

Members of the jury:

Now that you have been sworn as the jury to try this case, I want to take a few minutes to tell you something about your duties as jurors and to give you some preliminary instructions. At the end of the trial, I will give you more detailed written instructions that will control your deliberations. When you deliberate, it will be your duty to weigh and to evaluate all the evidence received in the case and, in that process, to decide the facts. To the facts as you find them, you will apply the law as I give it to you, whether you agree with the law or not. You must decide the case solely on the evidence and the law before you and must not be influenced by any person's race, color, religion, national ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, profession, occupation, celebrity, economic circumstances, or position in life or in the community. Do not allow personal likes or dislikes, sympathy, fear, public opinion, prejudices, or biases—including unconscious bias—to influence you. Unconscious biases are stereotypes, attitudes, or preferences that people may consciously reject but may be expressed without conscious awareness, control, or intention. Like conscious bias, unconscious bias also can affect how we evaluate information and make decisions. Please do not take anything I may say or do during the trial as indicating what I think of the evidence or what your verdict should be—that is entirely up to you.

As you know, this is a civil case. The plaintiffs have the burden of proving their case by what is called the preponderance of the evidence. That means the plaintiffs have to produce evidence which, considered in light of all the facts, leads you to believe that what the plaintiffs claim is more probably true than not true. To put it differently, if you were to put the plaintiffs' and the defendants' evidence on the opposite sides of the scales, the plaintiffs would have to make the scales tip somewhat towards their side. If the plaintiffs fail to meet this burden, the verdict must be for the defendant.

Those of you who have sat on criminal cases will have heard of proof beyond a reasonable doubt. That requirement does not apply to a civil case; therefore, you should put it out of your mind.

The evidence you are to consider in deciding what the facts are consists of:

- (1) the sworn testimony of any witness; and
- (2) the exhibits which are received in evidence; and
- (3) any facts to which the parties agree.

The following things are *not* evidence, and you must not consider them as evidence in deciding the facts of this case:

- (1) statements and arguments of the attorneys;
- (2) questions and objections of the attorneys;
- (3) testimony that I instruct you to disregard; and
- (4) anything you may see or hear when the court is not in session even if what you see or hear is done or said by one of the parties or by one of the witnesses.

The evidence that will be presented to you during the trial may be either direct or circumstantial. Direct evidence is direct proof of a fact, such as testimony by a witness about what that witness personally saw or heard or did. Circumstantial evidence is indirect evidence, that is, it is proof of one or more facts from which one can find another fact.

You are to consider both direct and circumstantial evidence. Either can be used to prove any fact. The law makes no distinction between the weight to be given to either direct or circumstantial evidence. It is for you to decide how much weight to give to any evidence.

There are rules of evidence that control what can be received in evidence. When a lawyer asks a question or offers an exhibit in evidence and a lawyer on the other side thinks that it is not permitted by the rules of evidence, that lawyer may object. If I overrule the objection, the question may be answered or the exhibit received. If I sustain the objection, the question cannot be answered, or the exhibit cannot be received. Whenever I sustain an objection to a question, you must ignore the question and must not guess what the answer would have been.

Sometimes I may order that evidence be stricken from the record and that you disregard or ignore the evidence. That means that when you are deciding the case, you must not consider the evidence that I told you to disregard.

Some evidence may be admitted during the trial for a limited purpose only. If I instruct you that an item of evidence has been admitted only for a limited purpose, you must consider it only for that limited purpose and for no other.

In deciding the facts in this case, you may have to decide which testimony to believe and which testimony not to believe. You may believe everything a witness says, or part of it, or none of it.

In considering the testimony of any witness, you may take into account:

- (1) the witness's opportunity and ability to see or hear or know the things testified to;
- (2) the witness's memory;
- (3) the witness's manner while testifying;
- (4) the witness's interest in the outcome of the case, if any;
- (5) the witness's bias or prejudice, if any;
- (6) whether other evidence contradicted the witness's testimony;
- (7) the reasonableness of the witness's testimony in light of all the evidence; and
- (8) any other factors that bear on believability.

You must avoid bias, conscious or unconscious, based on the witness's race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender in your determination of credibility.

The weight of the evidence as to a fact does not necessarily depend on the number of witnesses who testify about it.

You should pay close attention to the testimony and all evidence as it is presented because it will be necessary for you to rely upon your collective memories concerning what the testimony was when you retire to deliberate on a verdict. At the end of the trial you will have to make your decision based on what you recall of the evidence. Although, as you can see, a court reporter is making a recording of everything that is said during the trial, typewritten transcripts cannot be prepared for your use during deliberations and you should not expect to receive them. I urge you to pay close attention to the testimony as it is given.

On the other hand, all exhibits admitted into evidence during the trial will be available to you for your detailed study during your deliberations. So, if an exhibit is received into evidence but is not fully read or shown to you at the time, do not be concerned because you will get to see the exhibit later during your jury deliberations.

From time to time during the trial, it may become necessary for me to talk with the attorneys out of the hearing of the jury, either by having a conference at the bench or a side bar when the jury is present in the courtroom, or by calling a recess. Please understand that while you are waiting, we are working. The purpose of these conferences is not to keep relevant information from you, but to decide how certain evidence is to be treated under the rules of evidence and to avoid confusion and error. Of course, we will do what we can to keep the number and length of these conferences to a minimum. I may not always grant an attorney's request for a conference. Do not consider my granting or denying a request for a conference as any indication of my opinion of the case or of what your verdict should be.



If you wish, you may take notes during the course of trial. However, it is difficult to take detailed notes and pay attention to what the witnesses are saying at the same time. If you do take notes, be sure that your note taking does not interfere with your listening to and considering of all the evidence. If you do take notes, please keep them to yourself until you and your fellow jurors go to the jury room to decide the case. Please do not take your notes with you when you leave at the end of the day—be sure to leave them in the jury room. At the end of the case, your notes will be collected and destroyed.

Whether or not you take notes, you should rely on your own memory of what was said. Notes are only to assist your memory. You should not be overly influenced by the notes. We depend on the judgment of all members of the jury; you all must remember the evidence in this case.

I also permit jurors to submit written questions for witnesses who are called to testify during the trial. You may propose questions in order to clarify the testimony, but you are not to express any opinion about the testimony or argue with a witness. If you propose any questions, remember that your role is that of a neutral fact finder, not an advocate.

The following is the process for you to propose questions. If you have a question that you believe should be asked of a witness, you may write out the question for that witness, but this should occur while the witness is still testifying and before he or she is excused by the court. After you have written out your question, hand it to the juror sitting in the front row in the seat closest to the witness stand. That juror will raise his or her hand and my courtroom administrator will accept the question. I will discuss the question with the attorneys during side bar or when we take a recess. There are some proposed questions that I will not permit, or will not ask in the wording submitted by the juror. This might happen either due to the rules of evidence or other legal reasons, or because the question is expected to be answered later in the case. If I do not ask a proposed question, or if I rephrase it, do not speculate as to the reasons or about what the answer might have been. Do not give undue weight to questions you or other jurors propose. You should evaluate the answers to those questions in the same manner you evaluate all of the other evidence. Always remember that you are not advocates for one side or the other in this case. You are impartial judges of the facts.

By giving you the opportunity to propose questions, I am not requesting or suggesting that you do so. It will often be the case that a

lawyer has not asked a question because it is legally objectionable or because a later witness may be addressing that subject.

I will now say a few words about your conduct as jurors.

First, keep an open mind throughout the trial, and do not decide what the verdict should be until you and your fellow jurors have completed your deliberations at the end of the case.

Second, because you must decide this case based only on the evidence received in the case and on my instructions as to the law that applies, you must not be exposed to any other information about the case or to the issues it involves during the course of your jury duty. Thus, until the end of the case or unless I tell you otherwise:

Do not communicate with anyone in any way and do not let anyone else communicate with you in any way about the merits of the case or anything to do with it. This includes discussing the case in person, in writing, by phone or electronic means, via email, text messaging, or any forms of social media. This applies to communicating with your fellow jurors until I give you the case for deliberation, and it applies to communicating with everyone else including your family members, your employer, the media or press, and the people involved in the trial, although you may notify your family and your employer that you have been seated as a juror in the case, and how long you expect the trial to last. But, if you are asked or approached in any way about your jury service or anything about this case, you must respond that you have been ordered not to discuss the matter and report the contact to the court.

Because you will receive all the evidence and legal instruction you properly may consider to return a verdict: do not read, watch or listen to any news or media accounts or commentary about the case or anything to do with it; do not do any research, such as consulting dictionaries, searching the Internet, or using other reference materials; and do not make any investigation or in any other way try to learn about the case on your own. Do not visit or view any place discussed in this case, and do not use Internet programs or other devices to search for or view any place discussed during the trial. Also, do not do any research about this case, the law, or the people involved—including the parties, the witnesses, or the lawyers—until you have been excused as jurors. If you happen to read or hear anything touching on this case in the media, turn away and report it to me as soon as possible.

These rules protect each party's right to have this case decided only on evidence that has been presented here in court. Witnesses here in court take an oath to tell the truth, and the accuracy of their testimony is tested through the trial process. If you do any research or investigation outside the courtroom, or gain any information through improper communications, then your verdict may be influenced by inaccurate, incomplete or misleading information that has not been tested by the trial process. Each of the parties is entitled to a fair trial by an impartial jury, and if you decide the case based on information not presented in court, you will have denied the parties a fair trial. Remember, you have taken an oath to follow the rules, and it is very important that you follow these rules.

Because it is so important to the parties' rights that you decide this case based solely on the evidence and my instructions on the law, at the beginning of each day, I may ask you whether you have learned about or shared any information outside of this courtroom.

A juror who violates these restrictions jeopardizes the fairness of these proceedings. If any juror is exposed to any outside information, please notify the court immediately.

Finally, I must instruct you that you are to reserve your judgment concerning a verdict in this case until after you have heard all the evidence and the instructions of law and the arguments of the attorneys, and have retired to the jury room to deliberate on your verdict with your fellow jurors.

Trials proceed in the following way: First, each side may make an opening statement. An opening statement is not evidence. It is simply an outline to help you understand what that party expects the evidence will show. A party is not required to make an opening statement.

The plaintiffs will then present evidence, and counsel for the defendants may cross-examine. Then the defendants may present evidence, and counsel for the plaintiffs may cross-examine.

After the evidence has been presented, I will instruct you on the law that applies to the case and the attorneys will make closing arguments.

After that, you will go to the jury room to deliberate on your verdict.

I hope that for all of you this case is interesting and noteworthy.