

RULE 2

FILINGS

- A. No pleading or other document regarding a proceeding of the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Court shall be deemed to be filed with the court until the same has been received and recorded by the court clerk at the office of the court in Lincoln, Nebraska. Upon filing of a petition or initial pleading in a case that has not yet been assigned a docket number, such petition or pleading shall include the date and location of injury or alleged injury.
- B. All pleadings or other documents filed with, or correspondence received by, the court shall be stamped or imprinted by the court with the date of receipt. Time limits prescribed by law or these rules shall be calculated from the date of filing as reflected by the receipt date recorded on or with the document or correspondence.
- C. The following privacy rules shall apply to all filings and correspondence received by the court, including pleadings, attachments thereto, and any other documents.
 - 1. These rules seek to prevent personally identifiable information such as birth dates, Social Security numbers, employment visa numbers, green card numbers, passport numbers, and financial account numbers (such as bank routing and account numbers) of all persons, including minor children and dependents, from being included in court records generally available to the public.
 - 2. Upon filing of a petition or initial pleading in a case that has not been assigned a docket number, the Social Security account number or other identification number of the claimant shall be provided to the court in a separate document as set forth in Addendum 3 to these rules. Other personal and financial account information identified in Rule 2,C,1 may, if applicable, be provided to the court prior to the issuance of any order, judgment, or award, and shall also be set forth in a separate Addendum 3 document. Such separate document shall be submitted in either electronic form or paper form and shall not be accessible or viewable by the public. The document shall contain, at the top of the first page, the following language, in bold type: **This document is confidential and shall not be made part of the court file or provided to the public pursuant to Workers' Comp. Ct. R. of Proc. 2.** The court clerk shall keep the document separate from the case file but accessible to judges and court staff. If the document is submitted in electronic form, or converted from paper form to electronic form, the electronic document or the data contained therein may be reproduced or stored in the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Court case management system. If the document is submitted in electronic form, the paper form shall not be submitted.
 - 3. The personal and financial account information identified in Rule 2,C,1 shall not be included in any pleading or document submitted by a party or attorney for filing with the court, except by reference to a separate Addendum 3 document. An Addendum 3 document shall be separately submitted with any such pleading or other document. The Addendum 3 document is mandatory with respect to the information identified in Rule 2,C,1, but a party, attorney, or the court may include in the Addendum 3 document additional personal or financial account information sought to be protected.

4. The personal and financial account information identified in Rule 2,C,1 shall not be included in any court order, judgment, or award, except by reference to a separate Addendum 3 document. Where the court finds that an order, judgment, or award must contain Social Security numbers or other personal or financial account information identified in Rule 2,C,1, the court shall have the original order sealed and provide in the case file a redacted version of the order for public view.
5. No exhibit used at a hearing or trial shall contain the personal or financial account information identified in Rule 2,C,1, including the complete account number for any financial accounts or debts of any party. The same shall be redacted by the person offering the exhibit(s) to the extent necessary to protect the information from public access or misuse. By agreement of the parties, or as directed by the court, financial account information shall be identified in all pleadings, other documents and court orders, judgments, or awards in such a manner as the parties, attorneys, and the court may be able to distinguish information between similar accounts or debts, or as may be necessary to establish relevance to the matter being litigated.
6. The responsibility for redacting personal and financial account information set forth in Rule 2,C,1 rests solely with the attorney(s) and the parties. The court clerk shall not be required to review documents for compliance with this rule. If the court clerk identifies a violation of this rule, the court clerk may elect to provide a redacted document for public access. However, the court clerk electing to provide a redacted copy for public access shall maintain the original document without any alterations thereof, which document shall only be available to the court and the parties or the parties' attorney(s).

D. Electronic Filing, Service, and Notice.

1. Definitions.

- a. **Electronic Filing.** Electronic filing (E-Filing) is the electronic transmission of pleadings, motions or other documents to the Clerk of the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Court (court clerk) via the internet through the court-authorized service provider, ~~Nebraska.gov~~. An E-Filed document is a document that has been filed using E-Filing.
- b. **Electronic Service.** Electronic service (E-Service) is the electronic transmission of documents to any Nebraska attorney representing a party in a case via E-Filing. Any Nebraska attorney who has registered to use E-Filing thereby agrees to receive E-Service of any document, other than service of initial pleading or summons.
- c. **Durable Medium.** Durable medium shall be any information storage medium that is created by a durable process. A process shall be the combination of hardware, software, storage media, techniques, and procedures used to manage, create, store, retrieve, and delete information belonging to the party required to maintain the record. A process shall be durable if it meets the following criteria:
 - i. The process is capable of creating and storing information for the required records retention period.
 - ii. The process can be migrated to a successor process when necessary and will retain all information available in the original process after migration to the successor process.

- iii. The process maintains the integrity of information in a readily accessible manner, makes it retrievable, makes it processable through an established usual or routine set of procedures using available hardware and software, and makes it accurately reproducible in a human-readable form.
 - iv. The process provides for disaster recovery backups, which are periodically, depending on a retention schedule, verified for restorability and readability, and can be stored in a separate geographical location from the original information.
 - v. The process is demonstrated to create and maintain information for the retention period as specified, in an accurate, reliable, trustworthy, dependable, and incorruptible manner.
 - vi. The process allows the removal of information when it reaches the end of its required retention period.
 - vii. The process is documented so as to demonstrate to a reasonable person compliance with these criteria.
- d. **Electronic Notice.** Electronic notice (E-Notice) is the electronic transmission of notices, opinions, court entries, and any other dispositional orders or information from the court to all users who have registered for E-Notice. ~~E-Notice is not currently available via E-Filing. Until such time as E-Notice becomes available, the court shall distribute notices and signed orders via regular mail and file-stamped copies of pleadings via email, fax, or regular mail.~~ A Nebraska attorney who has registered for E-Filing agrees to receive E-Notice of all court notices, opinions, court entries, and any other dispositional orders or information from the court clerk.
- e. **User.** A user is a person or entity who is making use of one or more of the electronic services as defined in this section.

2. **E-Filing Registration and E-Service: E-Filing, E-Service, and E-Notice.**

- a. E-Filing is required for any pleadings or other documents filed by a Nebraska attorney in the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Court except:
 - i. Exhibits to be offered at a hearing or trial;
 - ii. Supersedeas bonds;
 - iii. Documents to be filed under seal pursuant to court order; or
 - iv. Any pleading where an exception is granted by the trial judge. The filer is responsible for service upon the parties entitled to service pursuant to Rule 3,B.

Due to limitations of the court-authorized service provider, city, county, or state attorneys must pre-pay statutory filing fees for Lump Sum Settlement applications and Releases of Liability pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. 48-139(3) as well as Notices of Appeal and accompanying appeal pleadings. Those statutory filing fees shall be paid in the form and manner prescribed by the court clerk. The court clerk may waive prepayment of fees in the event attorneys employed by the city, county, or state and the court clerk agree to and approve of an alternative method of payment via the E-Filing system.

- b. E-Service shall be used for any E-Filed document ~~to be electronically filed~~, except for the initial pleading and summons. Documents that are required to be served pursuant to Rule 3,B and in the manner required by Rule 3,B,1 may be served through E-Service or through a combination of E-Service and any other method permitted by Rule 3,B. A document electronically received by the E-Filing provider for service by 11:59:59 p.m. local time shall be deemed to have been served on that date.
- c. For purposes of Rule 3,B, service by E-Service to any party or Nebraska attorney who has registered to use E-Filing shall constitute service pursuant to Rule 3,B,1,e.
- d. All notices, opinions, court entries, and any other dispositional orders or information from the court clerk shall be sent in electronic format via E-Notice in lieu of the traditional paper format sent via regular mail. All documents sent via E-Notice shall be deemed sent to the recipient(s) upon transmission and in accordance with Rule 3,B,3.
- d e. Registration for E-Filing is mandatory for all Nebraska attorneys making any filing or appearance in the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Court ("required attorneys"). Registration for E-Filing requires an account with the court-authorized service provider, ~~Nebraska.gov~~, and requires a separate annual maintenance fee as determined by the court-authorized service provider. Registration allows the user to access E-Filing. Registration for E-Filing includes mandatory E-Service and E-Notice for required attorneys. Email addresses must be maintained in accordance with Rule 2,D,3.
- e f. ~~Failure to register or~~ Required attorneys must register and maintain contact information as provided in Rule 2,D,3,f. Failure by a required attorney to register for E-Filing or to maintain valid and up-to-date contact information as provided for in Rule 2,D,3,f may be enforced by any appropriate sanction or order of the trial court or appellate court, or by appropriate disciplinary procedure.
- f g. Attorneys admitted pro hac vice in a particular case pursuant to Neb. Ct. R. § 3-122 may utilize E-Filing through Nebraska counsel with whom the attorney is associated.

3. **Email addresses.**

- a. Email addresses for all E-Filing services offered by the court or its authorized service provider, ~~Nebraska.gov~~, cannot exceed 50 characters. Only one email address per attorney user will be permitted for E-Service and E-Notice.
- b. E-Service shall be sent electronically from the following email address: ne-support@egov.com. User email accounts should be set up to receive all emails from that email address. Do not reply to the above email address. No user may transmit documents to ne-support@egov.com.
- c. E-Notice shall be sent electronically from the following email address: ~~enotice@wcc.ne.gov~~ enotice@newcc.gov. User email accounts should be set up to receive all emails from that email address. Do not reply to the above email address. No user may transmit documents to ~~enotice@wcc.ne.gov~~ enotice@newcc.gov.
- d. After registration with ~~Nebraska.gov~~ the court's authorized service provider, all email addresses shall be maintained through the attorney's ~~Nebraska.gov~~ E-Filing account.

- e. Emails transmitted to a registered email address are presumed to have been delivered. The presumption may be rebutted only by clear and convincing evidence.
 - f. Contact Information. Users are responsible for maintaining valid and up-to-date contact information. When a user's email address changes, the user shall promptly update all email addresses provided for all Electronic Services offered by the court or its service providers. E-Service and E-Notice upon an obsolete email address shall constitute valid service where the user has not updated his or her email address. Mere usage of a new or different email address in a document filed using E-Filing or in paper format does not satisfy the requirements of this subsection for an update to the user's email address. Court staff will not update users' contact information. Any changes or updates to email addresses must be made by users through their E-Filing account.
 - g. Self-Represented Litigant E-Notice. Self-represented litigants who have internet access and email capability may register for E-Notice in a particular case by using a form developed by the court. Email addresses shall be in compliance with Rule 2,D,3. Any change to email addresses or discontinuation of E-Notice must be made by using a form developed by the court.
 - h. Pro Hac Vice E-Notice. Attorneys admitted pro hac vice in a particular case pursuant to Neb. Ct. R. § 3-122 may register for E-Notice by submitting a written request to the court clerk via email at filings@newcc.gov. Email addresses shall be in compliance with Rule 2,D,3. Any change to email addresses or discontinuation of E-Notice must be made in writing to the court clerk.
- 4. Cases may be commenced under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 48-173 or 48-162.03(2) through an E-Filing; however, service of the initial pleading and the summons shall not be made by E-Service. The electronic filing of a petition or initial pleading from which printed copies can be made shall comply with the requirements of Rule 3,A. The court clerk shall print sufficient copies for service with the summons. The summons and any required attachments to the summons shall be provided in printed form by the court clerk and shall be served in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 48-175 and 48-175.01 as applicable.
 - 5. Pleadings filed via E-Filing shall be submitted in searchable non-editable PDF format. Proposed orders shall be submitted in either editable Microsoft Word format (*.doc or *.docx) or Rich-Text Format (*.RTF) format. Attachments to pleadings may be submitted in any noneditable PDF format. Pleadings or other documents filed via E-Filing shall not be secured with a password or encrypted in any fashion. All electronically filed documents shall be easily readable. Documents that are not easily readable will be rejected by the court clerk and the filing party shall refile a document that meets these requirements.
 - 6. Pleadings or other documents in compliance with applicable filing requirements and electronically received by the court clerk by 11:59:59 p.m. local time shall be deemed to have been filed on that date. The court clerk shall notify the filing party of any document that fails to comply with applicable filing requirements.
 - 7. Use of E-Filing by an attorney shall constitute compliance with the Rule 3,I signature requirement, and the attorney using E-Filing shall be subject to all other requirements of Rule 3,I and Rule 3,J. Signatures of attorneys, parties, witnesses, and notaries and

notary stamps may be typed using the signature format “/s/ [typed name],” and using the stamp format “seal, notary public, State of [state name],” and commission expiration date to satisfy signature and certification requirements on E-filed documents. If the notarial commission of the particular notary public whose seal is being depicted is limited by county, the filing party shall use the stamp format “seal, notary public, State of [state name], County of [county name].” Other seals or stamps, such as those of courts, public bodies, agencies, or officials, or corporations, may be typed using the stamp format “seal, [alphanumeric content of seal].”

8. When a signature is affixed to a document or is deemed to be affixed to a document, that signature shall have the same effect as a handwritten signature of the person whose name appears or is deemed to appear on the document.
9. A document that requires the signatures of opposing parties or counsel (such as a stipulation) may be electronically filed by typing the names of each signing party or counsel, but the filer is required to first obtain the original signatures of all opposing parties or counsel on a document, or obtain approval of all opposing parties or attorney in writing. This rule only applies to documents that do not require verification (notarization) of signatures. See Requirements in Rule 2,D,10 of this section.
10. **Possession of printed documents.**
 - a. For documents that require verified signatures (such as lump sum settlement applications or releases of liability), except as provided in Rule 2,D,10,b, no pleading or other document may be filed via E-Filing unless the filing party first has possession of a printed document or documents bearing original signatures, stamps, and seals as applicable. Such printed documents:
 - i. shall be made available by the filing party for inspection by other parties or the court upon request, but shall not be filed with the court; and
 - ii. shall be maintained by the filing party for a period of two years after the final resolution of the action, including the final resolution of all appeals; and
 - iii. may be maintained by the filing party in either paper form or electronic form. Pleadings or other documents maintained in electronic form shall be stored using a durable medium as defined in Rule 2,D,1,c.
 - b. ~~Where~~ When an E-Filed pleading or other document is signed by only the filing attorney in accordance with Rule 2,D,7, the attorney shall not be required to have possession of or maintain a printed document or documents bearing an original signature.
11. An E-Filed pleading or other document shall not be transmitted to the court clerk by any other means unless the court requests a printed document bearing original signatures, stamps, and seals.
12. Upon satisfactory proof that E-Filing of a pleading or other document is not completed because of (1) an error in the transmission of the document to the court via E-Filing which was unknown to the sending party or (2) a failure to process the electronic filing when received by the court clerk or (3) technical failure in the State Data Communications Network, the court may enter an order permitting the pleading or other document to be filed as of the date it was first attempted to be sent electronically. Notwithstanding the

foregoing, no order may be entered under this rule which expands the statutory time period for commencing an action or perfecting an appeal unless there is an affirmative showing that the failure to make a timely filing was due solely to an E-Filing internal transmission error, processing error by the court clerk, or extended E-Filing system unavailability.

13. **Extended E-Filing system unavailability.** Only in the event of an extended period longer than 24 hours where the court's E-Filing system is not available may the user file a paper document with the court clerk. The user may make such filing by fax machine. In such instances, the user is responsible for service of the document(s) on parties entitled to service pursuant to Rule 3,B. This subsection does not apply to the user's unavailability of internet service or computer equipment. Notice of any extended E-Filing system unavailability will be provided on the court's website or through the court's authorized service provider.
 14. Upon a showing of substantial good faith compliance with ~~Rule 2,D~~ these rules, the court may waive nonjurisdictional defects ~~in an E-Filing~~ if it finds that no harm has occurred to any party as a result of the defective E-Filing.
- E. **Emailed Documents.** Only self-represented litigants may file documents by email with the court. If a self-represented litigant chooses to file by email, the only authorized email address to receive those filings is ~~filings@wcc.ne.gov~~ filings@newcc.gov. Emailing a document to any other court email address by a self-represented litigant or attorney shall not constitute a court filing and will not generate a file stamp. Self-represented litigants must meet general pleading requirements outlined in the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Act and in these rules. Documents electronically received by the court clerk at ~~filings@wcc.ne.gov~~ filings@newcc.gov by 11:59:59 p.m. local time shall be deemed to have been filed on that date. Emailed documents must not exceed 50 pages. Any attached documents exceeding 50 pages must be sent by regular mail or hand-delivered to the court.

RULE 3

PLEADINGS

- A. Except as otherwise required to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and except for any court forms promulgated or last amended prior to the effective date of this rule, the following rules apply.

The standard form for all pleadings, including, but not limited to, all petitions, answers, motions, forms, proposed orders, briefs, written closing arguments, and other filings, except bills of exceptions, shall be as follows:

1. All documents shall be on a page size measuring 8 ½ by 11 inches, in portrait mode. Electronically-filed documents shall be in a converted PDF (fully text-searchable), rather than only a scanned image PDF format. All electronically-filed documents shall be easily readable. Documents that are not easily readable may be declined by the court clerk or stricken by the trial judge.
2. Documents permitted to be filed in paper form shall follow the same formatting set forth in this rule.
3. Text shall be aligned to the left side and not justified. Margins shall be set to 1.5 inches on all sides, and lines shall be spaced at 1.15 or 1.2. Extra line spacing is allowed before headings and between paragraphs. Footnotes are not permitted.
4. Preferred fonts shall be Century or Century Schoolbook. Other allowed fonts are Times New Roman, Baskerville Old Face, Book Antiqua, or Palatino, and shall be set to no less than 12, nor more than 13, point text. Type shall not be underscored, but may be *italicized* or **boldfaced** for emphasis.
5. Every pleading shall contain a caption setting forth the name of the court, the names of the parties, the docket number, and a title (or the name of the document).

Whenever a motion or stipulation is filed, a proposed order shall accompany such motion or stipulation. Proposed orders shall be submitted by separate document ~~and shall include a certificate of service to be signed by the court clerk.~~ Proposed orders should not include a certificate of service.

- B. Every pleading subsequent to the petition, every written motion, every document relating to discovery or disclosure, and every written notice, appearance, designation of record on appeal, and similar document shall be served upon each of the parties by the initiating party. Except as provided in Rule 3,F, such party shall file proof of service with the court. Service and proof of service shall be made as follows:

1. Service upon an attorney or upon a party not represented by an attorney shall be made by:
 - a. delivering the document to the person to be served;
 - b. mailing it to the person to be served by first-class mail at the address designated pursuant to Rule 3,I, or if none is so designated, to the last-known address of the person, in which event, service is complete upon mailing;
 - c. leaving it at the person's office with the person's clerk or other person in charge thereof; or, if the office is closed or the person to be served has no office, leaving it at the person's dwelling house or usual place of abode with some person of suitable age and discretion then residing therein;

- d. transmitting it by facsimile to the person, if the person has designated a facsimile number pursuant to Rule 3,I;
 - e. sending it to the person by email if the person being served has designated an email address pursuant to Rule 3,I; or sending it via the court-authorized service provider to a registered user; or
 - f. delivering it by any other means consented to in writing by the party being served.
- 2. Proof of service may be made by certificate of the attorney causing the service to be made or by certificate of the party not represented by an attorney. A certificate of service shall state the manner in which service was made on each person served.
- 3. Service by regular mail is complete upon mailing. Service by facsimile or email is complete upon transmission, but it is not effective if the person attempting to make service learns that the attempted service did not reach the person to be served. Emails transmitted to a registered email address are presumed to have been delivered. The presumption may be rebutted only by clear and convincing evidence.
- 4. Any requirement that a document or notice be written or in writing is satisfied if the document or notice is served by electronic means pursuant to Rule 3,B,1.
- 5. Whenever a party has the right or is required to take some action within a prescribed period after the service of a notice or other document upon the party and the notice or document is served under Rule 3,B,1,b, three days shall be added to the prescribed period.
- C. In all proceedings involving approval or modification of a vocational rehabilitation plan, the moving party shall cause service of summons to be had on the Attorney General. Service on the Attorney General shall be made not less than 10 days prior to hearing, so that the Attorney General may have an opportunity to plead if requested by the court administrator.
- D. The following shall apply to any motion or similar filing in which a hearing is required:
 - 1. Except as otherwise provided by law, any motion or similar filing in which a hearing is requested shall be in writing and filed with the court clerk not less than five days prior to hearing except by permission of the trial judge.
 - 2. Prior to filing, the moving attorney or self-represented litigant shall obtain a date for hearing from the judge to whom the case is assigned or the judge's secretary and file a notice of hearing with the filing. Unless approved by the judge, a hearing date must be obtained for each motion, even if motions in the same case are already scheduled.
 - 3. Notice of hearing shall be delivered to the opposing attorney or party, if unrepresented, in accordance with Rule 3,B,1 three full days prior to hearing.
 - 4. To avoid delays in the progression of a case, the court shall refuse to consider any and all motions, including motions to compel, unless the moving attorney or self-represented litigant, as part of the motion makes a showing that, after personal consultation with the attorney(s) for opposing party(ies) or self-represented litigant and reasonable efforts to resolve differences, they are unable to reach an accord. This showing shall recite, additionally, the date, time and place of such conference and the names of all participants.

E. Summary Judgment Procedure.

1. Moving Party's Materials in Support of Motion. When a motion for summary judgment or partial summary judgment is filed, the moving party must simultaneously file with the court clerk and serve all parties of record:
 - a. an Evidence Index in Support listing all evidence to be offered in support of the motion for summary judgment; and
 - b. an Annotated Statement of Undisputed Facts setting forth concise, numbered paragraphs reciting each proposed material fact as to which the moving party contends there is no genuine dispute, annotated by pinpoint citation to the supporting evidence in the Evidence Index in Support.

Failure to submit such a Statement may constitute grounds for denial of the motion.

2. Opposing Party's Materials in Opposition. Each party opposing a motion for summary judgment or partial summary judgment must file with the court clerk and serve on all parties of record:
 - a. an Evidence Index in Opposition listing all evidence to be offered in opposition to the motion for summary judgment; and
 - b. an Annotated Statement of Disputed Facts setting forth concise, numbered paragraphs reciting each proposed material fact of the moving party as to which the opposing party contends there is a genuine dispute, annotated by pinpoint citation to the supporting evidence in the Evidence Index in Opposition.

Failure to submit such a Statement may constitute grounds for sustaining the motion.

3. For purposes of this rule, where competing motions are filed, a party shall be considered as the moving party regarding a motion or motions asserted by that party and as an opposing party regarding a motion or motions asserted by another party.
4. The assigned judge is expected to schedule deadlines for compliance with this rule and the summary judgment statutes so as to ensure a fair opportunity for all parties to present their evidence. The judge may, in the judge's discretion, extend any deadline for compliance with any requirement under this rule.
5. The documents required by this rule shall not be included within a brief submitted on behalf of a party.

F. Discovery materials that do not require action by the court shall not be filed with the court. All such materials, including notices of deposition, depositions, certificates of filing a deposition, interrogatories, answers and objections to interrogatories, requests for documents or to permit entry upon land and responses or objections to such requests, requests for admissions and responses or objections to such requests, subpoenas for depositions or other discovery and returns of service of subpoenas, and related notices shall be maintained by the parties. Discovery materials shall be filed with the court only when ordered by the court or when required by law.

G. Original briefs shall be filed with the court clerk with a copy served upon opposing counsel or opposing party(ies) if self-represented. Proof of such service shall be endorsed on the original brief. The materials required by Rule 3,E shall be separately filed with the court clerk. Nothing

included in a brief shall be treated as a substitution for any required document under Rule 3,E.

- H. Copies of all correspondence sent to the court shall be given by the party originating the correspondence to all other parties of record in the case in accordance with Rule 3,B,1.
- I. Any pleading or other document filed with, or correspondence received by, the court shall bear the typed or printed name and the signature of the preparer or signatory, the firm name if applicable, the complete address including the zip code, the telephone number, including the area code and the court's docket and page number if one has been assigned to the claim. For any party represented by an attorney, the attorney's Nebraska State Bar Association (Bar) number shall also be stated in the pleading or document. The signature block on any document may designate a fax number to which documents addressed to the signer may be sent by facsimile. The signature block on any document submitted for the pending case may designate an email address to which documents addressed to the signer may be sent electronically. Any changes or updates to contact information for any party or attorney shall be made by notifying the court clerk and the opposing party.
- J. The signature of an attorney or party constitutes the following:
 - 1. a certification by him or her that he or she has read the document;
 - 2. that it is not interposed for any improper purpose such as to harass or to cause unnecessary delay or needless increase in the cost of litigation;
 - 3. that to the best of his or her knowledge, information and belief formed after reasonable inquiry, it is well grounded in fact and is warranted by existing law or a good faith argument for the extension, modification or reversal of existing law; and
 - 4. that any allegations or denials of facts have evidentiary support or, if specifically so identified, are likely to have evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for further investigation or discovery.
- K. When a lawyer is not an attorney of record, such lawyer may prepare pleadings, briefs, and other documents to be filed with the court so long as such filings clearly indicate that said filings are "Prepared By" along with the name, address, email address, telephone number, and Bar number of the lawyer preparing the same. Such actions or filings shall not be deemed an appearance by the lawyer in the case.
- L. Consolidation of related cases. All motions to consolidate shall be filed in each related docketed case. A hearing on any motion to consolidate will not be required if the parties agree or stipulate that the related cases should be consolidated. The judge assigned to the oldest related docketed case shall enter an order on the stipulation or agreed-upon motion or preside over the hearing on the Motion to Consolidate. Upon entry of an order to consolidate, the judge assigned to the oldest related docketed case shall preside over the consolidated cases unless justice otherwise requires.

RULE 11
DECISIONS

- A. **Meaningful Review.** Decisions of the court shall provide the basis for a meaningful appellate review. The judge shall specify the evidence upon which the judge relies.
- B. **Official Version.** The official order, award, or judgment of the court shall be the original, signed version which is on file with the clerk of the court.
- C. **Copies Mailed.** A copy of each order, award, or judgment will be mailed to all attorneys and self-represented parties. For any attorney or self-represented party registered for E-Notice, a copy of each order, award, or judgment will instead be sent by E-Notice ~~when E-Notice becomes available.~~