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Rule 341. Briefs

(a) Form of Briefs. Briefs shall be submitted in clear, black text on white pages, each measuring 8½ by 11 inches. The text must be double-spaced; however, headings may be single-spaced. Margins must be at least 1½ inch on the left side and 1 inch on the other three sides. Each page shall be numbered within the bottom margin. Quotations of two or more lines in length may be single-spaced; however, lengthy quotations are not favored and should be included only where they will aid the court's comprehension of the argument. Footnotes are discouraged but, if used, may be single-spaced.

Typeface must be 12-point or larger throughout the document, including quoted material and any footnotes. Condensed type is prohibited.

(b) Length of Briefs.

(1) Length Limitation. The brief of appellant and brief of appellee shall each be limited to 50 pages, and the reply brief to 20 pages. Alternatively, the brief of appellant and brief of appellee shall each be limited to no more than 15,000 words and the reply brief to 6,000 words. This limitation excludes pages and words contained in the Rule 341(d) cover, the Rule 341(h)(1) table of contents and statement of points and authorities, the Rule 341(c) certificate of compliance, the certificate of service, and those matters to be appended to the brief under Rule 342(a). Cross-appellants and cross-appellees shall each be allowed an additional 30 pages or, alternatively, 9,000 words, and the cross-appellant's reply brief shall not exceed 20 pages or, alternatively, 6,000 words.

(2) Motions. Motions to file a brief in excess of the length limitation of this rule are not favored. Such a motion shall be filed not less than 10 days before the brief is due or not less than 5 days before a reply brief is due and shall state the excess number of pages or words requested and the specific grounds establishing the necessity for excess pages or words. The motion shall be supported by affidavit or verification by certification under Section 1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure of the attorney or self-represented litigant. Any affidavit shall be sworn to before a person who has authority under the law to administer oaths.

(c) Certificate of Compliance. The attorney or self-represented litigant shall submit with the brief his or her signed certification that the brief complies with the form and length requirements of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this rule, as follows:

I certify that this brief conforms to the requirements of Rules 341(a) and (b). The length of this brief, excluding the pages or words contained in the Rule 341(d) cover, the Rule 341(h)(1) table of contents and statement of points and authorities, the Rule 341(c) certificate of compliance, the certificate of service, and those matters to be appended to the brief under Rule 342(a), is ___ pages or words.

(d)Covers. The cover of the brief shall contain: the number of the case in the reviewing court and the name of that court; the name of the court or administrative agency from which the case was brought; the name of the case as it appeared in the lower tribunal, except that the status of each party in the reviewing court shall also be indicated (*e.g.*, plaintiff-appellant); the name of the trial judge entering the judgment to be reviewed; and the individual names and addresses of the attorneys and their law firm (or of the party if the party has no attorney) filing the brief shall also be stated.

The colors of the covers of the documents, whether electronic or paper, shall be: appellant's brief or petition, white; appellee's brief or answer, light blue; appellant's reply brief, light yellow; reply brief of appellee, light red; petition for rehearing, light green; answer to petition for rehearing, tan; and reply on rehearing, orange. If a separate appendix is filed, the cover shall be the same color as that of the brief which it accompanies.

(e) Duplicate Copies and Proof of Service. Electronically filed briefs shall be considered the official original. A court of review may, in its electronic filing procedures, require duplicate paper copies bearing the court's electronic file stamp. Such copies shall be printed one-sided and securely bound on the left side in a manner that does not obstruct the text. Such copies shall be received by the clerk within five days of the electronic notification generated upon acceptance of an electronically filed document.

The brief shall be served upon each other party to the appeal represented by separate counsel. Proof of service shall be filed with all briefs.

(f) References to Parties. In the brief the parties shall be referred to as in the trial court, *e.g.*, plaintiff and defendant, omitting the words appellant and appellee and petitioner and respondent, or by using actual names or descriptive terms such as "the employee," "the injured person," "the taxpayer," "the railroad," etc.

In all appeals involving juveniles filed from proceedings under the Juvenile Court Act or the Adoption Act, and in all appeals under the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code, the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act, or from actions for collection of fees for mental health services, the respective juvenile or recipient of mental-health services shall be identified by first name and last initial or by initials only.

The preferred method is the first name and last initial. The alternative method of initials only is to be used when, due to an unusual first name or spelling, the preferred method would create a substantial risk of revealing the individual's identity. The name of the involved juvenile or recipient of services shall not appear in the brief.

(g) Citations. Citations shall be made as provided in Rule 6.

(h) Appellant's Brief. The appellant's brief shall contain the following parts in the order named:

(1) A table of contents, including a summary statement, entitled "Points and Authorities," of the points argued and the authorities cited in the Argument. This shall consist of the headings of the points and subpoints as in the Argument, with the citation under each heading of the authorities relied upon or distinguished, and a reference to the page of the brief on which each heading and each authority appear.

(2) An introductory paragraph stating (i) the nature of the action and of the judgment appealed from and whether the judgment is based upon the verdict of a jury, and (ii) whether any question is raised on the pleadings and, if so, the nature of the question.

Illustration:

"This action was brought to recover damages occasioned by the alleged negligence of the defendant in driving his automobile. The jury rendered a verdict for the plaintiff upon which the court entered the judgment from which this appeal is taken. No questions are raised on the pleadings."

(3) A statement of the issue or issues presented for review, without detail or citation of authorities.

Illustration:

Issue Presented for Review:

"Whether the plaintiff was guilty of contributory negligence as a matter of law."

[or]

"Whether the trial court ruled correctly on certain objections to evidence."

[or]

"Whether the jury was improperly instructed."

The appellant must include a concise statement of the applicable standard of review for each issue, with citation to authority, either in the discussion of the issue in the argument or under a separate heading placed before the discussion in the argument.

(4) A statement of jurisdiction:

(i) In a case appealed to the Supreme Court directly from the trial court or as a matter of right from the Appellate Court, a brief statement under the heading "Jurisdiction" of the jurisdictional grounds for the appeal to the Supreme Court.

(ii) In a case appealed to the Appellate Court, a brief, but precise statement or explanation under the heading "Jurisdiction" of the basis for appeal including the supreme court rule or other law which confers jurisdiction upon the reviewing court; the facts of the case which bring it within this rule or other law; and the date that the order being appealed was entered and any other facts which are necessary to demonstrate that the appeal is timely. In appeals from a judgment as to all the claims and all the parties, the statement shall demonstrate the disposition of all claims and all parties. All facts recited in this statement shall be supported by page references to the record on appeal.

(5) In a case involving the construction or validity of a statute, constitutional provision, treaty, ordinance, or regulation, the pertinent parts of the provision verbatim, with a citation of the place where it may be found, all under an appropriate heading, such as "Statutes Involved." If the provision involved is lengthy, its citation alone will suffice at this point, and its pertinent text shall be set forth in an appendix.

(6) Statement of Facts, which shall contain the facts necessary to an understanding of the case, stated accurately and fairly without argument or comment, and with appropriate reference

to the pages of the record on appeal in the format as set forth in the Standards and Requirements for Electronic Filing the Record on Appeal.

(7) Argument, which shall contain the contentions of the appellant and the reasons therefor, with citation of the authorities and the pages of the record relied on. Evidence shall not be copied at length, but reference shall be made to the pages of the record on appeal where evidence may be found. Citation of numerous authorities in support of the same point is not favored. Points not argued are forfeited and shall not be raised in the reply brief, in oral argument, or on petition for rehearing.

(8) A short conclusion stating the precise relief sought, followed by the names of counsel as on the cover.

(9) An appendix as required by Rule 342.

(i) Briefs of Appellee and Other Parties. The brief for the appellee and other parties shall conform to the foregoing requirements, except that items (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), and (9) of paragraph (h) of this rule need not be included except to the extent that the presentation by the appellant is deemed unsatisfactory.

(j) Reply Brief. The reply brief, if any, shall be confined strictly to replying to arguments presented in the brief of the appellee and need contain only Argument.

(k) Supplemental Brief on Leave to Appeal. A party allowing a petition for leave to appeal or for appeal as a matter of right or an answer thereto to stand as his or her main brief, may file a supplemental brief, so entitled, containing additional material, and omitting any of the items set forth in paragraph (h) of this rule to the extent that they are adequately covered in the petition or answer. The Points and Authorities in the supplemental brief need relate only to the contents of that brief.

Amended October 21, 1969, effective January 1, 1970; amended July 30, 1979, effective October 15, 1979; amended January 5, 1981, effective February 1, 1981; amended February 19, 1982, effective April 1, 1982; amended May 28, 1982, effective July 1, 1982; amended April 27, 1984, and May 16, 1984, effective July 1, 1984; amended April 10, 1987, effective August 1, 1987; amended May 21, 1987, effective August 1, 1987; amended June 12, 1987, effective immediately; amended May 18, 1988, effective August 1, 1988; amended January 20, 1993, effective immediately; amended December 17, 1993, effective February 1, 1994; amended May 20, 1997, effective July 1, 1997; amended April 11, 2001, effective immediately; amended October 1, 2001, effective immediately; amended May 24, 2006, effective September 1, 2006; amended March 16, 2007, effective immediately; amended June 4, 2008, effective July 1, 2008; amended Feb. 6, 2013, eff. immediately; amended Dec. 9, 2015, eff. Jan. 1, 2016; amended June 22, 2017, eff. July 1, 2017; amended Sept. 15, 2017, eff. Nov. 1, 2017; amended May 25, 2018, eff. immediately; amended Sept. 30, 2020, eff. Oct. 1, 2020.

Committee Comments
(revised Sept. 15, 2017)

This rule was based upon former Supreme Court Rule 39, effective until January 1, 1967, which in turn was based upon former Uniform (and later Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth District)

Appellate Court Rule 7. There were no major changes.

Paragraph (a)

This paragraph deals with the length of briefs and the use of footnotes. It is derived from the second, third, and fourth sentences of former Rule 39(1). Three printed pages will normally contain approximately as many words as four unprinted pages, so the length limitations are substantially the same for printed and unprinted briefs.

The provision that footnotes are to be in the same size type as required for the text of the brief was deleted. Footnotes are to be used sparingly. Rule 344(b) prescribes 10-point type on 11-point slugs, instead of the 11-point type used in the body. This use of smaller type is conventional in the printing of legal texts, law reviews, the opinions of the Supreme Court of the United States, and other comparable materials. It is believed that the limited use of this slightly smaller type will not impose a burden on the courts.

In 1984 subsection (a) was amended to reduce from 75 to 50 the number of pages allowed to be in a printed brief and from 100 to 75 the number allowed in a brief that is not printed, and excludes from that page limitation those matters which are required by Rule 342(a) to be appended thereto.

Paragraph (b)

This is a revision of former Rule 40(1). The alternative word limitation for determining the maximum length of briefs is based on a uniform assumption of 300 words per page.

Paragraph (c)

This paragraph is derived in part from the first sentence of former Rule 39(1), except that it recognizes certain existing practices not permitted by the former rule if it was read literally. One is the use of the designations “appellant” and “appellee,” together with the designation of the party in the trial court, in the title of the case appearing in the caption. The other is that the parties may be referred to by actual names or descriptive terms instead of as plaintiff or defendant, which in many instances is desirable to avoid confusion.

The paragraph was amended effective October 1, 2001, to help protect the identities of recipients of mental health services. The amendment requires that only their first name and last initial, or their initials, appear on documents filed with the Appellate Court or any subsequent court. The requirement covers the parties’ briefs, motions, and other similar papers. The amendment does not require deletion of names from the trial record in preparing the record on appeal, nor does it address the means by which the Appellate Court or a subsequent court maintains the confidentiality of documents appearing in the record.

Paragraph (d)

Effective January 20, 1993, the requirements applicable to citations to cases, textbooks and statutes were placed in Rule 6, which is applicable to all documents filed in court, including briefs.

Paragraph (e)

Paragraph (e) is a substantial revision of portions of former Rule 39.

In 1981 the subparagraphs were restructured to make "Points and Authorities" the first part of the brief, so that it might act as a table of contents.

Subparagraph (1) is based upon the first three sentences of the paragraph designated II of former Rule 39(1). The revised provision specifically relates the Points and Authorities to the Argument. The same headings of the points and subpoints are to be used both here and in the Argument. The former provision that the three cases most relied on shall be cited first under each point was deleted in favor of the last sentence of subparagraph (e), which provides for ranking cases "as near as may be in the order of their importance."

The "introductory paragraph" provided for in subparagraph (2) will ordinarily not be captioned as such in the brief. As the illustration shows, the introductory paragraph is for the purpose of informing the court of the general area of the law in which the case falls, whether there was a jury trial, and whether there is a pleading question and if so what it is. The practice of many lawyers was to include in the statement of "The Nature of the Action" called for by the former rule much more detail than the courts wanted at this place in the brief.

The former requirement that "The Nature of the Case" include a statement of the party's "theory of the case" also produced much more detail than the rule contemplated.

Subparagraph (3) substitutes for the "theory of the case" a statement of "the issue or issues presented for review." Again, the court does not want detail at this point in the brief, as the illustration in the rule following this subparagraph attempts to make clear. The statement of the issue presented for review is not to be an elaborately framed legal question. Its purpose is to give the court a general idea of what the case is about. The court is not ready at this stage to appreciate the details. It should be noticed, for example, that the first alternative illustration of a statement of the issue presented for review does not state what conduct it is that one of the parties contends is contributory negligence as a matter of law. The second alternative does not describe the objections or the evidence to which they relate. The third alternative does not describe the instruction of which the complaint is made.

Subparagraph (4) is in part based upon former Rule 28-1, B. A similar provision appears in the rules of the Supreme Court of the United States. (Rule 40, 1(b).) In cases appealed to the Illinois Supreme Court as of right, it is important that the court be satisfied at the outset that jurisdiction exists. (See the comments to Rule 302.)

Subparagraph (4)(ii) was expanded effective February 1, 1994, to provide more comprehensive examples of what must be included in the statement demonstrating jurisdiction in the Appellate Court.

Subparagraph (5) is a combination of the third paragraph of former Rule 39(1) and paragraph

1(c) of Rule 40 of the rules of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Subparagraph (6) was based upon the paragraph numbered III of former Rule 39(1). The provision with respect to the citation of exhibits was new, as were the illustrations as to the form of the citations to the record. This subparagraph was amended in 1979 to delete reference to the preparation of excerpts from record to reflect the amendment of Rule 342 to eliminate the preparation and duplication of excerpts from the record except for the inclusion of copies of stated documents as an appendix to the brief, and to eliminate the preparation and filing of an abstract except on order of the reviewing court. (See Rule 342(a).) Because the elimination of excerpts and an abstract in most cases lends added importance to the accuracy and fairness with which the facts are stated in the brief, the first sentence of the subparagraph was amended to emphasize this point. A similar amendment was made to Rule 315(b)(4). See the committee comments to Rule 342.

Subparagraph (7) is a revision of the paragraph numbered IV of former Rule 39(1). The description of what the Argument is to contain is somewhat amplified. The provision admonishing against citation of numerous authorities was new. The limitation of the Argument to points made and cases cited in the Points and Authorities is no longer appropriate, since the Points and Authorities is to be derived from the Argument. The former provision that a point "made but not argued may be considered waived" was changed to the affirmative statement of the last sentence of the paragraph that failure to argue results in waiver and, further, that a point that has not been argued shall not be raised subsequently.

Subparagraph (8), requiring a short conclusion stating the precise relief sought, was new. It is customary to include a conclusion in a brief, but the relief sought is not always stated in the conclusion. This provision requires the party to end his brief by telling the court what relief he wants.

Paragraph (f)

The predecessor of this paragraph is the second paragraph following the paragraph numbered IV in former Rule 39(1). The new provision is simplified. The requirement that the appellee's brief state the propositions relied upon to sustain the judgment "as far as practicable, in the same order as the points of appellant" was not brought forward into the present rule. When the nature of the subject matter permits, counsel will normally follow the order established by his opponent in the interest of making his brief as convenient as possible for the court to use. Sometimes effective advocacy requires that a different order be adopted. In the opinion of the committee it is not possible to regulate this matter by rule.

Paragraph (g)

Paragraph (g) is the last paragraph of former Rule 39(1), without change of substance.

Paragraph (h)

Paragraph (h) as it appeared in the revised rules effective January 1, 1967, was deleted in October 1969, as unnecessary in light of paragraph (b) of Rule 343, adopted at that time.

What is now paragraph (h) was paragraph (i) of the revision adopted effective January 1, 1967, and was new at that time, although it provides specifically for a practice that was often employed under the former rules. This paragraph makes clear the extent to which the requirements of Rule 341 apply to a supplemental brief filed in supplement of, rather than in lieu of, a petition for leave to appeal or an answer that party has allowed to stand as his main brief.