISSION	400
23-8	DISJUNCTIVE QUESTIONS.....	401
23-9	INFERENCEAL REBUTTAL DEFENSES	402
23-10	ACTUAL DAMAGE ISSUES	404
23-11	PRESERVING JURY CHARGE ERROR	405
23-12	FORMAL AND INFORMAL CHARGE CONFERENCES.....	406
23-13	DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN ERRORS OF COMMISSION AND OMISSION.....	408
23-14	PROBLEMS WITH REQUESTED SUBMISSIONS.....	412
23-14:1	Failure to Submit Substantially Correct Wording	412
23-14:2	Failure to Keep Request Separate and Apart From Objection	413
23-14:3	Obscured Requests.....	414
23-14:4	En Masse Requests and Clusters.....	414
23-14:5	Overlooking the Effect of Omission of an Opponent's Element.....	415
23-14:6	Obtaining the Written Ruling	416
23-15	PROBLEMS WITH OBJECTIONS.....	417
23-15:1	Obscured Objections.....	417
23-15:2	Obtaining the Ruling	417
23-16	COMMON OBJECTIONS TO DEFECTS	418
23-16:1	Comment On the Evidence	418
23-16:2	Informing Jury of Effect of Answers	419
23-16:3	Question of Law	419

Table of Contents

23-16:4 Issue Unsupported by Pleadings 420
23-16:5 Issue Unsupported by Evidence 420
23-16:6 Issue Established As a Matter of Law 421

Chapter 24: Closing Argument..... 423

24-1 INTRODUCTION..... 423
24-2 DETERMINING TIME FOR CLOSING ARGUMENT 423
24-3 RIGHT TO OPEN AND CLOSE ARGUMENT 425
24-4 REQUIREMENT FOR PLAINTIFF TO FULLY
OPEN AND RESTRICTION ON REBUTTAL 425
24-5 IMPROPER JURY ARGUMENT 426
24-5:1 Appeal to Passion Or Prejudice 426
24-5:1.1 Juror Self-Interest 427
24-5:1.2 Golden Rule Argument..... 428
24-5:1.3 Conscience of the Community..... 430
24-5:1.4 Sending a Message..... 430
24-5:2 Arguing Outside the Record 431
24-5:3 Misstatement of the Law 432
24-5:4 Misleading the Jury 433
24-5:5 Informing Jury of Legal Effect of Answers..... 433
24-5:6 Personal Beliefs of Counsel 434
24-5:7 Accusations of Misconduct 435
24-5:7.1 Accusations of Misconduct Directed
to Opposing Counsel 435
24-5:7.2 Inflammatory and Prejudicial
Accusations Directed to an Opposing
Witness or Party 435
24-5:8 Arguing Financial Condition of Party..... 436
24-6 OBJECTIONS AND PRESERVATION OF ERROR 436

Chapter 25: Jury Deliberations 441

25-1 INTRODUCTION..... 441
25-2 JURY REVIEW OF TESTIMONY, EXHIBITS
AND NOTES FROM TRIAL 441
25-2:1 Request by Jury to Review Testimony 441
25-2:2 Right of Jury to View the Exhibits 442
25-2:3 Use of Notes by Jurors 442
25-3 JURY’S USE OF OUTSIDE INFORMATION 443
25-4 RESPONDING TO JURY COMMUNICATIONS 444
25-5 DYNAMITE (ALLEN) CHARGE 446
25-6 DECLARING MISTRIAL FOR DEADLOCKED
JURY..... 449

Table of Contents

Chapter 26: Verdict and Judgment	451
26-1 INTRODUCTION.....	451
26-2 RECEIVING THE VERDICT	451
26-3 POLLING THE JURY	453
26-4 RESPONDING TO PROBLEMS WITH THE VERDICT	454
26-4:1 Incomplete Verdict.....	455
26-4:2 Conflicting Findings	457
26-4:3 Failure of Requisite Number of Jurors or Same Jurors to Agree On Verdict.....	458
26-5 COMMUNICATING WITH JURORS AFTER DISCHARGE OF JURY	459
26-6 DRAFTING THE JUDGMENT	460
26-7 MOTION FOR JUDGMENT	460
26-8 MOTION FOR JNOV	461
26-9 MOTION TO DISREGARD A JURY FINDING.....	462
26-10 RENDITION AND SIGNING OF FINAL JUDGMENT	462
Chapter 27: Post-Judgment Motions in the Trial Court	463
27-1 INTRODUCTION.....	463
27-2 MOTION FOR NEW TRIAL	463
27-2:1 Necessity of Motion for New Trial	463
27-2:2 Filing, Amending and Presenting Motion for New Trial	465
27-3 MOTION TO MODIFY A JUDGMENT	467
27-4 MOTION FOR REMITTITUR	468
27-5 MOTION FOR JUDGMENT NUNC PRO TUNC.....	469
27-6 MOTION TO EXTEND POST-JUDGMENT DEADLINES.....	470
27-7 EQUITABLE BILL OF REVIEW	472
Appendix A	475
Texas Rules Of Civil Procedure.....	477
Texas Rules Of Evidence.....	801
The Texas Lawyer’s Creed.....	862
Civil Practice And Remedies Code- Chapter 22. Witnesses	867
Subchapter A. Witnesses Civil Practice And Remedies Code- Chapter 23. Juror Continuance	870

Table of Contents

Civil Practice And Remedies Code- Chapter 33. Proportionate Responsibility	871
Subchapter A. Proportionate Responsibility Civil Practice And Remedies Code- Chapter 38. Attorney’s Fees	875
Civil Practice And Remedies Code- Chapter 41. Damages.....	878
Appendix B.....	889
Final Checklist for Trial.....	891
Quick Reference Guide	893
Trial Notebook Categories and Sample Exhibit List	921
Forms.....	923
Table of Cases.....	987
Index	1037