

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF HAWAII

HELEN GILLMOR
United States District Judge

**GENERAL FEDERAL JURY
INSTRUCTIONS IN CIVIL CASES (2023)**

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COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 1

Members of the Jury:

You have now heard all of the evidence in the case, as well as the final arguments of the lawyers for the parties. It becomes my duty, therefore, to instruct you on the rules of law that you must follow and apply in arriving at your decision in this case.

In any jury trial there are, in effect, two judges. I am one of the judges, the other is the jury. It is my duty to preside over the trial and to determine what testimony and evidence is relevant under the law for your consideration. It is also my duty at the end of the trial to instruct you on the law applicable to the case.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 2A

You, as jurors, are the judges of the facts. But in determining what actually happened in this case -- that is, in reaching your decision as to the facts -- it is your sworn duty to follow the law I am now in the process of defining for you.

You must follow all of my instructions as a whole. You have no right to disregard or give special attention to any one instruction, or to question the wisdom or correctness of any rule I may state to you. That is, you must not substitute or follow your own notion or opinion as to what the law is or ought to be. It is your duty to apply the law as I give it to you, regardless of the consequences.

In deciding the facts of this case you must not be swayed by sympathy, bias or prejudice as to any party. This case should be considered and decided by you as an action between persons of equal standing in the community, and holding the same or similar stations in life. The law is no respecter of persons, and all persons stand equal before the law and are to be dealt with as equals in a court of justice.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 2B

You, as jurors, are the judges of the facts. But in determining what actually happened in this case -- that is, in reaching your decision as to the facts -- it is your sworn duty to follow the law I am now in the process of defining for you.

You must follow all of my instructions as a whole. You have no right to disregard or give special attention to any one instruction, or to question the wisdom or correctness of any rule I may state to you. That is, you must not substitute or follow your own notion or opinion as to what the law is or ought to be. It is your duty to apply the law as I give it to you, regardless of the consequences.

In deciding the facts of this case you must not be swayed by sympathy, bias or prejudice as to any party. This case should be considered and decided by you as an action between persons of equal standing in the community, and holding the same or similar stations in life. The law is no respecter of persons, and all persons stand equal before the law and are to be dealt with as equals in a court of justice. A corporation is entitled to the same fair trial at your hands as is a private individual.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 3

As stated earlier, it is your duty to determine the facts, and in so doing you must consider only the evidence I have admitted in the case. The term "evidence" includes the sworn testimony of the witnesses and the exhibits admitted in the record.

Remember that questions, statements, objections, and arguments by the lawyers are not evidence. The lawyers are not witnesses. Although you must consider a lawyer's questions to understand the answers of a witness, the lawyer's questions are not evidence. Similarly, what the lawyers have said in their opening and closing statements, and have said at other times is intended to help you interpret the evidence, but it is not evidence. If the facts as you remember them differ from the way the lawyers state them, your memory of them controls.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 4

There are rules of evidence which control what can be received into evidence. When a lawyer asks a question or offers an exhibit into 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 and the exhibit cannot be received.

Whenever I sustain an objection to a question, you must not speculate as to what the answer might have been or as to the reason for the objection. You must not consider for any purpose any offer of evidence that was rejected, or any evidence that was stricken from the record; such matter is to be treated as though you had never known of it.

In addition, some evidence was received only for a limited purpose; when I have instructed you to consider certain evidence in a limited way, you must do so.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 5

During the course of a trial I may have occasionally made comments to the lawyers, or asked questions of a witness, or admonished a witness concerning the manner in which he should respond to the questions of counsel. Do not assume from anything I have said that I have any opinion concerning any of the issues in this case. Except for my instructions to you on the law, you should disregard anything I may have said during the trial in arriving at your own findings as to the facts.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 6

The court may take judicial notice of certain facts or events. When the court declares it will take judicial notice of some fact or event, you may accept the court's declaration as evidence, and regard the fact or event which has been judicially noticed as conclusively proved.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 7

In this case, the parties have agreed, or stipulated, as to certain facts. This means that they both agree that these facts are true. You should therefore treat these facts as having been conclusively proved.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 8

Certain testimony has been read into evidence from depositions. A deposition is testimony taken under oath before the trial and preserved in writing. You are to consider that testimony as if it had been given in court.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 9

During the course of the trial you have heard reference made to the word "interrogatory". An interrogatory is a written question asked by one party of another, who must answer it under oath in writing. You are to consider interrogatories and the answers thereto the same as if the questions had been asked and answered here in court.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 10

Evidence may be direct or circumstantial. Direct evidence is direct proof of a fact, such as testimony of an eyewitness. Circumstantial evidence is indirect evidence, that is, proof of a chain of facts from which you could find that another fact exists, even though it has not been proved directly.

So, while you should consider only the evidence in the case, you are permitted to draw such reasonable inferences from the testimony and exhibits as you feel are justified in the light of common experience. In other words, you may make deductions and reach conclusions which reason and common sense lead you to draw from the facts which have been established by the testimony and evidence in the case.

You are to consider both direct and circumstantial evidence. The law permits you to give equal weight to both, but it is for you to decide how much weight to give to any evidence.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 11

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 opportunity and ability of the witness to see or hear or know the things testified to;
- (2) the witness's memory, candor, fairness, and intelligence;
- (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.

Sometimes a witness may say something that is not consistent with something else he or she said. Sometimes different

witnesses will give different versions of what happened. People often forget things or make mistakes in what they remember. Also, two people may see the same event but remember it differently. You may consider these differences, but do not decide that testimony is untrue just because it differs from other testimony.

However, if you decide that a witness has deliberately testified untruthfully about something important, you may choose not to believe anything that witness said. On the other hand, if you think the witness testified untruthfully about some things but told the truth about others, you may accept the part you think is true and ignore the rest.

The weight of the evidence as to a fact does not necessarily depend on the number of witnesses who testify. What is important is how believable the witnesses were, and how much weight you think their testimony deserves.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 12

The rules of evidence provide that if scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge might assist the jury in understanding the evidence or in determining a fact in issue, a witness qualified as an expert by knowledge, skill, experience, training, or education, may testify and state his or her opinion concerning such matters.

You should consider each expert opinion received in evidence in this case and give it such weight as you may think it deserves. If you decide that the opinion of an expert witness is not based upon sufficient education and experience, or if you should conclude that the reasons given in support of the opinion are not sound, or that the opinion is outweighed by other evidence, then you may disregard the opinion entirely.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 13

A witness may also be discredited or impeached by evidence that the general reputation of the witness for truth and veracity is bad in the community where the witness now resides, or has recently resided.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 14

The fact that a witness has previously been convicted of a felony, or a crime involving dishonesty or false statement, is also a factor you may consider in weighing the credibility of that witness. The fact of such a conviction does not necessarily destroy the witness's credibility, but is one of the circumstances you may take into account in determining the weight to be given to his or her testimony.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 15

When a corporation is involved, of course, it may act only through natural persons as its agents or employees; and, in general, any agent or employee of a corporation may bind the corporation by acts and declarations made while acting within the scope of the authority delegated to him or her by the corporation, or within the scope of the agent's or employee's duties to the corporation.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 16A

The burden is on the plaintiff in a civil action such as this to prove every essential element of the claim by a "preponderance of the evidence." A preponderance of the evidence means such evidence as, when considered and compared with that opposed to it, has more convincing force and produces in your minds a belief that what is sought to be proved is more likely true than not true. In other words, to establish a claim by a "preponderance of the evidence" merely means to prove that the claim is more likely so than not so.

In determining whether any fact in issue has been proved by a preponderance of the evidence, the jury may consider the testimony of all the witnesses, regardless of who may have called them, and all the exhibits received in evidence, regardless of who may have produced them. If the proof should fail to establish any essential element of plaintiff's claim by a preponderance of the evidence, the jury should find for the defendant as to that claim.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 16B

In a civil action such as this, each party asserting a claim, as hereafter described, has the burden of proving every essential element of his claim by a "preponderance of the evidence." A preponderance of the evidence means such evidence as, when considered and compared with that opposed to it, has more convincing force and produces in your minds a belief that what is sought to be proved is more likely true than not true. In other words, to establish a claim by a "preponderance of the evidence" merely means to prove that the claim is more likely so than not so.

Where more than one claim is involved, as in this case, you should consider each claim, and the evidence pertaining to it, separately, as you would had each claim been tried before you separately; but in determining any fact in issue, you may consider the testimony of all the witnesses, regardless of who may have called them, and all the exhibits received in evidence, regardless of who may have produced them.

If a preponderance of the evidence does not support each essential element of a claim, then the jury should find against the party having the burden of proof as to that claim.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 17

Although there are two sets of plaintiffs in this suit, the case of each is separate from and independent of the other.

The instructions govern the case as to each plaintiff so far as they are applicable to that plaintiff, unless otherwise stated. You will determine each plaintiff's case separately, the same as if you were trying different lawsuits.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 18

Although there is more than one defendant in this suit, it does not follow from that fact alone that if one is liable all are liable. Each defendant is entitled to a fair and separate consideration of that defendant's own defense and is not to be prejudiced by your decision as to the others. All instructions given apply to the case against each defendant unless otherwise stated.

You will decide each defendant's case separately.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 19

Remember that even during your deliberations, my mandate to you still applies that you not read any news stories or articles, listen to any radio, or watch any television reports about the case or about anyone who has 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 about the case on your own. And do not discuss the case in any manner with others, directly or through social media. You may only discuss the case with your fellow jurors during your deliberations, with all twelve of you present.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 20

Your verdict must represent the considered judgment of each juror. In order to return a verdict, it is necessary that each juror agree thereto. In other words, your verdict must be unanimous.

It is your duty as jurors to consult with one another and to deliberate with a view to reaching an agreement if you can do so without violence to individual judgment. Each of you must decide the case for yourself, but only after an impartial consideration of all the evidence in the case with your fellow jurors. In the course of your deliberations, do not hesitate to re-examine your own views, and change your opinion, if convinced it is erroneous. But do not surrender your honest conviction as to the weight or effect of the evidence, solely because of the opinion of your fellow jurors, or for the mere purpose of returning a verdict.

Remember at all times, you are not partisans. You are judges -- judges of the facts. Your sole interest is to seek the truth from the evidence in the case.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 21

Of course, the fact that I have given you instructions concerning the issue of plaintiff's damages should not be interpreted in any way as an indication that I believe the plaintiff should, or should not, prevail in this case.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 22

Some of you have taken notes during trial. Whether or not you took 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 your notes or those of your fellow jurors.

COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 23

Upon retiring to the jury room you should first select one of your number to act as your foreperson who will preside over your deliberations and will be your spokesperson here in court. A verdict form has been prepared for your convenience.

(Explain verdict)

You will take the verdict form to the jury room and when you have reached unanimous agreement as to your verdict, you will have your foreperson fill it in, date and sign it, and then return to the courtroom.

If, during your deliberations, you should desire to communicate with the Court, please reduce your message or question to writing signed by the foreperson. The foreperson will then contact the Courtroom Manager via the telephone located in the hallway outside the jury room. The Courtroom Manager will pick up the note and bring it to my attention. I will then respond as promptly as possible, either in writing or by having you returned to the courtroom so that I can address you orally. I caution you, however, with regard to any message or question you might send, that you should never state or specify your numerical division at the time.