

RULE 1.310 | DEPOSITIONS UPON ORAL EXAMINATION

(a) When Depositions May Be Taken. After commencement of the action any party may take the testimony of any person, including a party, by deposition upon oral examination. Leave of court, granted with or without notice, must be obtained only if the plaintiff seeks to take a deposition within 30 days after service of the process and initial pleading on any defendant, except that leave is not required (1) if a defendant has served a notice of taking deposition or otherwise sought discovery, or (2) if special notice is given as provided in subdivision (b) (2) of this rule. The attendance of witnesses may be compelled by subpoena as provided in rule 1.410. The deposition of a person confined in prison may be taken only by leave of court on such terms as the court prescribes.

(b) Notice; Method of Taking; Production at Deposition.

(1) A party desiring to take the deposition of any person on oral examination must give reasonable notice in writing to every other party to the action. The notice must state the time and place for taking the deposition and the name and address of each person to be examined, if known, and, if the name is not known, a general description sufficient to identify the person or the particular class or group to which the person belongs. If a subpoena duces tecum is to be served on the person to be examined, the designation of the materials to be produced under the subpoena must be attached to or included in the notice.

(2) Leave of court is not required for the taking of a deposition by plaintiff if the notice states that the person to be examined is about to go out of the state and will be unavailable for examination unless a deposition is taken before expiration of the 30-day period under subdivision (a). If a party shows that when served with notice under this subdivision that party was unable through the exercise of diligence to obtain counsel to represent the party at the taking of the deposition, the deposition may not be used against that party.

(3) For cause shown the court may enlarge or shorten the time for taking the deposition.



(4) Any deposition may be audiovisually recorded without leave of the court or stipulation of the parties, provided the deposition is taken in accordance with this subdivision.

(A) Notice. In addition to the requirements in subdivision (b)(1), a party intending to audiovisually record a deposition must:

i. state that the deposition is to audiovisually recorded in the title of the notice; and

ii. identify the method for audiovisually recording the deposition and, if applicable, provide the name and address of the operator of the audiovisual recording equipment in the body of the notice.

(B) Stenographer. Audiovisually recorded depositions must also be recorded stenographically, unless all parties agree otherwise.

(C) Procedure. At the beginning of the deposition, the officer before whom it is taken must, on camera:

(i) identify the style of the action,

(ii) state the date, and

(iii) put the witness under oath as provided in subdivision (c)(1).

(D) Responsibility for Recordings and Copies. The attorney for the party or the pro se party requesting the audiovisual recording of the deposition is responsible for safeguarding the recording, must permit the viewing of it by the opposing party, and, if requested, must provide access to a copy of the recording at the expense of the party requesting the copy.

(E) Cost of Audiovisually Recorded Depositions. The party requesting the audiovisual recording must bear the initial cost of the recording.

(5) The notice to a party deponent may be accompanied by a request made in compliance with rule 1.350 for the production of documents and tangible things at the



taking of the deposition. The procedure of rule 1.350 applies to the request. Rule 1.351 provides the exclusive procedure for obtaining documents or things by subpoena from nonparties without deposing the custodian or other person in possession of the documents.

(6) In the notice a party may name as the deponent a public or private corporation, a partnership or association, or a governmental agency, and designate with reasonable particularity the matters on which examination is requested. The organization so named must designate one or more officers, directors, or managing agents, or other persons who consent to do so, to testify on its behalf and may state the matters on which each person designated will testify. The persons so designated must testify about matters known or reasonably available to the organization. This subdivision does not preclude taking a deposition by any other procedure authorized in these rules.

(7) A deposition may be taken by communication technology, as that term is defined in Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.530, if stipulated by the parties or if ordered by the court on its own motion or on motion of a party. The order may prescribe the manner in which the deposition will be taken. In addition to the requirements of subdivision (b)(1), a party intending to take a deposition by communication technology must:

(A) state that the deposition is to be taken using communication technology in the title of the notice; and

(B) identify the specific form of communication technology to be used and provide instructions for access to the communication technology in the body of the notice.

(8) Any minor subpoenaed for testimony has the right to be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times during the taking of testimony notwithstanding the invocation of the rule of sequestration of section 90.616, Florida Statutes, except on a showing that the presence of a parent or guardian is likely to have a material, negative impact on the credibility or accuracy



of the minor's testimony, or that the interests of the parent or guardian are in actual or potential conflict with the interests of the minor.

(c) Examination and Cross-Examination; Record of Examination; Oath; Objections; Transcription.

(1) Examination and cross-examination of witnesses may proceed as permitted at the trial. The officer before whom the deposition is to be taken must put the witness under oath and must personally, or by someone acting under the officer's direction and in the officer's presence, record the testimony of the witness, except that when a deposition is being taken by communication technology under subdivision (b)(7), the witness must be put under oath as provided in Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.530(b)(2)(B). The testimony must be taken stenographically or audiovisually recorded under subdivision (b)(4). All objections made at the time of the examination to the qualifications of the officer taking the deposition, the manner of taking it, the evidence presented, or the conduct of any party, and any other objection to the proceedings must be noted by the officer on the deposition. Any objection during a deposition must be stated concisely and in a nonargumentative and nonsuggestive manner. A party may instruct a deponent not to answer only when necessary to preserve a privilege, to enforce a limitation on evidence directed by the court, or to present a motion under subdivision (d). Otherwise, evidence objected to must be taken subject to the objections. Instead of participating in the oral examination, parties may serve written questions in a sealed envelope on the party taking the deposition and that party must transmit them to the officer, who must propound them to the witness and record the answers verbatim.

(2) If requested by a party, the testimony must be transcribed at the initial cost of the requesting party and prompt notice of the request must be given to all other parties. A party who intends to use an audio or audiovisual recording of testimony at a hearing or trial must have the testimony transcribed and must file a copy of the transcript with the court.



(d) Motion to Terminate or Limit Examination. At any time during the taking of the deposition, on motion of a party or of the deponent and on a showing that the examination is being conducted in bad faith or in such manner as unreasonably to annoy, embarrass, or oppress the deponent or party, or that objection and instruction to a deponent not to answer are being made in violation of rule 1.310(c), the court in which the action is pending or the circuit court where the deposition is being taken may order the officer conducting the examination to cease immediately from taking the deposition or may limit the scope and manner of the taking of the deposition under rule 1.280(c). If the order terminates the examination, it shall be resumed thereafter only on the order of the court in which the action is pending. Upon demand of any party or the deponent, the taking of the deposition must be suspended for the time necessary to make a motion for an order. The provisions of rule 1.380(a) apply to the award of expenses incurred in relation to the motion.

(e) Witness Review. If the testimony is transcribed, the transcript must be furnished to the witness for examination and must be read to or by the witness unless the examination and reading are waived by the witness and by the parties. Any changes in form or substance that the witness wants to make must be listed in writing by the officer with a statement of the reasons given by the witness for making the changes. The changes must be attached to the transcript. It must then be signed by the witness unless the parties waived the signing or the witness is ill, cannot be found, or refuses to sign. If the transcript is not signed by the witness within a reasonable time after it is furnished to the witness, the officer must sign the transcript and state on the transcript the waiver, illness, absence of the witness, or refusal to sign with any reasons given therefor. The deposition may then be used as fully as though signed unless the court holds that the reasons given for the refusal to sign require rejection of the deposition wholly or partly, on motion under rule 1.330(d)(4).

(f) Filing; Exhibits.

(1) If the deposition is transcribed, the officer must certify on each copy of the deposition that the witness was duly sworn by the officer and that the deposition is a true record of the testimony given by the witness.



Documents and things produced for inspection during the examination of the witness must be marked for identification and annexed to and returned with the deposition on the request of a party, and may be inspected and copied by any party, except that the person producing the materials may substitute copies to be marked for identification if that person affords to all parties fair opportunity to verify the copies by comparison with the originals. If the person producing the materials requests their return, the officer must mark them, give each party an opportunity to inspect and copy them, and return them to the person producing them and the materials may then be used in the same manner as if annexed to and returned with the deposition.

(2) Upon payment of reasonable charges therefor the officer must furnish a copy of the deposition to any party or to the deponent.

(3) A copy of a deposition may be filed only under the following circumstances:

(A) It may be filed in compliance with Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.425 and rule 1.280(g) by a party or the witness when the contents of the deposition must be considered by the court on any matter pending before the court. Prompt notice of the filing of the deposition must be given to all parties unless notice is waived. A party filing the deposition must furnish a copy of the deposition or the part being filed to other parties unless the party already has a copy.

(B) If the court determines that a deposition previously taken is necessary for the decision of a matter pending before the court, the court may order that a copy be filed by any party at the initial cost of the party, and the filing party must comply with rules 2.425 and 1.280(g).

(g) Obtaining Copies. A party or witness who does not have a copy of the deposition may obtain it from the officer taking the deposition unless the court orders otherwise. If the deposition is obtained from a person other than the officer,



the reasonable cost of reproducing the copies must be paid to the person by the requesting party or witness.

(h) Failure to Attend or to Serve Subpoena; Expenses.

(1) If the party giving the notice of the taking of a deposition fails to attend and proceed therewith and another party attends in person or by attorney pursuant to the notice, the court may order the party giving the notice to pay to the other party the reasonable expenses incurred by the other party and the other party's attorney in attending, including reasonable attorneys' fees.

(2) If the party giving the notice of the taking of a deposition of a witness fails to serve a subpoena on the witness and the witness because of the failure does not attend and if another party attends in person or by attorney because that other party expects the deposition of that witness to be taken, the court may order the party giving the notice to pay to the other party the reasonable expenses incurred by that other party and that other party's attorney in attending, including reasonable attorneys' fees.

Committee Notes

1972 Amendment. Derived from Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 30 as amended in 1970. Subdivision (a) is derived from rule 1.280(a); subdivision (b) from rule 1.310(a) with additional matter added; the first sentence of subdivision (c) has been added and clarifying language added throughout the remainder of the rule.

1976 Amendment. Subdivision (b)(4) has been amended to allow the taking of a videotaped deposition as a matter of right. Provisions for the taxation of costs and the entry of a standard order are included as well. This new amendment allows the contemporaneous stenographic transcription of a videotaped deposition.

1988 Amendment. The amendments to subdivision (b)(4) are to provide for depositions by videotape as a matter of right. The notice provision is to ensure that specific notice is given that the deposition will be videotaped and to disclose the identity of the operator. It was decided not to make special provision for a number of days' notice.

The requirement that a stenographer be present (who is also the person likely to be swearing the deponent) is to ensure the availability of a transcript (although not required). The transcript would be a tool to ensure the accuracy of the videotape and thus eliminate the need to establish other procedures aimed at the same objective (like time clocks in the picture and the like). This does not mean that a transcript must be made. As at ordinary depositions, this would be up to the litigants.



Technical videotaping procedures were not included. It is anticipated that technical problems may be addressed by the court on motions to quash or motions for protective orders. Subdivision (c) has been amended to accommodate the taking of depositions by telephone. The amendment requires the deponent to be sworn by a person authorized to administer oaths in the deponent's location and who is present with the deponent.

1992 Amendment. Subdivision (b)(4)(D) is amended to clarify an ambiguity in whether the cost of the videotape copy is to be borne by the party requesting the videotaping or by the party requesting the copy. The amendment requires the party requesting the copy to bear the cost of the copy.

1996 Amendment. Subdivision (c) is amended to state the existing law, which authorizes attorneys to instruct deponents not to answer questions only in specific situations. This amendment is derived from Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 30(d) as amended in 1993.

2010 Amendment. Subdivision (b)(5) is amended to clarify that the procedure set forth in rule 1.351 must be followed when requesting or receiving documents or things without testimony, from nonparties pursuant to a subpoena. The amendment is intended to prevent the use of rules 1.310 and 1.410 to request documents from nonparties pursuant to a subpoena without giving the opposing party the opportunity to object to the subpoena before it is served on the nonparty as required by rule 1.351.

2011 Amendment. A reference to Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.425 and rule 1.280(f) is added to require persons filing discovery materials with the court to make sure that good cause exists prior to filing discovery materials and that certain specific personal information is redacted.

Court Commentary

1984 Amendment. Subdivision (b)(7) is added to authorize deposition by telephone, with provision for any party to have a stenographic transcription at that party's own initial expense.

Subdivision (d) is changed to permit any party to terminate the deposition, not just the objecting party.

Subdivision (e) is changed to eliminate the confusing requirement that a transcript be submitted to the witness. The term has been construed as requiring the court reporter to travel, if necessary, to the witness, and creates a problem when a witness is deposed in Florida and thereafter leaves the state before signing. The change is intended to permit the parties and the court reporter to handle such situations on an ad hoc basis as is most appropriate.

Subdivision (f) is the committee's action in response to the petition seeking amendment to rule 1.310(f) filed in the Supreme Court Case No. 62,699. Subdivision (f) is changed to clarify the need for furnishing copies when a deposition, or part of it, is properly filed, to authorize the court to require a deposition to be both transcribed and filed, and to specify that a party who does not obtain a copy of the deposition may get it from the court reporter unless ordered otherwise by the court. This eliminates the present requirement of furnishing a copy of the deposition, or material part of it, to a person who already has a copy in subdivision (f)(3)(A).



Subdivision (f)(3)(B) broadens the authority of the court to require the filing of a deposition that has been taken, but not transcribed.

Subdivision (g) requires a party to obtain a copy of the deposition from the court reporter unless the court orders otherwise. Generally, the court should not order a party who has a copy of the deposition to furnish it to someone who has neglected to obtain it when the deposition was transcribed. The person should obtain it from the court reporter unless there is a good reason why it cannot be obtained from the reporter.

