

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

STANDING ORDER REGARDING COURTROOM OPPORTUNITIES FOR
RELATIVELY INEXPERIENCED ATTORNEYS

May 3, 2017

MASTROIANNI, U.S.D.J.

Judges F. Dennis Saylor, Denise Casper, Timothy Hillman, Indira Talwani, and Leo Sorokin have adopted standing orders strongly encouraging the participation of relatively inexperienced and young attorneys in all court proceedings. Judge Casper noted that the “decline in courtroom opportunities for newer lawyers is widely recognized and is one of concern to both the bench and bar.”

Recognizing the importance of the development of future generations of practitioners through courtroom opportunities, the undersigned judge, as a matter of policy, strongly encourages the participation of relatively inexperienced attorneys in all court proceedings including but not limited to initial scheduling conferences, status conferences, hearings on discovery motions and dispositive motions, and examination of witnesses at trial.

The following admonitions regarding professionalism, authority, and supervision apply:

First, all attorneys appearing in this court, including those who are relatively inexperienced, will be held to the highest professional standards. These attorneys must be prepared and knowledgeable about the case and applicable law.

Second, all attorneys appearing in court should have a degree of authority commensurate with the proceeding. For example, an attorney appearing at a scheduling conference ordinarily should have the authority to propose and agree to a discovery schedule and any other matters reasonably likely to arise at the conference.

Third, relatively inexperienced attorneys who seek to participate in evidentiary hearings of substantial complexity, such as examining a witness at trial, should be accompanied and supervised by a more experienced attorney unless the court gives leave to do otherwise.

The undersigned judge hopes that counsel join the court in effectuating this important policy. Counsel may seek additional guidance from the court in particular cases concerning the scope and application of this policy.

It is So Ordered.

/s/ Mark G. Mastroianni
MARK G. MASTROIANNI
United States District Judge