

Rule 30. Depositions by Oral Examination

(a) WHEN A DEPOSITION MAY BE TAKEN.

(1) *Without Leave.* A party may, by oral questions, depose any person, including a party, without leave of court except as provided in Rule 30(a)(2). The deponent's attendance may be compelled by subpoena under Rule 45.

(2) *With Leave.* A party must obtain leave of court, and the court must grant leave to the extent consistent with Rule 26(b)(1) and (2):

(A) if the parties have not stipulated to the deposition and:

(i) the deposition would result in more than 10 depositions being taken under this rule or Rule 31 by the plaintiffs, or by the defendants, or by the third-party defendants;

(ii) the deponent has already been deposed in the case; or

(iii) the plaintiff seeks to take the deposition before the expiration of 30 days after service of the summons and complaint upon any defendant or 70 days in any case involving the District of Columbia or its officer or agency, or the United States or its officer or agency; or

(B) if the deponent is confined in prison; except

(C) leave is not required under Rule 30(a)(2)(A)(iii) if:

(i) a defendant has served a notice of taking deposition or otherwise sought discovery; or

(ii) the plaintiff's notice states that the deponent is expected to be out of the District of Columbia and more than 25 miles from the place of trial and be unavailable for examination unless the person's deposition is taken before the expiration of the 30-day or 70-day period, and sets forth facts to support the statement.

(b) NOTICE OF THE DEPOSITION; OTHER FORMAL REQUIREMENTS.

(1) *Notice in General.* A party who wants to depose a person by oral questions must give reasonable written notice to every other party. The notice must state the time and place of the deposition and, if known, the deponent's name and address. If the name is unknown, the notice must provide a general description sufficient to identify the person or the particular class or group to which the person belongs.

(2) *Producing Documents.* If a subpoena duces tecum is to be served on the deponent, the materials designated for production, as set out in the subpoena, must be listed in the notice or in an attachment. The notice to a party deponent may be accompanied by a request under Rule 34 to produce documents and tangible things at the deposition.

(3) Method of Recording.

(A) *Method Stated in the Notice.* The party who notices the deposition must state in the notice the method for recording the testimony. Unless the court orders otherwise, testimony may be recorded by audio, audiovisual, or stenographic means. The noticing party bears the recording costs. Any party may arrange to transcribe a deposition.

(B) *Additional Method.* With prior notice to the deponent and other parties, any party may designate another method for recording the testimony in addition to that specified in the original notice. That party bears the expense of the additional record or transcript unless the court orders otherwise.

(4) *By Remote Means.* The parties may stipulate—or the court may on motion order—that a deposition be taken by telephone or other remote means. For the purpose of this

rule and Rules 28(a), 37(a)(2), and 37(b)(1), the deposition takes place in the District of Columbia and where the deponent answers the questions.

(5) *Officer's Duties.*

(A) *Before the Deposition.* Unless the parties stipulate otherwise, a deposition must be conducted before an officer appointed or designated under Rule 28. The officer must begin the deposition with an on-the-record statement that includes:

- (i) the officer's name and business address;
- (ii) the date, time, and place of the deposition;
- (iii) the deponent's name;
- (iv) the officer's administration of the oath or affirmation to the deponent; and
- (v) the identity of all persons present.

(B) *Conducting the Deposition; Avoiding Distortion.* If the deposition is recorded nonstenographically, the officer must repeat the items in Rule 30(b)(5)(A)(i)–(iii) at the beginning of each unit of the recording medium. The deponent's and attorneys' appearance or demeanor must not be distorted through recording techniques.

(C) *After the Deposition.* At the end of the deposition, the officer must state on the record that the deposition is complete and must set out any stipulations made by the attorneys about custody of the transcript or recording and of the exhibits, or about other pertinent matters.

(6) *Notice or Subpoena Directed to an Organization.* In its notice or subpoena, a party may name as the deponent a public or private corporation, a partnership, an association, a governmental agency, or other entity and must describe with reasonable particularity the matters for examination. The named organization must designate one or more officers, directors, or managing agents, or designate other persons who consent to testify on its behalf; and it may set out the matters on which each person designated will testify. Before or promptly after the notice or subpoena is served, the serving party and the organization must confer in good faith about the matters for examination. A subpoena must advise a nonparty organization of its duty to confer with the serving party and to designate each person who will testify. The persons designated must testify about information known or reasonably available to the organization. Rule 30(b)(6) does not preclude a deposition by any other procedure allowed by these rules.

(c) EXAMINATION AND CROSS-EXAMINATION; RECORD OF THE EXAMINATION; OBJECTIONS; WRITTEN QUESTIONS.

(1) *Examination and Cross-Examination.* The examination and cross-examination of a deponent proceed as they would at trial under the provisions of Rule 43(c). After putting the deponent under oath or affirmation, the officer must record the testimony by the method designated under Rule 30(b)(3)(A). The testimony must be recorded by the officer personally or by a person acting in the presence and under the direction of the officer.

(2) *Objections.* An objection at the time of the examination—whether to evidence, to a party's conduct, to the officer's qualifications, to the manner of taking the deposition, or to any other aspect of the deposition—must be noted on the record, but the examination still proceeds; the testimony is taken subject to any objection. An objection must be stated concisely in a nonargumentative and nonsuggestive manner. A person may instruct a deponent not to answer only when necessary to preserve a privilege, to enforce a limitation ordered by the court, or to present a motion under Rule 30(d)(3).

(3) *Participating Through Written Questions.* Instead of participating in the oral examination, a party may serve written questions in a sealed envelope on the party noticing the deposition, who must deliver them to the officer. The officer must ask the deponent those questions and record the answers verbatim.

(d) DURATION; SANCTION; MOTION TO TERMINATE OR LIMIT.

(1) *Duration.* Unless otherwise stipulated or ordered by the court, a deposition is limited to one day of 7 hours. The court must allow additional time consistent with Rule 26(b)(1) and (2) if needed to fairly examine the deponent or if the deponent, another person, or any other circumstance impedes or delays the examination.

(2) *Sanction.* The court may impose an appropriate sanction—including the reasonable expenses and attorney's fees incurred by any party—on a person who impedes, delays, or frustrates the fair examination of the deponent.

(3) *Motion to Terminate or Limit.*

(A) *Grounds.* At any time during a deposition, the deponent or a party may move to terminate or limit it on the ground that it is being conducted in bad faith or in a manner that unreasonably annoys, embarrasses, or oppresses the deponent or party. The motion may be filed in this court or the court in the jurisdiction where the deposition is being taken. If the objecting deponent or party so demands, the deposition must be suspended for the time necessary to obtain an order.

(B) *Order.* The court may order that the deposition be terminated or may limit its scope and manner as provided in Rule 26(c). If terminated, the deposition may be resumed only by order of this court, except as provided in Rule 45(e).

(C) *Award of Expenses.* Rule 37(a)(5) applies to the award of expenses.

(e) REVIEW BY THE WITNESS; CHANGES.

(1) *Review; Statement of Changes.* On request by the deponent or a party before the deposition is completed, the deponent must be allowed 30 days after being notified by the officer that the transcript or recording is available in which:

(A) to review the transcript or recording; and

(B) if there are changes in form or substance, to sign a statement listing the changes and the reasons for making them.

(2) *Changes Indicated in the Officer's Certificate.* The officer must note in the certificate prescribed by Rule 30(f)(1) whether a review was requested and, if so, must attach any changes the deponent makes during the 30-day period.

(f) CERTIFICATION AND DELIVERY; EXHIBITS; COPIES OF THE TRANSCRIPT OR RECORDING; FILING.

(1) *Certification and Delivery.* The officer must certify in writing that the witness was duly sworn and that the deposition accurately records the witness's testimony. The certificate must accompany the record of the deposition. Unless the court orders otherwise, the officer must seal the deposition in an envelope or package bearing the title of the action and marked "Deposition of [witness's name]" and must promptly send it to the attorney who arranged for the transcript or recording. The officer must comply with the requirements of Rule 5(d) for the processing of such materials. If the deposition is recorded by other than stenographic means, the storage media must be clearly identified with the name of the deponent, the date of the deposition, and the title of the action. The attorney must store it under conditions that will protect it against loss, destruction, tampering, or deterioration.

(2) *Documents and Tangible Things.*

(A) *Originals and Copies.* Documents and tangible things produced for inspection during a deposition must, on a party's request, be marked for identification and attached to the deposition. Any party may inspect and copy them. But if the person who produced them wants to keep the originals, the person may:

(i) offer copies to be marked, attached to the deposition, and then used as originals—after giving all parties a fair opportunity to verify the copies by comparing them with the originals; or

(ii) give all parties a fair opportunity to inspect and copy the originals after they are marked—in which event the originals may be used as if attached to the deposition.

(B) *Order Regarding the Originals.* Any party may move for an order that the originals be attached to the deposition pending final disposition of the case.

(3) *Copies of the Transcript or Recording.* Unless otherwise stipulated or ordered by the court, the officer must retain the stenographic notes of a deposition taken stenographically or a copy of the recording of a deposition taken by another method. When paid reasonable charges, the officer must furnish a copy of the transcript or recording to any party or the deponent.

(4) *Notice of Filing.* A party who files the deposition must promptly notify all other parties of the filing.

(g) **FAILURE TO ATTEND A DEPOSITION OR SERVE A SUBPOENA; EXPENSES.** A party who, expecting a deposition to be taken, attends in person or by an attorney may recover reasonable expenses for attending, including attorney's fees, if the noticing party failed to:

(1) attend and proceed with the deposition; or

(2) serve a subpoena on a nonparty deponent, who consequently did not attend.

(h) **FILING TRANSCRIPTION OF DEPOSITION TAKEN BY NONSTENOGRAPHIC MEANS.** If a party intends to use in the proceeding a deposition recorded by other than stenographic means, the person must have prepared a typewritten, verbatim transcript of testimony. The original transcription must not be filed with the court unless otherwise ordered. If so ordered, a copy must be served on all parties, at least 30 days before the proceeding.

COMMENT TO 2021 AMENDMENTS

Subsection (b)(6) incorporates the 2020 amendments to *Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 30*. The rule now provides that, for a notice of deposition or subpoena directed to an organization, the serving party and organization must confer in good faith about the matters for examination.

COMMENT TO 2017 AMENDMENTS

This rule is substantially similar to *Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 30*, as amended in 2007 and 2015, except that: 1) the time period in subsection (a)(2)(A)(iii) reflects local practice; 2) exceptions to the restriction in subsection (a)(2)(A)(iii) have been moved to new subsection (a)(2)(C) and continue to reflect the 25-mile subpoena range of this court; 3) subsection (b)(4) provides that remote depositions taken by telephone are

considered to have taken place in the District of Columbia and the location where the person answers the questions; 4) subsection (c)(1) refers to Rule 43(c) rather than the Federal Rules of Evidence; 5) subsection (d)(3) refers to depositions taken in Superior Court actions as well as those taken in the District of Columbia pursuant to the Uniform Interstate Depositions and Discovery Act; 6) subsection (f)(1) requires the officer to comply with Rule 5(d) regarding filing; and 7) section (h) retains the requirement that a party transcribe a deposition that was recorded by nonstenographic means if the party intends to use the deposition in the proceeding.

The term “storage media” as used in subsection (f)(1) means any technology used to store a deposition recording for later reuse. This includes, but is not limited to, cassette tapes, videotapes, CDs, DVDs, memory cards, and USB flash drives.

COMMENT

Largely identical to *Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 30* except that there is no cross-reference in subparagraph (a)(2)(C) to Rule 26, since the changes in that Rule have not been adopted herein, and that subparagraph provides additional time to the District of Columbia and the United States after service of summons and complaint before the taking of testimony is allowed without leave of Court because the District of Columbia and the United States have 60 days to answer a complaint under Rule 12(a). Subparagraph (a)(2)(C) has also been modified to reflect the 25 mile subpoena range of the Court. Subparagraph (b)(1) has been amended to provide notice if the deposition is to be recorded by audio or videotape. In addition, paragraph (c) refers to Rule 43(b) rather than to the Federal Rules of Evidence. Paragraphs (b), (d), and (f) are revised to show reference only to cases pending in this Court. Subparagraph (f)(1) comports with Rule 5(d), which provides, among other things, that depositions shall not be filed with the Court unless their filing is pursuant to Court order or they are appended to a motion or opposition to which they are relevant. Paragraph (h) requires the preparation, filing and serving of a transcription of a deposition recorded by other than stenographic means if a party intends to use the deposition in the proceeding.