



## *2026 Palm Beach County Bar Association's Bench Bar Conference*

*March 6, 2026*

**Time: 2:45 PM – 3:45 PM**

### **Civil Practice Session**

#### **Revised Rules in Action – Lessons, Challenges, and Next Steps**

This 60-minute course will address recent changes to the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure, the effects of those changes, and commentary from the Bench regarding their impact on civil litigation practice.

**Panelists:** Judge John Parnofiello, Judge Reid Scott, Judge James Sherman, Judge Carolyn Bell

**Moderators:** Brett Lashley and Spencer Keyser

#### **I. Opening Remarks**

- Welcome and introduction of panelists
- Brief overview of session goals: how the 2025 Florida Rule amendments are reshaping civil litigation in Palm Beach County
- Initial impressions from the bench and bar: what's working, what's not with new rules

#### **II. The New Florida Rules of Civil Procedure – One Year Later**

##### **Rule 1.200: Designation of Case Management Tracks**

- How have these designations helped streamline different types of cases?
- What are the practical effects or is still too early to determine?
- How has the bench handled requests for complex designation and what benefits and pitfalls come with such designation?

##### **Rule 1.202: Duty to Confer**

- Have attorneys been following the conferral rule before filing motions?
  - If not, how has the bench been handling violations of this rule?
- Any tangible effects? Such as, less motion practice per case since the conferral rule went into effect?

##### **Rule 1.280: Proportionality and Initial Disclosures**

- The federal proportionality standard for discovery was added to rule 1.280 along with the requirement for initial disclosures.

- What effects has the addition of the proportionality standard had?
  - I.e. Less motions to compel discovery? More motions denied?
- Have initial disclosures helped streamline discovery? Are discovery disputes being addressed earlier in a case vs later given the initial disclosures?

#### **Rule 1.440: At Issue Rule and Rule 1.460: Continuances**

- The “at issue” rule was removed and continuances are strongly disfavored absent good cause.
- Have the amendments to these two rules helped the bench get cases set for trial and tried?
- Have the changes help streamline or clog the court’s trial dockets?

#### **DCM Hearings**

- Is the bar using DCM hearings to notify the court of case deadlines?
- Helpful in addressing issues early on in cases?
- Practical tips regarding utilizing the bench’s DCM hearing times?

**Open Question:** Any practical advice from the bench regarding the rule changes and things they see in practice?

### **III. Looking Ahead**

- Possible refinements or additional modifications to any rules?
- Q&A