

LR7.1

FORM OF PLEADINGS AND PAPERS

(a) **Form.** Pleadings, motions, briefs, and other papers submitted for filing must be typewritten, printed, or legibly handwritten on letter size paper. The pages shall be unfolded and shall be bound at the top and numbered at the bottom, without manuscript cover. The margin at the top of each page shall not be less than one and one-quarter inches, and bottom, left and right margins shall be set at not less than one inch. Typewritten documents should be double spaced. Mechanically reproduced copies which bear an original signature will be accepted by the court as originals.

The text of every document shall be printed in a font size of 11 or larger, so that the type size and face shall be no smaller than that contained in the United States Reports beginning with Volume 453. There shall be no more than 27 lines of regularly spaced text on a page.

(b) **Personal Data Identifiers.** In compliance with the policy of the Judicial Conference of the United States, and the E-Government Act of 2002, and in order to promote electronic access to case files while also protecting personal privacy and other legitimate interests, parties shall refrain from including, or shall partially redact where inclusion is necessary, the following personal data identifiers from all pleadings filed with the court, including exhibits thereto, whether filed electronically or in paper, unless otherwise ordered by the court:

a. **Social Security numbers.** If an individual's social security number must be included in a pleading, only the last four digits of that number should be used.

b. **Names of minor children.** If the involvement of a minor child must be mentioned in a pleading, only the initials of that child should be used.

c. **Dates of birth.** If an individual's date of birth must be included in a pleading, only the year should be used.

d. **Financial account numbers.** If financial account numbers are relevant and must be included in a pleading, only the last four digits of the financial account number should be used.

In compliance with the E-Government Act of 2002, a party wishing to file a document containing the personal data identifiers listed above may

a. file an unredacted version of the document under seal, or

b. file a reference list under seal. The reference list shall contain the complete personal data identifier(s) and the redacted identifier(s) used in its(their) place in the filing. All references in the case to the redacted identifiers included in the reference list will be construed to refer

to the corresponding complete personal data identifier. The reference list must be filed under seal, and may be amended as of right.

The court may, however, still require a redacted copy for the public file. The redacted version of the document or the reference list shall be retained by the court as part of the record and disposed of in accordance with Local Rule 83.5. Counsel who file personal identifier data under seal should be mindful that the confidentiality of sealed documents transferred to the General Services Administration for holding after the case is closed cannot be assured.

The responsibility for redacting these personal identifiers rests solely with counsel and parties. The Clerk will not review each pleading for compliance with this rule.

(c) Identification of Documents. All papers submitted for filing shall follow the heading format set out in the Appendix of Forms, Fed.R.Civ.P., and papers submitted subsequent to the original complaint shall bear the case number.

(d) Telephone Numbers and Addresses. Parties or attorneys signing papers submitted for filing must state their telephone numbers, as well as their addresses, and the N.C. State Bar number of attorneys who are admitted to practice before this court.

(e) Exhibits to Pleadings or Papers. Bulky or voluminous materials should not be submitted for filing with a pleading or paper, or incorporated by reference therein, unless such materials are essential. The court may order any pleading or paper stricken if filed in violation of this rule.

(f) Civil Rights Actions by Prisoners, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983. All *pro se* complaints filed by state prisoners seeking relief under 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983 shall be filed with the clerk in compliance with the instructions of the clerk and on appropriate forms which are available without charge in the clerk's office. In each action, an original and one copy of the complaint for the court and one copy of the complaint for each defendant must be provided by the plaintiff.