

Administrative Office of the Courts
Format and Style Rules for Mandatory Forms
Developed Pursuant to RCW 26.18.220
(June, 2006)

I. Use of Pleadings and Forms not Developed by the Administrative Office of the Courts

Pleadings and forms, other than those developed by the Administrative Office of the Courts, may be submitted provided:

- (A) The pleading or form is authorized under civil rules or statute (e.g., interrogatories and subpoenas, declarations of parties, etc.);
- (B) A similar pleading or form is not included in the mandatory forms developed by the Administrative Office of the Courts; and
- (C) The pleading or form complies with the format standards and rules set forth below and the caption of the form or pleading contains the notation "No Mandatory Form Developed."

II. Form and Pleading Standards

The following standards apply to written forms, to printed forms and to the electronic reproduction of forms and pleadings required by RCW 26.09.006, RCW 26.10.015 and RCW 26.26.065.

(A) Required Format Standards

The format standards in this section are required for all forms, pleadings, motions and other papers filed with the court pursuant to GR 14. The rule applies to all proceedings in all courts of the state of Washington unless otherwise specifically indicated by court rule.

(1) Paper Size

Paper size is 8-1/2" x 11".

(2) Writing or Printing

Forms and pleadings shall be legibly written or printed on one side of each page only. Forms and pleadings shall be printed in standard text fonts. For captions and paragraph headings, use a Sans Serif font, such as Arial, in bold, 12 point font. For the text, use a Serif font, such as Times New Roman, in 11 point font. 12 point font may also be used. Other point sizes may be used for captions and footers so long as the captions and footers are legible when faxed, photocopied or scanned. Bold, underlined and italicized type is acceptable where appropriate.

(3) Margins

- a) First page:
 - (i) Top Margin: Three inches.
 - (ii) Left Side Margin: One inch.
 - (iii) Right Side Margin: One inch.
 - (iv) Bottom Margin: One inch.

- b) Subsequent pages:
 - (i) Top Margin: One inch.
 - (ii) Left Side Margin: One inch.
 - (iii) Right Side Margin: One inch.
 - (iv) Bottom Margin: One inch.

(4) Filed Forms and Pleadings

Filed forms and pleadings shall not include any colored pages, highlighting or other colored markings.

(5) Exhibits

The required format standards are not mandatory for exhibits, but the use of the exhibits that comply with these format standards is encouraged if it does not impair legibility.

(B) Recommended Format Standards

Local rules, if any, should be followed with regard to use of numbered paper, spacing, fonts and related formatting standards. The format recommendations set forth in CR 10(e) must be adhered to in the absence of local rules concerning use of numbered paper, spacing and related formatting standards.

- (1) Footers must be placed at the left side of the bottom of each page, **above** the one inch margin.
- (2) Attorney or firm name, mailing address, telephone number, and URL may be present in the right side of the one inch bottom margin.
- (3) Line numbers may be present in the one inch left side margin.
- (4) Vertical lines may be present in the one inch side margins.

The margin requirements in Section II (A)(3) are required for scanning purposes. Anything present in the margins might not be scanned and might not become a part of the court's or county clerk's electronic archive. Litigants are not prohibited from placing the items listed in 2 through 4 clear of the margins.

(C) Captions

Captions must include the following:

- (1) **Name of Court.** The name of the court. The court's name may be set forth at the left margin of the pleading or form, or centered at the top of the first page of the pleading or form.
- (2) **Form Title.** The title of the form designated by the Administrative Office of the Courts. The title must be printed in the lower portion of the caption in the right hand field. The document title may not be changed or deleted, except to delete inapplicable portions of the title (e.g., the title of the parenting plan may be altered to indicate whether the parenting plan is a proposed, temporary or final parenting plan).
- (3) **SCOMIS Codes.** The SCOMIS (Superior Courts Management Information System) code is assigned to the form by the Administrative Office of the Courts. The SCOMIS code is to be printed underneath the form title. The SCOMIS codes may not be changed or altered from the assigned code.
- (4) **Designation of Parties and Action.** The parties and title of the action shall be designated as set forth in RCW 26.09.010 and RCW 26.10.020 in the left-hand field of the caption.

(D) Footers

Footers for the forms are mandatory. The footers shall consist of the following components:

- (1) **Title.** Place the title of the form on one line. Abbreviations may be used.
- (2) **SCOMIS Code.** Place the SCOMIS code in parentheses to the right of the form title.
- (3) **Page Numbering.** Each page of a form should have a page number. Place the page number on the same line as the form title. It is preferable to indicate the number of pages in a form as part of the page number.
- (4) **Form Number.** Forms are numbered according to the sequence of events in court proceedings. The numbering system also is designed to allow for insertion of new forms in the proper sequence in the future. Place the form number and effective date, in parentheses, on the next line below the title of the form.
- (5) **References to Court Rules and Statutes.** References to court rules and statutes must be listed on the form on the same line as the form number.

- (6) **Example Footer:** *Pet for Disso of Marriage (PTDSS) - Page 1 of 8*
WPF DR-01.0100 (6/2006) - RCW 26.09.020

(E) Paragraphs

- (1) **Paragraph Number and Header.** Each paragraph of a form includes a paragraph number and, in most instances, a header. The paragraph number and header shall not be changed or deleted.
- (2) **Paragraph Text.** The text of a paragraph shall not be altered, deleted or revised from the text provided in the form or pleading, except if there are check boxes provided in the form or pleading. If there are check boxes in the paragraph, the text preceding the first check box may not be altered, deleted or revised. The text following the check boxes may be deleted as provided below under Section (F). Text may be added to a paragraph only as provided in Section (G) below.
- (3) Example of Rule (E)(2) above -- The portions of Paragraph 1.7 of the Petition for Dissolution of Marriage which are shaded below may not be altered, deleted or revised in any fashion. The text following the check boxes may be deleted as provided below under Section (F):

1.7 Jurisdiction

This court has jurisdiction over the marriage.

- This court has jurisdiction over the respondent because:
- the respondent is presently residing in Washington.
 - the petitioner and respondent lived in Washington during their marriage and the petitioner continues to reside, or be a member of the armed forces stationed, in this state.
 - the petitioner and respondent may have conceived a child while within Washington.
 - Other:
- This court does not have jurisdiction over the respondent.

(F) Deletion of Check Boxes Which do not Apply

- (1) Check boxes are used wherever identifiable alternatives to choices exist and precede the statements (choices) to which they apply.

Example -- Paragraph 1.7 of the Petition for Dissolution of Marriage states:

1.7 Jurisdiction

This court has jurisdiction over the marriage.

This court has jurisdiction over the respondent because:

the respondent is presently residing in Washington.

the petitioner and respondent lived in Washington during their marriage and the petitioner continues to reside, or be a member of the armed forces stationed, in this state.

the petitioner and respondent may have conceived a child while within Washington.

Other:

This court does not have jurisdiction over the respondent.

- (2) Check boxes and the statements that follow the check box may be deleted if they do not apply to a case.

Example -- If the respondent is residing in Washington, the check boxes and statements in Paragraph 1.7 which do not apply may be deleted as follows:

1.7 Jurisdiction

This court has jurisdiction over the marriage.

This court has jurisdiction over the respondent because the respondent is presently residing in Washington.

(G) Adding Text to a Form or Pleading

Text may not be added to a form or pleading except where the word "other" appears as a paragraph heading or a check box option in the form or pleading. Any text that is added to a form or pleading as a check box option must be preceded by the word "other" to identify the text as added text. Example:

1.7 Jurisdiction

This court has jurisdiction over the marriage.

This court has jurisdiction over the respondent because:

Other: the respondent is submitting to the jurisdiction of the court by joining the petition.

(H) Miscellaneous

- (1) ***Names of Parties.*** The names of the parties may be substituted for the terms petitioner, respondent, husband, wife, mother, father, etc., wherever appropriate in the body of the forms.
- (2) ***Attachments.*** Attachments to the forms are permissible.
- (3) ***WSBA Numbers.*** Pursuant to APR 13(a) and CR 11, attorneys must include their WSBA number whenever a form or pleading is signed.