

Lehigh County Law Library Pathfinder

This PATHFINDER is not intended to be legal advice. If you need legal advice or assistance drafting legal documents, you must hire a private attorney.
Law Library staff **cannot** assist you in drafting legal documents.

BASIC FORMAT OF LEGAL PAPERS **And** **PARTS OF A COMPLAINT**

The formatting of legal pleadings and other documents is controlled by the Pennsylvania and local county Rules of Court.

Please consult the Pennsylvania Rules of Court online or in print and the Lehigh County Rules of Court at www.lccpa.org for the latest revisions of rules concerning legal format.

Pennsylvania Rule of Civil Procedure 204.1. Pleadings and Other Legal Papers. Format

All pleadings, motions and other legal papers must conform to the following requirements:

- (1) The document shall be on 8 ½ inch by 11 inch paper.
- (2) The document shall be prepared on white paper (except for dividers and similar sheets) of good quality.
- (3) The first sheet shall contain a 3-inch space from the top of the paper for all court stampings, filing notices, etc.
- (4) The text must be double spaced, but quotations more than two lines long may be indented and single spaced. Margins must be at least one inch on all four sides.
- (5) **The lettering shall be clear and legible and no smaller than point 12.** The lettering shall be on only one side of a page, except that exhibits and similar supporting documents may be lettered on both sides of a page.
- (6) Documents and papers shall be firmly bound.

Credits

Adopted July 7, 2006, effective Feb. 1, 2007. Current with amendments received through October 15, 2018.

Editors' Notes EXPLANATORY COMMENT--2006

New Rule 204.1 governs the format of pleadings and other legal papers filed with the court in civil actions and proceedings. The new rule is substantially identical to current Pennsylvania Rule of Appellate Procedure 124(a) and to new Rule of Criminal Procedure 575(C). The criminal rule governs the format of motions, answers and briefs in criminal proceedings. The civil rule is being promulgated contemporaneously with the criminal rule to foster uniformity of format of legal papers in both civil and criminal matters. These rules will promote the objectives of the unified judicial system under the Constitution of 1968 and facilitate the statewide practice of law.

Lehigh County Rules of Civil Procedure Rule 205.2(a) Filing of Legal Papers with the Clerk of Courts.

All pleadings and other documents submitted for filing with the Clerk of Courts shall conform with the following requirements:

- (1) The use of backers and/or toppers is prohibited.
- (2) All documents shall be fastened together by staples.
- (3) The text of original documents shall not be highlighted by the use of colored markers. Highlighting of text can be done by bolding or by using a different style and size of font.
- (4) All documents shall be single-sided and double-spaced, except that quotations, footnotes and exhibits may be single-spaced.
- (5) The font size of all documents shall be not less 12 points.
- (6) Paper shall be of good quality and shall not exceed 8-1/2" x 11" in size.
- (7) Attachments smaller than 8-1/2" x 11" shall be attached to regular size paper by using scotch tape.
- (8) All exhibits shall be identified as such on the bottom center of each document as well as by exhibit tabs.
- (9) All pages shall be numbered consecutively. The number shall appear at the bottom center position of each page.
- (10) All copies attached to documents shall be clear and legible.
- (11) All documents shall contain the following: (i) the correct caption of the case, including the names of the parties, the docket number, the division of the court, and the name of the assigned judge, if any; (ii) a title indicating the nature of the document; (iii) the name, address, telephone number, fax number and Supreme Court identification number of the attorney filing the document; and (iv) if the party filing the document is not an attorney, the name, address, telephone number of such party.
- (12) No document submitted for filing to the clerk of courts – civil shall disclose the social security number of any person, except as specifically authorized by court order.

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Pa.R.C.P. No. 1018. Caption

Every pleading shall contain a caption setting forth the name of the court, the number of the action and the name of the pleading. The caption of a complaint shall set forth the form of the action and the names of all the parties, but in other pleadings it is sufficient to state the name of the first party on each side in the complaint with an appropriate indication of other parties.

Note: Civil Actions and proceedings shall be captioned "Court of Common Pleas of _____ County--Civil Action" or other appropriate form of action.

The caption of all legal papers filed in a medical professional liability action must contain the designation "Civil Action--Medical Professional Liability Action." See Rule 1042.16.

The caption of all legal papers filed in a civil action by and against a minor must designate the minor by the initials of his or her first and last name. See Rule 2028.

Credits Adopted June 25, 1946, effective Jan. 1, 1947. Amended Oct. 15, 2004, imd. effective; Dec. 27, 2004, imd. effective; January 5, 2018, effective January 6, 2018.

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF SAMPLE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.	
Civil/Criminal Division	
In re: Appeal from Suspension of Operator's License of Jack Smith,	No. 12345-2014.
Jack Smith,)
v.)
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA)
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.	
<u>MOTION FOR LEAVE TO FILE APPEAL NUNC PRO TUNC FROM SUSPENSION OF OPERATOR'S LICENSE OF JACK SMITH</u>	

Pa. R.C. P. 1022.

Paragraphing

Every pleading shall be divided into paragraphs numbered consecutively.

Each paragraph shall contain as far as practicable only one material allegation.

AND NOW, comes the Petitioner, JACK SMITH, Pro Se, filing the within Petition, and respectfully averring as follows:

1. Movant is Jack Smith, who resides at 123 Hill Drive, Fairyland, Pennsylvania 12345.
2. On or about October 9, 2014, Movant was notified by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation that his operator's license bearing number 123456 was being suspended for a period of one (1) year effective November 13, 2014, due to Petitioner's violation of Section 1543(A) of the Pennsylvania Motor Vehicle Code. (a true and correct copy of this letter is attached hereto as Exhibit "A")
3. Movant, at some time following the receipt of his Official Notice of Suspension from the Department, and prior to the expiration of thirty (30) days past the mail date of said Notice, consulted with Attorney Mickey Mouse concerning filing an appeal from the suspension.
4. During said telephone consultation with Attorney Mouse, Attorney Mouse directed Movant to fax his Notice of Suspension to him and assured him that he would timely file an appeal from the Notice of Suspension.

Pa. R.C. P. Rule 1021. Claim for Relief. Determination of Amount in Controversy

(a) Any pleading demanding relief shall specify the relief sought. Relief in the alternative or of several different types, including an accounting may be demanded.

(b) Any pleading demanding relief for unliquidated damages shall not claim any specific sum.

(c) In counties having rules governing compulsory arbitration the plaintiff shall state whether the amount claimed does or does not exceed the jurisdictional amount requiring arbitration referral by local rule.

(d) The court on its own motion or motion of any party may by discovery, pre-trial conference, hearing or otherwise, determine the amount actually in controversy and enter an order of reference to arbitration.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff requests judgment in Replevin in his favor and against the Defendant for:¶
1. The possession and delivery of the following items of personal property:¶
A. Yorkshire Terrier;¶
B. Dell Laptop computer;¶
C. Espresso Machine; and¶
D. 20 Hawaiian shirts¶
and also¶
2. \$2,700.00 representing the total value of all items of personal property which are the subject matter of this complaint. ¶
¶
RUBBLE & RUBBLE, P.C. ¶
<i>Jeffrey M. Rubble, Esquire</i> ¶
Attorney for Plaintiff¶