

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 Parnofielo, 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