

RULE 205.2(a)      PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PLEADINGS AND OTHER  
LEGAL PAPERS

- (1) All documents filed in the Office of Prothonotary shall be on 8½ inch by 11 inch paper and shall comply with the following requirements:
  - (a) The document shall be prepared on white paper of good quality and the use of recycled paper is encouraged.
  - (b) The first sheet shall contain a 3-inch space from the top of the paper for all court stampings, filing notices, etc.
  - (c) The text must be double spaced, but quotations more than two lines long may be indented and single spaced. Except as provided in subsection b, margins must be at least one inch on all four sides.
  - (d) The lettering shall be clear, legible and no smaller than Arial 12 point.
  - (e) The lettering shall be on only one side of a page.
  - (f) All exhibit tabs shall appear at the bottom of the pleading.
  - (g) No backers shall be used on the original or any copies of pleadings or other legal papers filed with the Prothonotary. The original of pleadings or other legal papers should be stapled in the top left corner. If the document is over one-half inch thick, it should be secured with a binder clip. Backers may be used for copies provided to the court, opposing parties or clients.
  - (h) Exhibits or attachments smaller than 8½ inches by 11 inches shall be attached to a regular size paper by using adhesive tape.
  - (i) Pages shall be consecutively numbered beginning with page 2 and said number shall appear on the bottom center of the pleading.
  - (j) The name of the attorney or party, the address at which service can be made, a telephone number and email address of the attorney or party shall appear on the top left hand corner of the first page of all papers filed in the Office of the Prothonotary.
  - (k) With the initiating filing and all subsequent filings, in cases where medical malpractice is or will be alleged, the notation "Civil Action – Medical Professional Liability Action" shall appear on all captions directly underneath the docket number.

- (l) Any courtesy copies of filings that are provided to a judge and served on opposing parties must be firmly bound and any metal fasteners or staples must be securely covered with no sharp or protruding edges of any kind.
- (m) Filings of record may be referenced in any subsequent filing but shall not be attached thereto.
- (n) Unless required by an applicable law or rule of court or unless so directed by the court, parties or their attorneys may include only:
  - (1) the last four digits of the social security number or the taxpayer identification number;
  - (2) the year of the individual's birth;
  - (3) the last four digits of the financial account information

in documents filed with the Prothonotary. The responsibility for redacting these personal identifiers rests solely with the parties. Documents will not be reviewed by the Prothonotary for compliance with the rule. This rule applies to exhibits to pleadings and to exhibits entered into evidence in Court.
- (2) The Prothonotary shall endorse upon each paper filed, the date and time of its filing, and enter it upon the proper docket.
- (3) (a) All civil motions, petitions, administrative applications and answers or responses thereto shall be accompanied by a proposed order (or alternative orders).
- (b) The proposed order(s) shall contain a distribution legend which shall include the name(s) and mailing address(es), telephone number(s), facsimile number(s) and e-mail address(es), if any, of all attorneys and/or pro se parties to be served.
- (4) The judge(s) chambers shall:
  - (a) file the original order with the Prothonotary;
  - (b) prepare copies of the order for mailing;
  - (c) have the Prothonotary's Office certify the copies for mailing;
  - (d) mail copies of the certified order to all parties listed in the distribution legend;

- (e) note the date of mailing and the initials of the person who accomplished the mailing on the filed original order.

## COMMENT

Paragraph (3) of this rule is intended to formalize a practice of long standing in Dauphin County as well as the majority of other counties. The proposed order should identify the relief sought, e.g. continuance, rule to show cause, request status or discovery conference, amend a complaint, etc.

An accurate distribution legend naming all attorneys and/or pro se parties and their addresses, telephone numbers, facsimile numbers and e-mail addresses, if any, is essential since the court is now assuming the responsibility for service of its orders. Inclusion of facsimile numbers and e-mail addresses is not intended to authorize service by these methods.

Paragraph (4) of this rule is intended to formalize what is now a hybrid process which has left some doubt as to the responsibility for service of orders.

Pursuant to 23 Pa.C.S.A. §4304.1(a)(3), the complete Social Security Number is required when the divorce file is submitted to the court for entry of a divorce decree. Dauphin County uses a form entitled 'Divorce Information Sheet' for the collection of this information. This sheet is pulled from the Prothonotary's file after the entry of the divorce decree and is never available to the public.