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From: Bianca Cuellar <Bianca@201injury.com>
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To: Comments Mailbox
Subject: [External]Mandatory Virtual Jury Trials

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Dear Judge Grant,

Throughout the past several months, I have noticed that insurance carriers are using this pandemic as an excuse to not settle cases. They know that without the imminent threat of a jury trial, there is no motive for them to settle cases for fair value. They are making some offers, but they are not realistic. A recent example was a case that was arbitrated by an insurance company for \$350,000. I had filed an Offer of Judgment for the policy limits of \$100,000. Pre-COVID, this case would have settled, but I have been offered zero dollars. They know my only remedy is to settle cheaply or wait forever until the case is tried. That is unfair and constitutes bad faith. Unfortunately, I have no remedy and the client and I will wait until the case is reached for trial. Many of my colleagues have similar stories to share.

The solution I propose is to make all virtual trials mandatory. This will get the carrier's attention and help settle cases and reduce the backlog. I understand others are not in favor of the mandatory requirement, but in light of the recent state of the world, it is the only practical way to get these cases moving.

Respectfully,

Bianca N. Cuellar

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