

FEDERAL RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE

DECEMBER 1, 2025



Printed for the use
of
THE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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FOREWORD

This document contains the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure together with forms, as amended to December 1, 2025. The rules have been promulgated and amended by the United States Supreme Court pursuant to law, and further amended by Acts of Congress. This document has been prepared by the Committee in response to the need for an official up-to-date document containing the latest amendments to the rules.

For the convenience of the user, where a rule has been amended a reference to the date the amendment was promulgated and the date the amendment became effective follows the text of the rule.

The Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure and the Advisory Committee on the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Judicial Conference of the United States, prepared notes explaining the purpose and intent of the amendments to the rules. The Committee Notes may be found in the Appendix to Title 28, United States Code, following the particular rule to which they relate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Jordan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a stylized "Jordan".

Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary.

DECEMBER 1, 2025.

AUTHORITY FOR PROMULGATION OF RULES

TITLE 28, UNITED STATES CODE

§ 2072. Rules of procedure and evidence; power to prescribe

(a) The Supreme Court shall have the power to prescribe general rules of practice and procedure and rules of evidence for cases in the United States district courts (including proceedings before magistrate judges thereof) and courts of appeals.

(b) Such rules shall not abridge, enlarge or modify any substantive right. All laws in conflict with such rules shall be of no further force or effect after such rules have taken effect.

(c) Such rules may define when a ruling of a district court is final for the purposes of appeal under section 1291 of this title.

(Added Pub. L. 100-702, title IV, § 401(a), Nov. 19, 1988, 102 Stat. 4648, eff. Dec. 1, 1988; amended Pub. L. 101-650, title III, §§ 315, 321, Dec. 1, 1990, 104 Stat. 5115, 5117.)

§ 2073. Rules of procedure and evidence; method of prescribing

(a)(1) The Judicial Conference shall prescribe and publish the procedures for the consideration of proposed rules under this section.

(2) The Judicial Conference may authorize the appointment of committees to assist the Conference by recommending rules to be prescribed under sections 2072 and 2075 of this title. Each such committee shall consist of members of the bench and the professional bar, and trial and appellate judges.

(b) The Judicial Conference shall authorize the appointment of a standing committee on rules of practice, procedure, and evidence under subsection (a) of this section. Such standing committee shall review each recommendation of any other committees so appointed and recommend to the Judicial Conference rules of practice, procedure, and evidence and such changes in rules proposed by a committee appointed under subsection (a)(2) of this section as may be necessary to maintain consistency and otherwise promote the interest of justice.

(c)(1) Each meeting for the transaction of business under this chapter by any committee appointed under this section shall be open to the public, except when the committee so meeting, in open session and with a majority present, determines that it is in the public interest that all or part of the remainder of the meeting on that day shall be closed to the public, and states the reason for so closing the meeting. Minutes of each meeting for the transaction of business under this chapter shall be maintained by the committee and made available to the public, except that any portion of such minutes, relating to a closed meeting and made available to the public, may contain such deletions as may be necessary to avoid frustrating the purposes of closing the meeting.

(2) Any meeting for the transaction of business under this chapter, by a committee appointed under this section, shall be preceded by sufficient notice to enable all interested persons to attend.

(d) In making a recommendation under this section or under section 2072 or 2075, the body making that recommendation shall provide a proposed rule, an explanatory note on the rule, and a written report explaining the body's action, including any minority or other separate views.

(e) Failure to comply with this section does not invalidate a rule prescribed under section 2072 or 2075 of this title.

(Added Pub. L. 100-702, title IV, § 401(a), Nov. 19, 1988, 102 Stat. 4649, eff. Dec. 1, 1988; amended Pub. L. 103-394, title I, § 104(e), Oct. 22, 1994, 108 Stat. 4110.)

§ 2074. Rules of procedure and evidence; submission to Congress; effective date

(a) The Supreme Court shall transmit to the Congress not later than May 1 of the year in which a rule prescribed under section 2072 is to become effective a copy of the proposed rule. Such rule shall take effect no earlier than December 1 of the year in which such rule is so transmitted unless otherwise provided by law. The Supreme Court may fix the extent such rule shall apply to proceedings then pending, except that the Supreme Court shall not require the application of such rule to further proceedings then pending to the extent that, in the opinion of the court in which such proceedings are pending, the application of such rule in such proceedings would not be feasible or would work injustice, in which event the former rule applies.

(b) Any such rule creating, abolishing, or modifying an evidentiary privilege shall have no force or effect unless approved by Act of Congress.

(Added Pub. L. 100-702, title IV, § 401(a), Nov. 19, 1988, 102 Stat. 4649, eff. Dec. 1, 1988.)

HISTORICAL NOTE

The Supreme Court prescribes rules of civil procedure for the district courts pursuant to section 2072 of Title 28, United States Code, as enacted by Title IV “Rules Enabling Act” of Pub. L. 100-702 (approved November 19, 1988, 102 Stat. 4648), effective December 1, 1988. Pursuant to section 2074 of Title 28, the Supreme Court transmits to Congress (not later than May 1 of the year in which a rule prescribed under section 2072 is to become effective) a copy of the proposed rule. The rule takes effect no earlier than December 1 of the year in which the rule is transmitted unless otherwise provided by law.

By act of June 19, 1934, ch. 651, 48 Stat. 1064 (subsequently 28 United States Code, §2072), the Supreme Court was authorized to prescribe general rules of civil procedure for the district courts. The rules, and subsequent amendments, were not to take effect until (1) they had been first reported to Congress by the Attorney General at the beginning of a regular session and (2) after the close of that session.

Under a 1949 amendment to 28 U.S.C., §2072, the Chief Justice of the United States, instead of the Attorney General, reported the rules to Congress. In 1950, section 2072 was further amended so that amendments to the rules could be reported to Congress not later than May 1 each year and become effective 90 days after being reported. Effective December 1, 1988, section 2072 was repealed and supplanted by new sections 2072 and 2074, see first paragraph of Historical Note above.

The original rules, pursuant to act of June 19, 1934, were adopted by order of the Court on December 20, 1937, transmitted to Congress by the Attorney General on January 3, 1938, and became effective September 16, 1938 (308 U.S. 645; Cong. Rec., vol. 83, pt. 1, p. 13, Exec. Comm. 905; H. Doc. 460 and H. Doc. 588, 75th Cong.)

Rule 81(a)(6) was abrogated by order of the Court on December 28, 1939, transmitted to Congress by the Attorney General on January 3, 1940, effective April 3, 1941 (308 U.S. 642; Cong. Rec., vol. 86, pt. 1, p. 14, Exec. Comm. 1152).

Further amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated December 27, 1946, transmitted to Congress by the Attorney General on January 3, 1947, and became effective March 19, 1948 (329 U.S. 839; Cong. Rec., vol. 93, pt. 1, p. 41, Exec. Comm. 32; H. Doc. 46 and H. Doc. 473, 80th Cong.). The amendments affected Rules 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 17, 24, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 36, 41, 45, 52, 54, 56, 58, 59, 60, 62, 65, 66, 68, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 84, and 86, and Forms 17, 20, 22, and 25.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated December 29, 1948, transmitted to Congress by the Attorney General on January 3, 1949, and became effective October 20, 1949 (335 U.S. 919; Cong. Rec., vol. 95, pt. 1, p. 94, Exec. Comm. 24; H.

Doc. 33, 81st Cong.). The amendments affected Rules 1, 17, 22, 24, 25, 27, 37, 45, 57, 60, 62, 65, 66, 67, 69, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 79, 81, 82, and 86, and Forms 1, 19, 22, 23, and 27.

Amendment to Rule 81(a)(7) and new Rule 71A and Forms 28 and 29 were adopted by the Court by order dated April 30, 1951, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on May 1, 1951, and became effective August 1, 1951 (341 U.S. 959; Cong. Rec., vol. 97, pt. 4, p. 4666, Exec. Comm. 414; H. Doc. 121, 82d Cong.).

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 17, 1961, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on April 18, 1961, and became effective July 19, 1961 (368 U.S. 1009; Cong. Rec., vol. 107, pt. 5, p. 6524, Exec. Comm. 821). The amendments affected Rules 25, 54, 62, and 86, and Forms 2 and 19.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated January 21, 1963, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (374 U.S. 861; Cong. Rec., vol. 109, pt. 1, p. 1037, Exec. Comm. 267; H. Doc. 48, 88th Cong.), and became effective July 1, 1963, by order of the Court dated March 18, 1963 (374 U.S. 861; Cong. Rec., vol. 109, pt. 4, p. 4639, Exec. Comm. 569; H. Doc. 48, pt. 2, 88th Cong.; see also H. Doc. 67, 88th Cong.). The amendments affected Rules 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30, 41, 49, 50, 52, 56, 58, 71A, 77, 79, 81, and 86, and Forms 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 18, 21, 22-A, and 22-B, and added Forms 30, 31, and 32.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated February 28, 1966, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (383 U.S. 1029; Cong. Rec., vol. 112, pt. 4, p. 4229, Exec. Comm. 2094; H. Doc. 391, 89th Cong.), and became effective July 1, 1966. The amendments affected Rules 1, 4, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 26, 38, 41, 42, 43, 44, 47, 53, 59, 65, 68, 73, 74, 75, 81, and 82, and Forms 2 and 15, and added Rules 23.1, 23.2, 44.1, and 65.1, and Supplemental Rules A, B, C, D, E, and F for certain Admiralty and Maritime claims. The amendments govern all proceedings in actions brought after they became effective and also all further proceedings in actions then pending, except to the extent that in the opinion of the Court an application in a particular action then pending would not be feasible or would work injustice, in which event the former procedure applies.

In addition, Rule 6(c) of the Rules of Civil Procedure promulgated by the Court on December 20, 1937, effective September 16, 1938; Rule 2 of the Rules for Practice and Procedure under section 25 of an act to amend and consolidate the acts respecting copyright, approved March 4, 1909, promulgated by the Court on June 1, 1909, effective July 1, 1909; and the Rules of Practice in Admiralty and Maritime Cases, promulgated by the Court on December 6, 1920, effective March 7, 1921, as revised, amended and supplemented, were rescinded, effective July 1, 1966.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated December 4, 1967, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on January 15, 1968 (389 U.S. 1121; Cong. Rec., vol. 114, pt. 1, p. 113, Exec. Comm. 1361; H. Doc. 204, 90th Cong.), and became effective July 1, 1968. The amendments affected Rules 6(b), 9(h), 41(a)(1), 77(d), and 81(a), and abrogated the chapter heading "IX. Appeals" and Rules 72-76, and Form 27.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated March 30, 1970, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (398 U.S. 977; Cong. Rec., vol. 116, pt. 7, p. 9861, Exec. Comm. 1839; H. Doc. 91-291), and became effective July 1, 1970. The amendments affected Rules 5(a), 9(h), 26, 29 to 37, 45(d), and 69(a), and Form 24.

On March 1, 1971, the Court adopted additional amendments, which were transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (401 U.S. 1017; Cong. Rec., vol. 117, pt. 4, p. 4629, Exec. Comm. 341; H. Doc. 92-57), and became effective July 1, 1971. The amendments affected Rules 6(a), 27(a)(4), 30(b)(6), 77(c), and 81(a)(2).

Further amendments were proposed by the Court in its orders dated November 20 and December 18, 1972, and transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on February 5, 1973 (409 U.S. 1132 and 419 U.S. 1133; Cong. Rec., vol. 119, pt. 3, p. 3247, Exec. Comm. 359; H. Doc. 93-46). Although these amendments were to have become effective July 1, 1973, Public Law 93-12 (approved March 30, 1973, 87 Stat. 9) provided that the proposed amendments "shall have no force or effect except to the extent, and with such amendments, as they may be expressly approved by Act of Congress." Section 3 of Public Law 93-595 (approved January 2, 1975, 88 Stat. 1949) approved the amendments proposed by the Court, to be effective July 1, 1975. The amendments affected Rules 30(c), 43, and 44.1, and abrogated Rule 32(c).

On April 29, 1980, the Court adopted additional amendments, which were transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (446 U.S. 995; Cong. Rec., vol. 126, pt. 8, p. 9535, Exec. Comm. 4260; H. Doc. 96-306), and became effective August 1, 1980. The amendments affected Rules 4, 5, 26, 28, 30, 32, 33, 34, 37, and 45.

Section 205(a) and (b) of Public Law 96-481 (approved October 21, 1980, 94 Stat. 2330) repealed Rule 37(f) and deleted the corresponding item from the Table of Contents, to be effective October 1, 1981.

Amendments to Rule 4 were adopted by the Court by order dated April 28, 1982, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (456 U.S. 1013; Cong. Rec., vol. 128, pt. 6, p. 8191, Exec. Comm. 3822; H. Doc. 97-173), and became effective August 1, 1982. However, Public Law 97-227 (approved August 2, 1982, 96 Stat. 246) provided that the amendments to Rule 4 shall take effect on October 1, 1983, unless previously approved, disapproved, or modified by Act of Congress, and further provided that this Act shall be effective as of August 1, 1982, but shall not apply to the service of process that takes place between August 1, 1982, and the date of enactment of this Act [August 2, 1982]. Section 5 of Public Law 97-462 (approved January 12, 1983, 96 Stat. 2530) provided that the amendments to Rule 4 the effective date of which was delayed by Public Law 97-227 shall not take effect. Sections 2 to 4 of Public Law 97-462 amended Rule 4(a), (c) to (e), and (g), added Rule 4(j), and added Form 18-A in the Appendix of Forms, effective 45 days after enactment of Public Law 97-462 [February 26, 1983].

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 28, 1983, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (461 U.S. 1095; Cong. Rec., vol. 129, pt. 8, p. 10479, Exec. Comm. 1027; H. Doc. 98-54), and became effective August 1,

1983. The amendments included new Rules 26(g), 53(f), 72 through 76 and new Official Forms 33 and 34, and amendments to Rules 6(b), 7(b), 11, 16, 26(a), (b), 52(a), 53(a), (b), (c), and 67.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 29, 1985, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (471 U.S. 1153; Cong. Rec., vol. 131, pt. 7, p. 9826, Exec. Comm. 1156; H. Doc. 99-63), and became effective August 1, 1985. The amendments affected Rules 6(a), 45(d)(2), 52(a), 71A(h), and 83, Official Form 18-A, and Rules B(1), C(3), and E(4)(f) of the Supplemental Rules for Certain Admiralty and Maritime Claims.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated March 2, 1987, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (480 U.S. 953; Cong. Rec., vol. 133, pt. 4, p. 4448, Exec. Comm. 714; H. Doc. 100-40), and became effective August 1, 1987. The amendments affected Rules 4(b), (d)(1), (e), (i)(1), 5(b), (e), 6(e), 8(a), (b), (e)(2), 9(a), 11, 12(a), (b), (e) to (g), 13(a), (e), (f), 14, 15, 16(f), 17, 18, 19(a), (b), 20(b), 22(1), 23(c)(2), 23.1, 24(a), 25(b), (d), 26(b)(3), (e)(1), (2), (f)(5), (g), 27(a)(1), (b), 28(b), 30(b)(1), (2), (4), (6), (7), (c), (e), (f)(1), (g), 31(a), (b), 32(a)(4), 34(a), 35(a), (b)(1), (2), 36, 37(a)(2), (b)(2), (c), (d), (g), 38(c), (d), 41(a)(2), (b), 43(f), 44(a)(1), 44.1, 45(c), (f), 46, 49(a), 50(b), (d), 51, 53(a), (c) to (e)(1), (3), (5), 54(c), 55(a), (b), (e), 56(a), (b), (e) to (g), 60(b), 62(f), 63, 65(b), 65.1, 68, 69, 71, 71A(d)(2), (3)(ii), (e) to (g), (j), 73(b), 75(b)(2), (c)(1), (2), (4), 77(c), 78, and 81(c), and Rules B, C(3), (6), E(2)(b), (4)(b), (c), (5)(c), (9)(b), (c), and F(1) to (6) of the Supplemental Rules for Certain Admiralty and Maritime Claims.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 25, 1988, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (485 U.S. 1043; Cong. Rec., vol. 134, pt. 7, p. 9154, Exec. Comm. 3515; H. Doc. 100-185), and became effective August 1, 1988. The amendments affected Rules 17(a) and 71A(e).

Section 7047(b) of Public Law 100-690 (approved November 18, 1988, 102 Stat. 4401) amended Rule 35. Section 7049 of Public Law 100-690, which directed amendment of Rule 17(a) by striking “with him”, and section 7050 of Public Law 100-690, which directed amendment of Rule 71A(e) by striking “taking of the defendants property” and inserting “taking of the defendant’s property”, could not be executed because of the intervening amendments to those Rules by the Court by order dated April 25, 1988, effective August 1, 1988.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 30, 1991, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (500 U.S. 963; Cong. Rec., vol. 137, pt. 7, p. 9721, Ex. Comm. 1190; H. Doc. 102-77), and became effective December 1, 1991. The amendments affected Rules 5, 15, 24, 34, 35, 41, 44, 45, 47, 48, 50, 52, 53, 63, 72, and 77, the headings for chapters VIII and IX, and Rules C and E of the Supplemental Rules for Certain Admiralty and Maritime Claims, added new Official Forms 1A and 1B, and abrogated Form 18-A.

Section 11 of Pub. L. 102-198 (approved December 9, 1991, 105 Stat. 1626) amended Rule 15(c)(3) as transmitted to Congress by the Supreme Court to become effective on December 1, 1991; provided that Forms 1A and 1B included in the transmittal shall not

be effective; and provided that Form 18-A, abrogated by the Supreme Court in the transmittal, effective December 1, 1991, shall continue in effect on or after that date.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 22, 1993, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (507 U.S. 1089; Cong. Rec., vol. 139, pt. 6, p. 8127, Ex. Comm. 1102; H. Doc. 103-74), and became effective December 1, 1993. The amendments affected Rules 1, 4, 5, 11, 12, 15, 16, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 50, 52, 53, 54, 58, 71A, 72, 73, 74, 75, and 76, added new Rule 4.1, affected Forms 2, 33, 34, and 34A, added new Forms 1A, 1B, and 35, and abrogated Form 18-A.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 27, 1995, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (514 U.S. 1151; Cong. Rec., vol. 141, pt. 8, p. 11745, Ex. Comm. 804; H. Doc. 104-64), and became effective December 1, 1995. The amendments affected Rules 50, 52, 59, and 83.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 23, 1996, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (517 U.S. 1279; Cong. Rec., vol. 142, pt. 6, p. 8831, Ex. Comm. 2487; H. Doc. 104-201), and became effective December 1, 1996. The amendments affected Rules 5 and 43.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 11, 1997, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (520 U.S. 1305; Cong. Rec., vol. 143, pt. 4, p. 5551, Ex. Comm. 2795; H. Doc. 105-67), and became effective December 1, 1997. The amendments affected Rules 9 and 73, abrogated Rules 74, 75, and 76, and affected Forms 33 and 34.

An additional amendment was adopted by the Court by order dated April 24, 1998, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (523 U.S. 1221; H. Doc. 105-266), and became effective December 1, 1998. The amendment affected Rule 23.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 26, 1999, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (526 U.S. 1183; Cong. Rec., vol. 145, pt. 6, p. 7907, Ex. Comm. 1787; H. Doc. 106-54), and became effective December 1, 1999. The amendments affected Rule 6 and Form 2.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 17, 2000, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (529 U.S. 1155; Cong. Rec., vol. 146, pt. 5, p. 6328, Ex. Comm. 7336; H. Doc. 106-228), and became effective December 1, 2000. The amendments affected Rules 4, 5, 12, 14, 26, 30, and 37 and Rules B, C, and E of the Supplemental Rules for Certain Admiralty and Maritime Claims.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 23, 2001, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (532 U.S. 1085; Cong. Rec., vol. 147, pt. 5, p. 6126, Ex. Comm. 1575; H. Doc. 107-61), and became effective December 1, 2001. The amendments affected Rules 5, 6, 65, 77, 81, and 82.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 29, 2002, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (535 U.S. 1147; Cong. Rec., vol. 148, pt. 5, p. 6813, Ex. Comm. 6623; H. Doc. 107-204), and became effective December 1, 2002. The amendments affected Rules 54, 58, and 81 and Rule C of the Supplemental Rules for Certain Admiralty and Maritime Claims and added new Rule 7.1.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated March 27, 2003, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (538 U.S. 1083; Cong. Rec., vol. 149, pt. 6, p. 7689, Ex. Comm. 1493; H. Doc. 108–56), and became effective December 1, 2003. The amendments affected Rules 23, 51, 53, 54, and 71A and Forms 19, 31, and 32.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 25, 2005, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (544 U.S. 1173; Cong. Rec., vol. 151, pt. 7, p. 8784, Ex. Comm. 1906; H. Doc. 109–23), and became effective December 1, 2005. The amendments affected Rules 6, 27, and 45, and Rules B and C of the Supplemental Rules for Certain Admiralty and Maritime Claims.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 12, 2006, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (547 U.S. 1233; Cong. Rec., vol. 152, pt. 6, p. 7213, Ex. Comm. 7317; H. Doc. 109–105), and became effective December 1, 2006. The amendments affected Rules 5, 9, 14, 16, 24, 26, 33, 34, 37, 45, 50, and 65.1, added new Rule 5.1, affected Form 35, affected Rules A, C, and E of the Supplemental Rules for Admiralty or Maritime Claims and Asset Forfeiture Actions, and added new Rule G to such Supplemental Rules.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 30, 2007, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (550 U.S. 1003; Cong. Rec., vol. 153, pt. 8, p. 10612, Ex. Comm. 1377; H. Doc. 110–27), and became effective December 1, 2007. The amendments affected Rules 1 through 86 and added new Rule 5.2; Forms 1 through 35 were amended to become restyled Forms 1 through 82.

An additional amendment was adopted by the Court by order dated April 23, 2008, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (553 U.S. 1149; Cong. Rec., vol. 154, pt. 8, p. 11078, Ex. Comm. 6881; H. Doc. 110–117), and became effective December 1, 2008. The amendment affected Rule C of the Supplemental Rules for Admiralty or Maritime Claims and Asset Forfeiture Actions.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated March 26, 2009, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on March 25, 2009 (556 U.S. 1341; Cong. Rec., vol. 155, pt. 8, p. 10210, Ex. Comm. 1264; H. Doc. 111–29), and became effective December 1, 2009. The amendments affected Rules 6, 12, 13, 14, 15, 23, 27, 32, 38, 48, 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 59, 62, 65, 68, 71.1, 72, and 81, added new Rule 62.1, and affected Forms 3, 4, and 60, and Rules B, C, and G of the Supplemental Rules for Admiralty or Maritime Claims and Asset Forfeiture Actions.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 28, 2010, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (559 U.S. 1139; Cong. Rec., vol. 156, pt. 6, p. 8139, Ex. Comm. 7473; H. Doc. 111–111), and became effective December 1, 2010. The amendments affected Rules 8, 26, and 56, and Form 52.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 16, 2013, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (569 U.S. 1149; Cong. Rec., vol. 159, pt. 5, p. 6968, Ex. Comm. 1495; H. Doc. 113–29), and became effective December 1, 2013. The amendments affected Rules 37 and 45.

An additional amendment was adopted by the Court by order dated April 25, 2014, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (572 U.S. 1217; Cong. Rec., vol. 160, pt. 11, p. 15506, Ex. Comm. 7579; H. Doc. 113–163), and became effective December 1, 2014. The amendment affected Rule 77.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 29, 2015, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (575 U.S. 1055; Cong. Rec., vol. 161, pt. 5, p. 6139, Ex. Comm. 1373; H. Doc. 114–33), and became effective December 1, 2015. The amendments affected Rules 1, 4, 16, 26, 30, 31, 33, 34, 37, and 55, abrogated Rule 84, and abrogated the Appendix of Forms (Forms 1 through 82).

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 28, 2016, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (578 U.S. 1061; Cong. Rec., vol. 162, pt. 4, p. 5467, Ex. Comm. 5233; H. Doc. 114–128), and became effective December 1, 2016. The amendments affected Rules 4, 6, and 82.

An additional amendment was adopted by the Court by order dated April 27, 2017, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (581 U.S. 1049; Cong. Rec., vol. 163, pt. 6, p. 7574, Ex. Comm. 1255; H. Doc. 115–33), and became effective December 1, 2017. The amendment affected Rule 4.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 26, 2018, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (584 U.S. 1077; Cong. Rec., vol. 164, p. H3927, Daily Issue, Ex. Comm. 4789; H. Doc. 115–119), and became effective December 1, 2018. The amendments affected Rules 5, 23, 62, and 65.1.

An additional amendment was adopted by the Court by order dated April 27, 2020, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (590 U.S. 1033; Cong. Rec., vol. 166, p. H4223, Daily Issue, Ex. Comm. 4923; H. Doc. 116–145), and became effective December 1, 2020. The amendment affected Rule 30.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 11, 2022, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (596 U.S.—; Cong. Rec., vol. 168, p. H4442, Daily Issue, Ex. Comm. 3741; H. Doc. 117–110), and became effective December 1, 2022. The amendments affected Rule 7.1 and added Supplemental Rules for Social Security Review Actions Under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) (Rules 1 to 8).

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 24, 2023, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (599 U.S.—; Cong. Rec., vol. 169, p. H1944, Daily Issue, Ex. Comm. 791; H. Doc. 118–30), and became effective December 1, 2023. The amendments affected Rules 6, 15, and 72, and added new Rule 87.

An additional amendment was adopted by the Court by order dated April 2, 2024, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (602 U.S.—; Cong. Rec., vol. 170, p. H2134, Daily Issue, Ex. Comm. 3645; H. Doc. 118–125), and became effective December 1, 2024. The amendment affected Rule 12.

Additional amendments were adopted by the Court by order dated April 23, 2025, transmitted to Congress by the Chief Justice on the same day (604 U.S.—; Cong. Rec., vol. 171, p. H1622, Daily

Issue, Ex. Comm. 771; H. Doc. 119–44), and became effective December 1, 2025. The amendments affected Rules 16 and 26, and added new Rule 16.1.

Committee Notes

Committee Notes prepared by the Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure and the Advisory Committee on the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Judicial Conference of the United States, explaining the purpose and intent of the amendments are set out in the Appendix to Title 28, United States Code, following the particular rule to which they relate. In addition, the rules and amendments, together with Committee Notes, are set out in the House documents listed above.

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RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE
FOR THE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURTS ¹

Effective September 16, 1938, as amended to December 1, 2025

TITLE I. SCOPE OF RULES; FORM OF ACTION

Rule 1. Scope and Purpose

These rules govern the procedure in all civil actions and proceedings in the United States district courts, except as stated in Rule 81. They should be construed, administered, and employed by the court and the parties to secure the just, speedy, and inexpensive determination of every action and proceeding.

(As amended Dec. 29, 1948, eff. Oct. 20, 1949; Feb. 28, 1966, eff. July 1, 1966; Apr. 22, 1993, eff. Dec. 1, 1993; Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007; Apr. 29, 2015, eff. Dec. 1, 2015.)

Rule 2. One Form of Action

There is one form of action—the civil action.

(As amended Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007.)

**TITLE II. COMMENCING AN ACTION; SERVICE OF PROCESS,
PLEADINGS, MOTIONS, AND ORDERS**

Rule 3. Commencing an Action

A civil action is commenced by filing a complaint with the court.

(As amended Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007.)

Rule 4. Summons

(a) CONTENTS; AMENDMENTS.

(1) *Contents*. A summons must:

- (A) name the court and the parties;
- (B) be directed to the defendant;
- (C) state the name and address of the plaintiff's attorney or—if unrepresented—of the plaintiff;
- (D) state the time within which the defendant must appear and defend;
- (E) notify the defendant that a failure to appear and defend will result in a default judgment against the defendant for the relief demanded in the complaint;
- (F) be signed by the clerk; and
- (G) bear the court's seal.

¹ Title amended December 29, 1948, effective October 20, 1949.

(2) *Amendments.* The court may permit a summons to be amended.

(b) *ISSUANCE.* On or after filing the complaint, the plaintiff may present a summons to the clerk for signature and seal. If the summons is properly completed, the clerk must sign, seal, and issue it to the plaintiff for service on the defendant. A summons—or a copy of a summons that is addressed to multiple defendants—must be issued for each defendant to be served.

(c) *SERVICE.*

(1) *In General.* A summons must be served with a copy of the complaint. The plaintiff is responsible for having the summons and complaint served within the time allowed by Rule 4(m) and must furnish the necessary copies to the person who makes service.

(2) *By Whom.* Any person who is at least 18 years old and not a party may serve a summons and complaint.

(3) *By a Marshal or Someone Specially Appointed.* At the plaintiff's request, the court may order that service be made by a United States marshal or deputy marshal or by a person specially appointed by the court. The court must so order if the plaintiff is authorized to proceed in forma pauperis under 28 U.S.C. § 1915 or as a seaman under 28 U.S.C. § 1916.

(d) *WAIVING SERVICE.*

(1) *Requesting a Waiver.* An individual, corporation, or association that is subject to service under Rule 4(e), (f), or (h) has a duty to avoid unnecessary expenses of serving the summons. The plaintiff may notify such a defendant that an action has been commenced and request that the defendant waive service of a summons. The notice and request must:

(A) be in writing and be addressed:

(i) to the individual defendant; or

(ii) for a defendant subject to service under Rule 4(h), to an officer, a managing or general agent, or any other agent authorized by appointment or by law to receive service of process;

(B) name the court where the complaint was filed;

(C) be accompanied by a copy of the complaint, 2 copies of the waiver form appended to this Rule 4, and a prepaid means for returning the form;

(D) inform the defendant, using the form appended to this Rule 4, of the consequences of waiving and not waiving service;

(E) state the date when the request is sent;

(F) give the defendant a reasonable time of at least 30 days after the request was sent—or at least 60 days if sent to the defendant outside any judicial district of the United States—to return the waiver; and

(G) be sent by first-class mail or other reliable means.

(2) *Failure to Waive.* If a defendant located within the United States fails, without good cause, to sign and return a waiver requested by a plaintiff located within the United States, the court must impose on the defendant:

(A) the expenses later incurred in making service; and

(B) the reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees, of any motion required to collect those service expenses.

(3) *Time to Answer After a Waiver.* A defendant who, before being served with process, timely returns a waiver need not serve an answer to the complaint until 60 days after the request was sent—or until 90 days after it was sent to the defendant outside any judicial district of the United States.

(4) *Results of Filing a Waiver.* When the plaintiff files a waiver, proof of service is not required and these rules apply as if a summons and complaint had been served at the time of filing the waiver.

(5) *Jurisdiction and Venue Not Waived.* Waiving service of a summons does not waive any objection to personal jurisdiction or to venue.

(e) **SERVING AN INDIVIDUAL WITHIN A JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE UNITED STATES.** Unless federal law provides otherwise, an individual—other than a minor, an incompetent person, or a person whose waiver has been filed—may be served in a judicial district of the United States by:

(1) following state law for serving a summons in an action brought in courts of general jurisdiction in the state where the district court is located or where service is made; or

(2) doing any of the following:

(A) delivering a copy of the summons and of the complaint to the individual personally;

(B) leaving a copy of each at the individual's dwelling or usual place of abode with someone of suitable age and discretion who resides there; or

(C) delivering a copy of each to an agent authorized by appointment or by law to receive service of process.

(f) **SERVING AN INDIVIDUAL IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY.** Unless federal law provides otherwise, an individual—other than a minor, an incompetent person, or a person whose waiver has been filed—may be served at a place not within any judicial district of the United States:

(1) by any internationally agreed means of service that is reasonably calculated to give notice, such as those authorized by the Hague Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extrajudicial Documents;

(2) if there is no internationally agreed means, or if an international agreement allows but does not specify other means, by a method that is reasonably calculated to give notice:

(A) as prescribed by the foreign country's law for service in that country in an action in its courts of general jurisdiction;

(B) as the foreign authority directs in response to a letter rogatory or letter of request; or

(C) unless prohibited by the foreign country's law, by:

(i) delivering a copy of the summons and of the complaint to the individual personally; or

(ii) using any form of mail that the clerk addresses and sends to the individual and that requires a signed receipt; or

(3) by other means not prohibited by international agreement, as the court orders.

(g) **SERVING A MINOR OR AN INCOMPETENT PERSON.** A minor or an incompetent person in a judicial district of the United States

must be served by following state law for serving a summons or like process on such a defendant in an action brought in the courts of general jurisdiction of the state where service is made. A minor or an incompetent person who is not within any judicial district of the United States must be served in the manner prescribed by Rule 4(f)(2)(A), (f)(2)(B), or (f)(3).

(h) SERVING A CORPORATION, PARTNERSHIP, OR ASSOCIATION. Unless federal law provides otherwise or the defendant's waiver has been filed, a domestic or foreign corporation, or a partnership or other unincorporated association that is subject to suit under a common name, must be served:

(1) in a judicial district of the United States:

(A) in the manner prescribed by Rule 4(e)(1) for serving an individual; or

(B) by delivering a copy of the summons and of the complaint to an officer, a managing or general agent, or any other agent authorized by appointment or by law to receive service of process and—if the agent is one authorized by statute and the statute so requires—by also mailing a copy of each to the defendant; or

(2) at a place not within any judicial district of the United States, in any manner prescribed by Rule 4(f) for serving an individual, except personal delivery under (f)(2)(C)(i).

(i) SERVING THE UNITED STATES AND ITS AGENCIES, CORPORATIONS, OFFICERS, OR EMPLOYEES.

(1) *United States*. To serve the United States, a party must:

(A)(i) deliver a copy of the summons and of the complaint to the United States attorney for the district where the action is brought—or to an assistant United States attorney or clerical employee whom the United States attorney designates in a writing filed with the court clerk—or

(ii) send a copy of each by registered or certified mail to the civil-process clerk at the United States attorney's office;

(B) send a copy of each by registered or certified mail to the Attorney General of the United States at Washington, D.C.; and

(C) if the action challenges an order of a nonparty agency or officer of the United States, send a copy of each by registered or certified mail to the agency or officer.

(2) *Agency; Corporation; Officer or Employee Sued in an Official Capacity*. To serve a United States agency or corporation, or a United States officer or employee sued only in an official capacity, a party must serve the United States and also send a copy of the summons and of the complaint by registered or certified mail to the agency, corporation, officer, or employee.

(3) *Officer or Employee Sued Individually*. To serve a United States officer or employee sued in an individual capacity for an act or omission occurring in connection with duties performed on the United States' behalf (whether or not the officer or employee is also sued in an official capacity), a party must serve the United States and also serve the officer or employee under Rule 4(e), (f), or (g).

(4) *Extending Time*. The court must allow a party a reasonable time to cure its failure to:

- (A) serve a person required to be served under Rule 4(i)(2), if the party has served either the United States attorney or the Attorney General of the United States; or
 - (B) serve the United States under Rule 4(i)(3), if the party has served the United States officer or employee.
- (j) SERVING A FOREIGN, STATE, OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT.
 - (1) *Foreign State*. A foreign state or its political subdivision, agency, or instrumentality must be served in accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1608.
 - (2) *State or Local Government*. A state, a municipal corporation, or any other state-created governmental organization that is subject to suit must be served by:
 - (A) delivering a copy of the summons and of the complaint to its chief executive officer; or
 - (B) serving a copy of each in the manner prescribed by that state's law for serving a summons or like process on such a defendant.
- (k) TERRITORIAL LIMITS OF EFFECTIVE SERVICE.
 - (1) *In General*. Serving a summons or filing a waiver of service establishes personal jurisdiction over a defendant:
 - (A) who is subject to the jurisdiction of a court of general jurisdiction in the state where the district court is located;
 - (B) who is a party joined under Rule 14 or 19 and is served within a judicial district of the United States and not more than 100 miles from where the summons was issued; or
 - (C) when authorized by a federal statute.
 - (2) *Federal Claim Outside State-Court Jurisdiction*. For a claim that arises under federal law, serving a summons or filing a waiver of service establishes personal jurisdiction over a defendant if:
 - (A) the defendant is not subject to jurisdiction in any state's courts of general jurisdiction; and
 - (B) exercising jurisdiction is consistent with the United States Constitution and laws.
- (l) PROVING SERVICE.
 - (1) *Affidavit Required*. Unless service is waived, proof of service must be made to the court. Except for service by a United States marshal or deputy marshal, proof must be by the server's affidavit.
 - (2) *Service Outside the United States*. Service not within any judicial district of the United States must be proved as follows:
 - (A) if made under Rule 4(f)(1), as provided in the applicable treaty or convention; or
 - (B) if made under Rule 4(f)(2) or (f)(3), by a receipt signed by the addressee, or by other evidence satisfying the court that the summons and complaint were delivered to the addressee.
 - (3) *Validity of Service; Amending Proof*. Failure to prove service does not affect the validity of service. The court may permit proof of service to be amended.
- (m) TIME LIMIT FOR SERVICE. If a defendant is not served within 90 days after the complaint is filed, the court—on motion or on its

own after notice to the plaintiff—must dismiss the action without prejudice against that defendant or order that service be made within a specified time. But if the plaintiff shows good cause for the failure, the court must extend the time for service for an appropriate period. This subdivision (m) does not apply to service in a foreign country under Rule 4(f), 4(h)(2), or 4(j)(1), or to service of a notice under Rule 71.1(d)(3)(A).

(n) ASSERTING JURISDICTION OVER PROPERTY OR ASSETS.

(1) *Federal Law*. The court may assert jurisdiction over property if authorized by a federal statute. Notice to claimants of the property must be given as provided in the statute or by serving a summons under this rule.

(2) *State Law*. On a showing that personal jurisdiction over a defendant cannot be obtained in the district where the action is brought by reasonable efforts to serve a summons under this rule, the court may assert jurisdiction over the defendant's assets found in the district. Jurisdiction is acquired by seizing the assets under the circumstances and in the manner provided by state law in that district.

(As amended Jan. 21, 1963, eff. July 1, 1963; Feb. 28, 1966, eff. July 1, 1966; Apr. 29, 1980, eff. Aug. 1, 1980; Pub. L. 97-462, §2, Jan. 12, 1983, 96 Stat. 2527, eff. Feb. 26, 1983; Mar. 2, 1987, eff. Aug. 1, 1987; Apr. 22, 1993, eff. Dec. 1, 1993; Apr. 17, 2000, eff. Dec. 1, 2000; Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007; Apr. 29, 2015, eff. Dec. 1, 2015; Apr. 28, 2016, eff. Dec. 1, 2016; Apr. 27, 2017, eff. Dec. 1, 2017.)

RULE 4 NOTICE OF A LAWSUIT AND REQUEST TO WAIVE SERVICE OF SUMMONS.

(Caption)

To *(name the defendant or—if the defendant is a corporation, partnership, or association—name an officer or agent authorized to receive service)*:

WHY ARE YOU GETTING THIS?

A lawsuit has been filed against you, or the entity you represent, in this court under the number shown above. A copy of the complaint is attached.

This is not a summons, or an official notice from the court. It is a request that, to avoid expenses, you waive formal service of a summons by signing and returning the enclosed waiver. To avoid these expenses, you must return the signed waiver within *(give at least 30 days or at least 60 days if the defendant is outside any judicial district of the United States)* from the date shown below, which is the date this notice was sent. Two copies of the waiver form are enclosed, along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope or other prepaid means for returning one copy. You may keep the other copy.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If you return the signed waiver, I will file it with the court. The action will then proceed as if you had been served on the date the waiver is filed, but no summons will be served on you and you will have 60 days from the date this notice is sent (see the date below) to answer the complaint (or 90 days if this notice is sent to you outside any judicial district of the United States).

If you do not return the signed waiver within the time indicated, I will arrange to have the summons and complaint served on you. And I will ask the court to require you, or the entity you represent, to pay the expenses of making service.

Please read the enclosed statement about the duty to avoid unnecessary expenses.

I certify that this request is being sent to you on the date below.

Date: _____

(Signature of the attorney
or unrepresented party)

(Printed name)

(Address)

(E-mail address)

(Telephone number)

RULE 4 WAIVER OF THE SERVICE OF SUMMONS.

(Caption)

To *(name the plaintiff's attorney or the unrepresented plaintiff)*:

I have received your request to waive service of a summons in this action along with a copy of the complaint, two copies of this waiver form, and a prepaid means of returning one signed copy of the form to you.

I, or the entity I represent, agree to save the expense of serving a summons and complaint in this case.

I understand that I, or the entity I represent, will keep all defenses or objections to the lawsuit, the court's jurisdiction, and the venue of the action, but that I waive any objections to the absence of a summons or of service.

I also understand that I, or the entity I represent, must file and serve an answer or a motion under Rule 12 within 60 days from _____, the date when this request was sent (or 90 days if it was sent outside the United States). If I fail to do so, a default judgment will be entered against me or the entity I represent.

Date: _____

(Signature of the attorney
or unrepresented party)

(Printed name)

(Address)

(E-mail address)

(Telephone number)

(Attach the following)

DUTY TO AVOID UNNECESSARY EXPENSES
OF SERVING A SUMMONS

Rule 4 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure requires certain defendants to cooperate in saving unnecessary expenses of serving a summons and complaint. A defendant who is located in the United States and who fails to return a signed waiver of service requested by a plaintiff located in the United States will be required to pay the expenses of service, unless the defendant shows good cause for the failure.

“Good cause” does not include a belief that the lawsuit is groundless, or that it has been brought in an improper venue, or that the court has no jurisdiction over this matter or over the defendant or the defendant’s property.

If the waiver is signed and returned, you can still make these and all other defenses and objections, but you cannot object to the absence of a summons or of service.

If you waive service, then you must, within the time specified on the waiver form, serve an answer or a motion under Rule 12 on the plaintiff and file a copy with the court. By signing and returning the waiver form, you are allowed more time to respond than if a summons had been served.

Rule 4.1. Serving Other Process

(a) IN GENERAL. Process—other than a summons under Rule 4 or a subpoena under Rule 45—must be served by a United States marshal or deputy marshal or by a person specially appointed for that purpose. It may be served anywhere within the territorial limits of the state where the district court is located and, if authorized by a federal statute, beyond those limits. Proof of service must be made under Rule 4(l).

(b) ENFORCING ORDERS: COMMITTING FOR CIVIL CONTEMPT. An order committing a person for civil contempt of a decree or injunction issued to enforce federal law may be served and enforced in any district. Any other order in a civil-contempt proceeding may be served only in the state where the issuing court is located or elsewhere in the United States within 100 miles from where the order was issued.

(As added Apr. 22, 1993, eff. Dec. 1, 1993; amended Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007.)

Rule 5. Serving and Filing Pleadings and Other Papers

(a) SERVICE: WHEN REQUIRED.

(1) *In General.* Unless these rules provide otherwise, each of the following papers must be served on every party:

(A) an order stating that service is required;

(B) a pleading filed after the original complaint, unless the court orders otherwise under Rule 5(c) because there are numerous defendants;

(C) a discovery paper required to be served on a party, unless the court orders otherwise;

(D) a written motion, except one that may be heard *ex parte*; and

(E) a written notice, appearance, demand, or offer of judgment, or any similar paper.

(2) *If a Party Fails to Appear.* No service is required on a party who is in default for failing to appear. But a pleading that asserts a new claim for relief against such a party must be served on that party under Rule 4.

(3) *Seizing Property.* If an action is begun by seizing property and no person is or need be named as a defendant, any service required before the filing of an appearance, answer, or claim must be made on the person who had custody or possession of the property when it was seized.

(b) SERVICE: HOW MADE.

(1) *Serving an Attorney.* If a party is represented by an attorney, service under this rule must be made on the attorney unless the court orders service on the party.

(2) *Service in General.* A paper is served under this rule by:

(A) handing it to the person;

(B) leaving it:

(i) at the person's office with a clerk or other person in charge or, if no one is in charge, in a conspicuous place in the office; or

(ii) if the person has no office or the office is closed, at the person's dwelling or usual place of abode with someone of suitable age and discretion who resides there;

(C) mailing it to the person's last known address—in which event service is complete upon mailing;

(D) leaving it with the court clerk if the person has no known address;

(E) sending it to a registered user by filing it with the court's electronic-filing system or sending it by other electronic means that the person consented to in writing—in either of which events service is complete upon filing or sending, but is not effective if the filer or sender learns that it did not reach the person to be served; or

(F) delivering it by any other means that the person consented to in writing—in which event service is complete when the person making service delivers it to the agency designated to make delivery.

(3) *Using Court Facilities.* [Abrogated (Apr. 26, 2018, eff. Dec. 1, 2018.)]

(c) SERVING NUMEROUS DEFENDANTS.

(1) *In General.* If an action involves an unusually large number of defendants, the court may, on motion or on its own, order that:

(A) defendants' pleadings and replies to them need not be served on other defendants;

(B) any crossclaim, counterclaim, avoidance, or affirmative defense in those pleadings and replies to them will be treated as denied or avoided by all other parties; and

(C) filing any such pleading and serving it on the plaintiff constitutes notice of the pleading to all parties.

(2) *Notifying Parties.* A copy of every such order must be served on the parties as the court directs.

(d) FILING.

(1) *Required Filings; Certificate of Service.*

(A) *Papers after the Complaint.* Any paper after the complaint that is required to be served must be filed no later than a reasonable time after service. But disclosures under Rule 26(a)(1) or (2) and the following discovery requests and responses must not be filed until they are used in the proceeding or the court orders filing: depositions, interrogatories, requests for documents or tangible things or to permit entry onto land, and requests for admission.

(B) *Certificate of Service.* No certificate of service is required when a paper is served by filing it with the court's electronic-filing system. When a paper that is required to be served is served by other means:

(i) if the paper is filed, a certificate of service must be filed with it or within a reasonable time after service; and

(ii) if the paper is not filed, a certificate of service need not be filed unless filing is required by court order or by local rule.

(2) *Nonelectronic Filing.* A paper not filed electronically is filed by delivering it:

(A) to the clerk; or

(B) to a judge who agrees to accept it for filing, and who must then note the filing date on the paper and promptly send it to the clerk.

(3) *Electronic Filing and Signing.*

(A) *By a Represented Person—Generally Required; Exceptions.* A person represented by an attorney must file electronically, unless nonelectronic filing is allowed by the court for good cause or is allowed or required by local rule.

(B) *By an Unrepresented Person—When Allowed or Required.* A person not represented by an attorney:

(i) may file electronically only if allowed by court order or by local rule; and

(ii) may be required to file electronically only by court order, or by a local rule that includes reasonable exceptions.

(C) *Signing.* A filing made through a person's electronic-filing account and authorized by that person, together with that person's name on a signature block, constitutes the person's signature.

(D) *Same as a Written Paper.* A paper filed electronically is a written paper for purposes of these rules.

(4) *Acceptance by the Clerk.* The clerk must not refuse to file a paper solely because it is not in the form prescribed by these rules or by a local rule or practice.

(As amended Jan. 21, 1963, eff. July 1, 1963; Mar. 30, 1970, eff. July 1, 1970; Apr. 29, 1980, eff. Aug. 1, 1980; Mar. 2, 1987, eff. Aug. 1, 1987; Apr. 30, 1991, eff. Dec. 1, 1991; Apr. 22, 1993, eff. Dec. 1, 1993; Apr. 23, 1996, eff. Dec. 1, 1996; Apr. 17, 2000, eff. Dec. 1, 2000; Apr. 23, 2001, eff. Dec. 1, 2001; Apr. 12, 2006, eff. Dec. 1, 2006; Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007; Apr. 26, 2018, eff. Dec. 1, 2018.)

Rule 5.1. Constitutional Challenge to a Statute—Notice, Certification, and Intervention

(a) **NOTICE BY A PARTY.** A party that files a pleading, written motion, or other paper drawing into question the constitutionality of a federal or state statute must promptly:

(1) file a notice of constitutional question stating the question and identifying the paper that raises it, if:

(A) a federal statute is questioned and the parties do not include the United States, one of its agencies, or one of its officers or employees in an official capacity; or

(B) a state statute is questioned and the parties do not include the state, one of its agencies, or one of its officers or employees in an official capacity; and

(2) serve the notice and paper on the Attorney General of the United States if a federal statute is questioned—or on the state attorney general if a state statute is questioned—either by certified or registered mail or by sending it to an electronic address designated by the attorney general for this purpose.

(b) **CERTIFICATION BY THE COURT.** The court must, under 28 U.S.C. § 2403, certify to the appropriate attorney general that a statute has been questioned.

(c) **INTERVENTION; FINAL DECISION ON THE MERITS.** Unless the court sets a later time, the attorney general may intervene within 60 days after the notice is filed or after the court certifies the challenge, whichever is earlier. Before the time to intervene expires, the court may reject the constitutional challenge, but may not enter a final judgment holding the statute unconstitutional.

(d) **NO FORFEITURE.** A party's failure to file and serve the notice, or the court's failure to certify, does not forfeit a constitutional claim or defense that is otherwise timely asserted.

(As added Apr. 12, 2006, eff. Dec. 1, 2006; amended Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007.)

Rule 5.2. Privacy Protection For Filings Made with the Court

(a) **REDACTED FILINGS.** Unless the court orders otherwise, in an electronic or paper filing with the court that contains an individual's social-security number, taxpayer-identification number, or birth date, the name of an individual known to be a minor, or a financial-account number, a party or nonparty making the filing may include only:

(1) the last four digits of the social-security number and taxpayer-identification number;

(2) the year of the individual's birth;

(3) the minor's initials; and

(4) the last four digits of the financial-account number.

(b) **EXEMPTIONS FROM THE REDACTION REQUIREMENT.** The redaction requirement does not apply to the following:

(1) a financial-account number that identifies the property allegedly subject to forfeiture in a forfeiture proceeding;

(2) the record of an administrative or agency proceeding;

(3) the official record of a state-court proceeding;

(4) the record of a court or tribunal, if that record was not subject to the redaction requirement when originally filed;

(5) a filing covered by Rule 5.2(c) or (d); and

(6) a pro se filing in an action brought under 28 U.S.C. §§ 2241, 2254, or 2255.

(c) LIMITATIONS ON REMOTE ACCESS TO ELECTRONIC FILES; SOCIAL-SECURITY APPEALS AND IMMIGRATION CASES. Unless the court orders otherwise, in an action for benefits under the Social Security Act, and in an action or proceeding relating to an order of removal, to relief from removal, or to immigration benefits or detention, access to an electronic file is authorized as follows:

(1) the parties and their attorneys may have remote electronic access to any part of the case file, including the administrative record;

(2) any other person may have electronic access to the full record at the courthouse, but may have remote electronic access only to:

(A) the docket maintained by the court; and

(B) an opinion, order, judgment, or other disposition of the court, but not any other part of the case file or the administrative record.

(d) FILINGS MADE UNDER SEAL. The court may order that a filing be made under seal without redaction. The court may later unseal the filing or order the person who made the filing to file a redacted version for the public record.

(e) PROTECTIVE ORDERS. For good cause, the court may by order in a case:

(1) require redaction of additional information; or

(2) limit or prohibit a nonparty's remote electronic access to a document filed with the court.

(f) OPTION FOR ADDITIONAL UNREDACTED FILING UNDER SEAL. A person making a redacted filing may also file an unredacted copy under seal. The court must retain the unredacted copy as part of the record.

(g) OPTION FOR FILING A REFERENCE LIST. A filing that contains redacted information may be filed together with a reference list that identifies each item of redacted information and specifies an appropriate identifier that uniquely corresponds to each item listed. The list must be filed under seal and may be amended as of right. Any reference in the case to a listed identifier will be construed to refer to the corresponding item of information.

(h) WAIVER OF PROTECTION OF IDENTIFIERS. A person waives the protection of Rule 5.2(a) as to the person's own information by filing it without redaction and not under seal.

(As added Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007.)

Rule 6. Computing and Extending Time; Time for Motion Papers

(a) COMPUTING TIME. The following rules apply in computing any time period specified in these rules, in any local rule or court order, or in any statute that does not specify a method of computing time.

(1) *Period Stated in Days or a Longer Unit.* When the period is stated in days or a longer unit of time:

(A) exclude the day of the event that triggers the period;

(B) count every day, including intermediate Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays; and

(C) include the last day of the period, but if the last day is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the period continues to run until the end of the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

(2) *Period Stated in Hours.* When the period is stated in hours:

(A) begin counting immediately on the occurrence of the event that triggers the period;

(B) count every hour, including hours during intermediate Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays; and

(C) if the period would end on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the period continues to run until the same time on the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

(3) *Inaccessibility of the Clerk's Office.* Unless the court orders otherwise, if the clerk's office is inaccessible:

(A) on the last day for filing under Rule 6(a)(1), then the time for filing is extended to the first accessible day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday; or

(B) during the last hour for filing under Rule 6(a)(2), then the time for filing is extended to the same time on the first accessible day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

(4) *"Last Day" Defined.* Unless a different time is set by a statute, local rule, or court order, the last day ends:

(A) for electronic filing, at midnight in the court's time zone; and

(B) for filing by other means, when the clerk's office is scheduled to close.

(5) *"Next Day" Defined.* The "next day" is determined by continuing to count forward when the period is measured after an event and backward when measured before an event.

(6) *"Legal Holiday" Defined.* "Legal holiday" means:

(A) the day set aside by statute for observing New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday, Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth National Independence Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, or Christmas Day;

(B) any day declared a holiday by the President or Congress; and

(C) for periods that are measured after an event, any other day declared a holiday by the state where the district court is located.

(b) **EXTENDING TIME.**

(1) *In General.* When an act may or must be done within a specified time, the court may, for good cause, extend the time:

(A) with or without motion or notice if the court acts, or if a request is made, before the original time or its extension expires; or

(B) on motion made after the time has expired if the party failed to act because of excusable neglect.

(2) *Exceptions.* A court must not extend the time to act under Rules 50(b) and (d), 52(b), 59(b), (d), and (e), and 60(b).

(c) **MOTIONS, NOTICES OF HEARING, AND AFFIDAVITS.**

(1) *In General.* A written motion and notice of the hearing must be served at least 14 days before the time specified for the hearing, with the following exceptions:

- (A) when the motion may be heard ex parte;
- (B) when these rules set a different time; or
- (C) when a court order—which a party may, for good cause, apply for ex parte—sets a different time.

(2) *Supporting Affidavit.* Any affidavit supporting a motion must be served with the motion. Except as Rule 59(c) provides otherwise, any opposing affidavit must be served at least 7 days before the hearing, unless the court permits service at another time.

(d) **ADDITIONAL TIME AFTER CERTAIN KINDS OF SERVICE.** When a party may or must act within a specified time after being served and service is made under Rule 5(b)(2)(C) (mail), (D) (leaving with the clerk), or (F) (other means consented to), 3 days are added after the period would otherwise expire under Rule 6(a).

(As amended Dec. 27, 1946, eff. Mar. 19, 1948; Jan. 21, 1963, eff. July 1, 1963; Feb. 28, 1966, eff. July 1, 1966; Dec. 4, 1967, eff. July 1, 1968; Mar. 1, 1971, eff. July 1, 1971; Apr. 28, 1983, eff. Aug. 1, 1983; Apr. 29, 1985, eff. Aug. 1, 1985; Mar. 2, 1987, eff. Aug. 1, 1987; Apr. 26, 1999, eff. Dec. 1, 1999; Apr. 23, 2001, eff. Dec. 1, 2001; Apr. 25, 2005, eff. Dec. 1, 2005; Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007; Mar. 26, 2009, eff. Dec. 1, 2009; Apr. 28, 2016, eff. Dec. 1, 2016; Apr. 24, 2023, eff. Dec. 1, 2023.)

TITLE III. PLEADINGS AND MOTIONS

Rule 7. Pleadings Allowed; Form of Motions and Other Papers

(a) **PLEADINGS.** Only these pleadings are allowed:

- (1) a complaint;
- (2) an answer to a complaint;
- (3) an answer to a counterclaim designated as a counterclaim;
- (4) an answer to a crossclaim;
- (5) a third-party complaint;
- (6) an answer to a third-party complaint; and
- (7) if the court orders one, a reply to an answer.

(b) **MOTIONS AND OTHER PAPERS.**

(1) *In General.* A request for a court order must be made by motion. The motion must:

- (A) be in writing unless made during a hearing or trial;
- (B) state with particularity the grounds for seeking the order; and
- (C) state the relief sought.

(2) *Form.* The rules governing captions and other matters of form in pleadings apply to motions and other papers.

(As amended Dec. 27, 1946, eff. Mar. 19, 1948; Jan. 21, 1963, eff. July 1, 1963; Apr. 28, 1983, eff. Aug. 1, 1983; Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007.)

Rule 7.1. Disclosure Statement

(a) **WHO MUST FILE; CONTENTS.**

(1) *Nongovernmental Corporations.* A nongovernmental corporate party or a nongovernmental corporation that seeks to intervene must file a statement that:

- (A) identifies any parent corporation and any publicly held corporation owning 10% or more of its stock; or
- (B) states that there is no such corporation.

(2) *Parties or Intervenorors in a Diversity Case.* In an action in which jurisdiction is based on diversity under 28 U.S.C. §1332(a), a party or intervenor must, unless the court orders otherwise, file a disclosure statement. The statement must name—and identify the citizenship of—every individual or entity whose citizenship is attributed to that party or intervenor:

(A) when the action is filed in or removed to federal court, and

(B) when any later event occurs that could affect the court's jurisdiction under §1332(a).

(b) **TIME TO FILE; SUPPLEMENTAL FILING.** A party, intervenor, or proposed intervenor must:

(1) file the disclosure statement with its first appearance, pleading, petition, motion, response, or other request addressed to the court; and

(2) promptly file a supplemental statement if any required information changes.

(As added Apr. 29, 2002, eff. Dec. 1, 2002; amended Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007; Apr. 11, 2022, eff. Dec. 1, 2022.)

Rule 8. General Rules of Pleading

(a) **CLAIM FOR RELIEF.** A pleading that states a claim for relief must contain:

(1) a short and plain statement of the grounds for the court's jurisdiction, unless the court already has jurisdiction and the claim needs no new jurisdictional support;

(2) a short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief; and

(3) a demand for the relief sought, which may include relief in the alternative or different types of relief.

(b) **DEFENSES; ADMISSIONS AND DENIALS.**

(1) *In General.* In responding to a pleading, a party must:

(A) state in short and plain terms its defenses to each claim asserted against it; and

(B) admit or deny the allegations asserted against it by an opposing party.

(2) *Denials—Responding to the Substance.* A denial must fairly respond to the substance of the allegation.

(3) *General and Specific Denials.* A party that intends in good faith to deny all the allegations of a pleading—including the jurisdictional grounds—may do so by a general denial. A party that does not intend to deny all the allegations must either specifically deny designated allegations or generally deny all except those specifically admitted.

(4) *Denying Part of an Allegation.* A party that intends in good faith to deny only part of an allegation must admit the part that is true and deny the rest.

(5) *Lacking Knowledge or Information.* A party that lacks knowledge or information sufficient to form a belief about the truth of an allegation must so state, and the statement has the effect of a denial.

(6) *Effect of Failing to Deny.* An allegation—other than one relating to the amount of damages—is admitted if a responsive

pleading is required and the allegation is not denied. If a responsive pleading is not required, an allegation is considered denied or avoided.

(c) AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES.

(1) *In General.* In responding to a pleading, a party must affirmatively state any avoidance or affirmative defense, including:

- accord and satisfaction;
- arbitration and award;
- assumption of risk;
- contributory negligence;
- duress;
- estoppel;
- failure of consideration;
- fraud;
- illegality;
- injury by fellow servant;
- laches;
- license;
- payment;
- release;
- res judicata;
- statute of frauds;
- statute of limitations; and
- waiver.

(2) *Mistaken Designation.* If a party mistakenly designates a defense as a counterclaim, or a counterclaim as a defense, the court must, if justice requires, treat the pleading as though it were correctly designated, and may impose terms for doing so.

(d) PLEADING TO BE CONCISE AND DIRECT; ALTERNATIVE STATEMENTS; INCONSISTENCY.

(1) *In General.* Each allegation must be simple, concise, and direct. No technical form is required.

(2) *Alternative Statements of a Claim or Defense.* A party may set out 2 or more statements of a claim or defense alternatively or hypothetically, either in a single count or defense or in separate ones. If a party makes alternative statements, the pleading is sufficient if any one of them is sufficient.

(3) *Inconsistent Claims or Defenses.* A party may state as many separate claims or defenses as it has, regardless of consistency.

(e) CONSTRUING PLEADINGS. Pleadings must be construed so as to do justice.

(As amended Feb. 28, 1966, eff. July 1, 1966; Mar. 2, 1987, eff. Aug. 1, 1987; Apr. 30, 2007, eff. Dec. 1, 2007; Apr. 28, 2010, eff. Dec. 1, 2010.)

Rule 9. Pleading Special Matters

(a) CAPACITY OR AUTHORITY TO SUE; LEGAL EXISTENCE.

(1) *In General.* Except when required to show that the court has jurisdiction, a pleading need not allege:

- (A) a party's capacity to sue or be sued;
- (B) a party's authority to sue or be sued in a representative capacity; or
- (C) the legal existence of an organized association of persons that is made a party.