

These standards do not apply to filings in the 3rd, 6th, 13th, 16th, and 20th Circuit Courts until these courts are fully implemented on MiFILE. See those courts' websites for specific filing guidelines. These standards apply to the SCAO-approved court forms and forms generated by MiCSES as of January 1, 2022.

## Preparing Electronic Documents for Filing

### 1. General Pleading Requirements

All documents electronically filed with Michigan courts must, at a minimum, comply with [MCR 1.109\(D\)](#) and be prepared in accordance with the general pleading requirements of [MCR 2.111](#). Depending on the type of case, there may be other court rule or statutory requirements.

### 2. Signature

Every document filed with the court must be signed by the person filing it or by at least one attorney of record. A party who is not represented by an attorney must sign the document. If a document is not signed, it will be rejected by the court. [MCR 1.109\(E\)](#).

An electronic signature means an electronic sound, symbol, or process attached to or logically associated with a record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record. The following form is acceptable: */s/ [printed name]*.

In probate proceedings the following also applies:

- (a) When a person is represented by an attorney, the signature of the attorney is required on any paper filed in a form approved by the State Court Administrator only if the form includes a place for a signature.
- (b) An application, petition, or other paper may be signed by the attorney for the petitioner, except that an inventory, account, acceptance of appointment, and sworn closing statement must be signed by the fiduciary or trustee. A receipt for assets must be signed by the person entitled to the assets.

### 3. Electronic Document Format Standards

All documents electronically filed with Michigan courts must be prepared in accordance with these standards. Deviation from these standards may result in a submitted filing being rejected. [MCR 1.109\(D\)](#) and [MCR 8.119\(C\)](#). See [standard rejection reasons and solutions](#).

With the exception of redacting protected personal identifying information, these standards do not apply to documents being filed with the court that: 1) the filing party did not create or 2) the filing party created for a reason other than filing with the court. Such documents are typically attached to or accompany a document that the filing party has specifically prepared for filing with the court. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- leases, bank statements, wills, codicils, trusts, or other testamentary documents;
- copies of documents from a court file that preceded these standards or a printout of a register of action from a court's records;
- documents created by local, state, or federal government agencies, such as a local tax bill, marriage license, birth certificate, or death certificate; and
- documents prepared, executed, acknowledged, or proved outside the state of Michigan, such as a copy of a foreign judgment.

These standards also do not apply to the Michigan Uniform Law Citations.

➤ **Language**

- Each document filed with the court must be in English. [MCR 1.109\(D\)\(1\)](#).

➤ **Caption, Titling of Documents**

- The caption must comply with specific court rule requirements, including capitalized statements for appellate documents. [MCR 1.109\(D\)](#).
- The title of a motion and subsequent order must be specific and include the name of the party filing the motion (e.g., Defendant [NAME]'s Motion for Summary Disposition). [MCR 2.119](#).

**Personal Identifying Information**

- Personal identifying information protected under [MCR 1.109\(D\)\(9\)](#) as of January 1, 2021 must be provided to the court as required by [MCR 1.109\(D\)\(2\)](#) in an appropriate SCAO-approved method or form. If by form, the form must be completed and filed with the document to which it pertains.
- If a party is required to include protected personal identifying information in a public document filed with the court after January 1, 2021, the party shall file the document with the protected personal identifying information redacted, along with a personal identifying information form approved by the State Court Administrative Office under [MCR 1.109\(D\)\(9\)\(b\)\(i\)](#).

➤ **Page View/Size**

- 8 ½ x 11 inch view. Must be capable of being printed on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper per single page without manipulation. [MCR 1.109\(B\)](#).
- Cannot reduce 8 ½ x 14 inches to fit into an 8 ½ x 11 inch view.
- No multiple transcript pages on a single document page. [MCR 1.109\(B\)](#).
- Any attachment, graphic, or photograph larger than 8 ½ x 11 inches must be filed in its original size in paper format unless the judge directs that it can be filed electronically in its original size. [MCR 1.109\(D\)\(4\)](#), [MCR 1.109\(G\)\(3\)\(c\)](#).
- Any attachment, graphic, or photograph smaller than 8 ½ x 11 inches may be filed in its original size.

➤ **Type Face and Font**

- Type face must be without ornament, serif or sans serif. Preferred are: Arial, Calibri, Constantia, Georgia, Tahoma, and Times New Roman. Limit use of font attributes such as italics, capitalization, and bolding.
- Font must be 12 or 13 point for body text and no less than 10 point for footnotes, except with regard to forms approved by the State Court Administrative Office. [MCR 1.109\(D\)\(1\)](#).

➤ **Margins**

- One-inch top and bottom margins; one-half inch side margins; side margins for date and time stamps; top margin for other court-use-only stamps.
- These margin standards do not apply to transcripts.
- Two and one-half inch top margin for documents prepared for recording in the register of deeds. [MCL 565.201](#).
- No text or image shall be placed in the margin except a court's date and time stamp.

➤ **Line and Paragraph Spacing**

- Except as otherwise provided by court rule, one and one-half or double line spacing, except with regard to forms approved by the State Court Administrative Office, quotes, and footnotes.
- Paragraphs must be numbered.

➤ **Document Volume/Number of Pages**

- Motion Practice – combined length of motion and brief cannot exceed 20 pages, double spaced. Excludes attachments or exhibits. [MCR 2.119](#).
- Case Evaluation Summary – cannot exceed 20 pages, exclusive of attachments, unless otherwise permitted by the court. [MCR 2.403](#).
- Motion for Relief from Judgment – combined motion and any memorandum of law cannot exceed 50 pages. Excludes attachments or exhibits. [MCR 6.502\(C\)](#).

➤ **File Format, Quality, Metadata, Orientation**

- Documents must be searchable/Optical Character Recognition (OCR) PDF and capable of being printed.
- When the filing party has control of the creation of a document, the document must be converted to PDF directly from the program used to create the document. A scanned image of a document is prohibited except for documents the filing party did not create electronically or when a required signature on the document was signed by hand.
- Scanned documents must be a minimum 300-400 dpi, black/white mode.
- Permissible formats are PDF, DOC and DOCX, RTF, TIFF, TXT, JPG, and PNG.

- Each page of a document must be oriented so that the text is not upside down or sideways and can be read without manipulation.
  - Multiple documents (including attachments) cannot be combined into a single PDF unless authorized in these standards. In summary proceedings case types (LT and SP), a document with attachments must be combined in the same file with the lead document.
  - Each document must contain no blank pages.
  - Color photographs or graphics must be filed in color.
  - All metadata must be removed from the document, including information referencing drafters, reviewers, javascript, or macros.
  - Bar codes affixed by a filer are permissible provided they are within the prescribed margins.
- **File Size; Multiple-Part Documents**
- File size shall not exceed 25 MB. Files larger than 25 MB may be filed electronically in separate 25 MB (or smaller) segments.
  - Multiple-part documents are a single document split apart by necessity because of file size limitations. The document must follow the naming convention in these standards. Multiple-part documents are not connected filings.
  - Connected filings are lead documents with attachments. The filer is responsible for dividing the document into appropriately sized parts and labeling each segment (e.g., 1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3).
- **File Name**
- The file name must identify the title of the document.
  - There is a 100 character limit.
  - Abbreviations are permitted.
  - Do not use special characters.
- **Attachments (previously referred to as exhibits)**
- Attachments the filing party creates for filing with the court must comply with these standards. In addition, each attachment accompanying a document must be separately attached (connected) and referenced to the lead document to which it relates as follows:
    - The last page of the lead document to which attachments pertain must contain an index subtitled “Index to Attachments” and must list the title of each attachment and its associated file name(s).
    - Each attachment must be identified as an attachment to the lead document, be numbered, and contain the title as follows: Attachment 1 [title of attachment, e.g., Lease] for [name of lead document, e.g., Complaint for Possession].
  - Each attachment must conform to the file size limit. To the extent an attachment exceeds the size limitation, each portion must be separately described as being a

portion of the whole attachment (e.g., Attachment 1 [title of attachment] for [name of lead document] Part 1 of 3; Attachment 1 [title of attachment] for [name of lead document] Part 2 of 3; Attachment 1 [title of attachment] for [name of lead document] Part 3 of 3).

- Multiple attachments can be combined as a single attachment when the documents are of a like kind (e.g., multiple account statements that span a period of time).
- Exception for Summary Proceedings (LT and SP) Cases: If a document has attachments, the document and all attachments must be combined into a single document.

➤ **Hyperlinks**

- Each filed document must be self-contained. Hyperlinks embedded within a document must refer only to information within the same document.
- Embedded audio or video files are prohibited.

#### 4. Preparing Appellate Documents

In addition to the above general document standards, documents prepared for filing with the Court of Appeals and Michigan Supreme Court must also comply with certain standards. See Subchapters [7.200](#) and [7.300](#) of the Michigan Court Rules and the [Appellant Manual](#) and the [Appellee Manual](#) for details.

Source: [Michigan Trial Court Records Management Standards](#), Standard 3.3.1.4. Minimum Filing Requirements. Established by the State Court Administrative Office, July 31, 2019, revised October, 2019.