

Rule 303. Appeals from Final Judgments of the Circuit Court in Civil Cases

(a) Time; Filing; Transmission of Notice of Appeal.

(1) The notice of appeal must be filed with the clerk of the circuit court within 30 days after the entry of the final judgment appealed from, or, if a timely posttrial motion directed against the judgment is filed, whether in a jury or a nonjury case, within 30 days after the entry of the order disposing of the last pending postjudgment motion directed against that judgment or order, irrespective of whether the circuit court had entered a series of final orders that were modified pursuant to postjudgment motions. A judgment or order is not final and appealable while a Rule 137 claim remains pending unless the court enters a finding pursuant to Rule 304(a). A notice of appeal filed after the court announces a decision, but before the entry of the judgment or order, is treated as filed on the date of and after the entry of the judgment or order. The notice of appeal may be filed by any party or by any attorney representing the party appealing, regardless of whether that attorney has filed an appearance in the circuit court case being appealed.

(2) When a timely postjudgment motion has been filed by any party, whether in a jury case or a nonjury case, a notice of appeal filed before the entry of the order disposing of the last pending postjudgment motion, or before the final disposition of any separate claim, becomes effective when the order disposing of said motion or claim is entered. A party intending to challenge an order disposing of any postjudgment motion or separate claim, or a judgment amended upon such motion, must file a notice of appeal, or an amended notice of appeal within 30 days of the entry of said order or amended judgment, but where a postjudgment motion is denied, an appeal from the judgment is deemed to include an appeal from the denial of the postjudgment motion. No request for reconsideration of a ruling on a postjudgment motion will toll the running of the time within which a notice of appeal must be filed under this rule.

(3) If a timely notice of appeal is filed and served by a party, any other party, within 10 days after service upon him or her, or within 30 days from the entry of the judgment or order being appealed, or within 30 days of the entry of the order disposing of the last pending postjudgment motion, whichever is later, may join in the appeal, appeal separately, or cross-appeal by filing a notice of appeal, indicating which type of appeal is being taken.

(4) Within five days after the filing of a notice of appeal, or an amendment of a notice of appeal filed in the circuit court pursuant to subparagraph (b)(5) of this rule, the clerk of the circuit court shall file the notice of appeal or of the amendment with the clerk of the court to which the appeal is being taken.

(b) Form and Contents of Notice of Appeal.

(1) The notice of appeal shall be captioned as follows:

(i) At the top shall appear the statement "Appeal to the _____ Court," naming the court to which the appeal is taken, and below this shall be the statement "From the Circuit Court of _____," naming the court from which the appeal is taken.

(ii) It shall bear the title of the case, naming and designating the parties in the same manner as in the circuit court and adding the further designation "appellant" or "appellee," *e.g.*, "Plaintiff-Appellee."

(iii) It shall be designated “Notice of Appeal,” “Joining Prior Appeal,” “Separate Appeal,” or “Cross-Appeal,” as appropriate.

(2) It shall specify the judgment or part thereof or other orders appealed from and the relief sought from the reviewing court.

(3) A notice of appeal filed pursuant to Rule 302(a)(1) from a judgment of a circuit court holding unconstitutional a statute of the United States or of this state shall have appended thereto a copy of the court’s findings made in compliance with Rule 18.

(4) It shall contain the name and address of each appellant or appellant’s attorney.

(5) The notice of appeal may be amended without leave of court within the original 30-day period to file the notice as set forth in paragraph (a) above. Thereafter it may be amended only on motion, in the reviewing court, pursuant to paragraph (d) of this rule. Amendments relate back to the time of the filing of the notice of appeal.

(c) Service of Notice of Appeal. The party filing the notice of appeal or an amendment as of right, shall, within 7 days, file a notice of filing with the reviewing court and serve the notice of appeal upon every other party and upon any other person or officer entitled by law to notice. Proof of service, as provided by Rule 12, shall be filed with the notice.

(d) Extension of Time in Certain Circumstances. On motion supported by a showing of reasonable excuse for failure to file a notice of appeal on time, accompanied by the proposed notice of appeal and the filing fee, filed in the reviewing court within 30 days after expiration of the time for filing a notice of appeal, the reviewing court may grant leave to appeal and order the clerk to transmit the notice of appeal to the trial court for filing. If the reviewing court allows leave to file a late notice of appeal, any other party may, within 10 days of the order allowing the filing of the late notice, join in the appeal separately or cross-appeal as set forth in Rule 303(a)(3).

(e) Docketing. Upon receipt of the notice of appeal transmitted to the reviewing court pursuant to paragraph (a) of this rule, or receipt of a motion for leave to appeal under paragraph (d) of this rule, the clerk of the reviewing court shall enter the appeal upon the docket.

Amended effective January 12, 1967; amended effective January 1, 1970; amended October 21, 1969, effective January 1, 1970; amended effective July 1, 1971; amended effective September 1, 1974; amended October 1, 1976, effective November 15, 1976; amended July 30, 1979, effective October 15, 1979; amended August 9, 1983, effective October 1, 1983; amended April 27, 1984, effective July 1, 1984; amended December 17, 1993, effective February 1, 1994; corrected March 18, 2005, effective immediately; amended October 14, 2005, effective January 1, 2006; amended July 27, 2006, effective September 1, 2006; amended March 16, 2007, effective May 1, 2007; amended May 30, 2008, effective immediately; corrected June 4, 2008, effective immediately; amended Dec. 11, 2014, eff. Jan. 1, 2015; amended June 22, 2017, eff. July 1, 2017.

(March 16, 2007)

Rule 303(a)(2) is intended to address concerns raised in cases such as *John G. Phillips & Assoc. v. Brown*, 197 Ill. 2d 337 (2001). Subparagraph (a)(2) protects the rights of an appellant who has filed a “premature” notice of appeal by making the notice of appeal effective when the order denying a postjudgment motion or resolving a still-pending separate claim is entered. See Fed. R. App. P. 4(a)(4)(B)(i), (a)(4)(B)(ii). The question whether a particular “claim” is a separate claim for purposes of Rule 304(a) is often a difficult one. See *Dewan v. Ford Motor Co.*, 343 Ill. App. 3d 1062 (2003); *In re Marriage of King*, 208 Ill. 2d 332 (2003); *Marsh v. Evangelical Covenant Church of Hinsdale*, 138 Ill. 2d 458 (1990); *Physicians Insurance Exchange v. Jennings*, 316 Ill. App. 3d 443 (2000); *F.H. Prince & Co., Inc. v. Towers Financial Corp.*, 266 Ill. App. 3d 977 (1994); *Servio v. Paul Roberts Auto Sales, Inc.*, 211 Ill. App. 3d 751 (1991). Subparagraph (a)(2) protects the appellant who files a notice of appeal prior to the resolution of a still-pending claim that is determined to be a separate claim under Rule 304(a). Note that under subparagraph (a)(2), there is no need to file a second notice of appeal where the postjudgment order simply denies the appellant’s postjudgment motion. However, where the postjudgment order grants new or different relief than the judgment itself, or resolves a separate claim, a second notice of appeal is necessary to preserve an appeal from such order.