§ 510. Pretrial conference

At any time after issue has been joined, the court, in its discretion, may require the attendance of all parties and counsel at one or more pretrial conferences. The conferences shall be held for the purpose of settlement negotiation, or, in the alternative, to narrow the issues for trial, seek agreement among the parties and counsel as to the admissibility of evidence, seek agreement as to the order in which witnesses will be called, and otherwise provide for the speedy and orderly conduct of trial. Absent objection placed on the record, during a pretrial conference the court may confer with any party or parties and their counsel outside of the presence of any other party or parties and their respective counsel.