

SCHEDULING FINAL HEARING IN CONTESTED MATTERS  
CASE MANAGEMENT AND PRETRIAL CONFERENCES

In order to obtain a final hearing in a contested domestic relations matter, the parties must attend a case management conference and a pretrial conference. The pretrial conference will replace the traditional docket call.

Pursuant to Rule 12.200, Fla.Fam.L.R.P., either upon the court's own initiative or upon receipt of a Notice for Trial, a case management conference will be ordered by the court. All parties and their counsel are required to attend this conference.

At the conference, the court may schedule, order or expedite discovery; schedule disclosure of expert witnesses and discovery of facts known; pursue the possibilities of settlement; refer parties to mediation; refer the cause for a home study or aid in the disposition of the action. If full settlement has been reached and the matter is uncontested and all requirements have been met, the case may proceed to final hearing at the case management conference.

The court will schedule a pretrial conference when either party writes a letter to Judge Makemson enclosing a copy of the pretrial stipulation signed by counsel for each party and by unrepresented parties, which conforms to the case management conference order. If a party submits a notice that the other party has refused to comply with the case management conference order, the court will issue an order to show cause why sanctions should not be imposed on the delinquent party. At the pretrial conference a date certain for trial will be scheduled.