

COURTROOM PROTOCOL

- ▶ Counsel should arrive in the courtroom ten minutes before the start of Court to hear any announcements regarding a change in the order in which the cases will be heard.
- ▶ Counsel tables are not assigned to particular sides, and counsel may sit at either table in the courtroom. Counsel tables are, however, for counsel only; seating behind the bar is available for non-attorneys, including parties. Third-year law students practicing under Local Rule 46(a) may sit at counsel table.
- ▶ Participants in the first case should seat themselves at counsel tables before the start of Court. Appellant's counsel in the first case should immediately proceed to the podium to begin argument when the presiding judge calls the first case.
- ▶ The most senior judge on the argument panel sits in the center and presides over the argument session. The next most senior judge sits to the presiding judge's right, and the third judge on the panel sits to the presiding judge's left. The names of the judges on the panel are posted in the attorney check-in room on the morning of argument.
- ▶ The Court uses a green/yellow/red light system for timing argument. The timer light remains green until five minutes of argument time remain, at which point a yellow light appears. A red light appears when counsel's argument time has expired.
- ▶ The judges will be familiar with the case, and counsel may expect to deviate from their prepared argument to answer questions and provide supporting references from the appendix.
- ▶ The judges come down from the bench after each case to shake hands with counsel and thank them for their advocacy. At this point, they will either return to the bench and call the next case or they may take a recess.
- ▶ Counsel requiring any special arrangements such as hearing assistance or wheelchair accommodation should contact the calendar clerk or the chief deputy clerk at 804-916-2700.
- ▶ A CD of the oral argument may be requested by letter enclosing a check payable to the Clerk, U.S. Court of Appeals, in the amount of \$26. Federal government attorneys and CJA attorneys are exempt from the charge.