§ 4317. When reference to determine may be used. (a) Upon consent of the parties. The parties may stipulate that any issue shall be determined by a referee. Upon the filing of the stipulation with the clerk, the clerk shall forthwith enter an order referring the issue for trial to the referee named therein. Where the stipulation does not name a referee, the court shall designate a referee. Leave of court and designation by it of the referee is required for references in matrimonial actions; actions against a corporation to obtain a dissolution, to appoint a receiver of its property, or to distribute its property, unless such action is brought by the attorney-general; or actions where a defendant is an infant.

(b) Without consent of the parties. On motion of any party or on its own initiative, the court may order a reference to determine a cause of action or an issue where the trial will require the examination of a long account, including actions to foreclose mechanic's liens; or to determine an issue of damages separately triable and not requiring a trial by jury; or where otherwise authorized by law.

(c) Transcript. Unless otherwise stipulated, a transcript of the testimony together with the exhibits or copies thereof of the issue heard before the referee shall be provided to all the parties involved upon payment of appropriate fees.