GREETINGS

Welcome to the 333rd District Court of Texas, Harris County, Texas. We are located on the 14th floor, Civil Courthouse Building, at 201 Caroline.

Joseph J. “Tad” Halbach Jr., JUDGE

COURT REPORTER: Jodi Masera CLERKS: Bernadette Lynch and Euniecy Gentry; COORDINATOR: Vicki Garcia BAILIFF: Ralph Maxie

The Court usually convenes at 9:00 a.m. each day. We will have a short break both mid-morning and mid-afternoon for coffee, etc. The time of the break may vary from time to time, and the judge will announce those times. We will break approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes for lunch, around 12:00 noon, and the judge will advise you of the time to return after the lunch break and in the evening we will break at approximately 5:00 p.m.

*PLEASE* be on time and available in the jury room so the bailiff can escort you back into the courtroom after a break. We suggest that each juror bring a light sweater or jacket since we cannot adjust the room temperature on short notice.

The Jury Instruction Booklet has the phone number of the court also, and you may wish to leave that number with anyone who may need to reach you in an emergency or important family matter. We will pass those calls on to you at the earliest possible moment.

There are many parking facilities within walking distance of the courthouse. *A suggestion only* regarding parking is across the street in the Harris County Credit Union Parking Garage. Their fee is $6.00 all day.

Please wear the pin-on jury tags that will be given to you at all times while you are in the courtroom. Also, please return them to the bailiff, or leave them on the jury room table, upon final release by the Court.



INSTRUCTIONS

TO JURORS IN

CIVIL CASES

*Judge Joseph J. “Tad” Halbach Jr.*

*333rd District Court*

*713-368-6470*

There are numerous places to have lunch within walking distance of this building. The Civil Building has a full-service cafeteria in the basement.

Please feel free to discuss any of the above with the bailiff. We want you to be as comfortable as possible during your stay as a juror and to make this experience an enjoyable one.

1. Turn off all phones and other electronic devices. While you are in the courtroom and while you are deliberating, do not communicate with anyone through any electronic device. Do not post information about the case on the Internet before these court proceedings end and you are released from jury duty. Do not record or photograph any part of these court proceedings, because it is prohibited by law.

2. To avoid looking like you are friendly with one side of the case, do not mingle with nor talk to the lawyers, the witnesses, the parties, or any other person who might be connected with or interested in this case. You may exchange casual greetings like “hello” and “good morning.” Other than that, do not talk with them at all. They have to follow these same instructions too, so you should not be offended when they do.

3. Do not accept any favors from the lawyers, witnesses, parties, or anyone else involved in the case, and do not do any favors for them. This includes favors such as giving rides and food.

4. Do not discuss this case with anyone, even your spouse or friend, either in person or by any other means, including by phone, text or email message, chat room, blog, or social networking websites such as Facebook, Twitter, or Myspace. Do not allow anyone to discuss the case with you or in your hearing. If anyone tries to discuss the case with you or in your hearing, tell me immediately. We do not want you to be influenced by something other than the evidence admitted in court.

5. Do not discuss this case with anyone during trial, not even with the other jurors, until the end of the trial. You should not discuss the case with your fellow jurors until the end of the trial so that you do no form opinions about the case before you have heard everything.

After you have heard all the evidence, received all of my instructions, and heard all of the lawyers’ arguments, you will then go to the jury room to discuss the case with the other jurors and reach a verdict.

6. Do not do any investigation about the facts of the case. Do not make personal inspections, observations, investigations, or experiments, nor personally view premises, things or articles not produced in court. Do not try to get information about the case, lawyers, witnesses, or issues from outside this courtroom. This includes looking anything up on the Internet to try to learn more about the case. Do not seek information contained in law books, dictionaries, public or private records or elsewhere, which is not admitted in evidence. Do not let anyone else do any of these things for you.

This rule is very important because we want a trial based only on evidence admitted in open court. Your conclusions about the case must be based only on what you see and hear in this courtroom because the law does not permit you to base your conclusions on information that has not been presented to you in open court. All the information must be presented in open court so the parties and their lawyers can test it and object to it. Information from other sources, like the Internet, will not go through this important process in the courtroom. In addition, information from other sources could be completely unreliable. As a result, if you investigate this case on your own, you could compromise the fairness to all parties in this case and jeopardize the results of this trial.

7. Do not tell other jurors your own personal experiences nor those of other persons, nor relate any special information. A juror may have special knowledge of matters such as business, technical or professional matters, or he or she may have expert knowledge or opinions, or may know what happened in this or some other lawsuit. Telling other jurors about it is wrong because it means the jury will be considering things that were not admitted in court.

8. Do not discuss or consider attorney's fees unless evidence about attorney's fees is admitted.

9. Do not consider, discuss, nor speculate whether or not any party is or is not protected in whole or in part by insurance of any

10. During the trial, if taking notes will help focus your attention on the evidence, you may take notes using the materials the court has provided. Do not use any personal electronic devices to take notes. If taking notes will distract your attention from the evidence, you should not take notes. Your notes are for your own personal use. They are not evidence. Do not show or read your notes to anyone, including other jurors.

You must leave your notes in the jury room or with the bailiff. The bailiff is instructed not to read your notes and to insure they are kept secure and not disclosed to anyone.

You may take your notes back into the jury room and consult them during deliberations, but keep in mind they are not evidence. When you deliberate, each of you should rely on your independent recollection of the evidence and not be influenced by the fact that another juror has or has not taken notes. After you complete your deliberations, the bailiff will collect your notes and they will be destroyed.

11. At the conclusion of all the evidence, I will submit to you a written charge asking you some specific questions called special issues. You will not be asked, and you should not consider, whether one party or the other should win. Since you will need to consider all of the evidence admitted by me, it is important that you pay close attention to the evidence as it is presented.

Texas law permits proof of any violations of the rule of proper jury conduct. By this I mean that jurors and others may be called upon to testify in open court about acts of jury misconduct. I instruct you, therefore to follow carefully all instructions which have been given you, as well as others, which you later receive while this case is on trial.



Judge Joseph J. “Tad” Halbach Jr., 333rd District Court

Telephone No. 713-368-6470