

# **United States District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee**



## **Guidelines for Creating a Clear Record in the Courtroom**

- Upon speaking for the first time, counsel should identify themselves for the record. Spell your name and state whom you represent.
- Instruct witnesses to clearly state and spell their names for the record.
- Give the court reporter the correct spellings of unusual or technical names and vocabulary or words used by counsel or witnesses that are frequently misunderstood.
- Speak clearly and audibly.
- Only one person should speak at a time.
- Avoid making noises when people are talking – paper riffling, opening binders, etc., can cover up voices.
- Make sure that any electronic device that is permitted in the courtroom is turned off or on silent mode.
- Wait until the courtroom is quiet to begin speaking.
- Be sure that verbal responses, rather than “uh huh” and gestures, are elicited from all witnesses.
- When reading from a document, read slowly and clearly.
- Avoid making any statements you do not want recorded.
- Remain within arm’s reach of a microphone at all times when speaking.
- Avoid tapping on or striking the table or microphone.
- When at a sidebar conference that is to be recorded, speak one at a time directly into the sidebar microphone.
- Counsel are responsible for covering these guidelines with their clients and witnesses.