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Includes amendments effective November 1, 2024

*The Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure were restyled, effective September 1, 2017. The restyled Rules completely replaced the former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure. Included below are the Rules, Restyling Notes, and Advisory Notes to the restyled Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure and Advisory Notes supporting the adoption and amendment of the former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure, since their 2001 adoption.*

*Former Rules 9, 15, and 16 were renumbered to become, respectively, Rules 7A, 1A, and 1B. The Advisory Notes to former Rules 9, 15, and 16 have been moved to follow the particular Rule as renumbered. Former Rule 2 has been separated into three Rules, Rules 2A, 2B, and 2C. The Advisory Notes to former Rule 2 precede the three new Rules. Where appropriate, bracketed notations are added to enhance clarity with respect to the included notes.*

## MAINE RULES OF APPELLATE PROCEDURE

*With Restyling Notes and Advisory Notes to the restyled Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure; **Advisory Notes to the former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure appear in red type.***

### **INTRODUCTORY NOTE [to 2017 Restyling]**

The Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure were originally drafted and approved in 2000, taking effect January 1, 2001. They were approved concurrently with other significant statutory and rules changes affecting court practice, including placement of exclusive jurisdiction over domestic relations matters with the District Court, and implementation of direct appeals from most District Court criminal and civil judgments to the Law Court, eliminating intermediate appeals through the Superior Court.<sup>1</sup>

The 2001 changes required significant adjustment of practices for taking most appeals from the District Court. To simplify the transition in appellate practice, the Supreme Judicial Court elected to develop the Maine Rules of

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<sup>1</sup> Statewide adoption of the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure in 2015 resulted in further reduction of appeals from the District Court to the Superior Court by eliminating intermediate or final appeals to the Superior Court in bail and probation related matters.

Appellate Procedure utilizing appeal provisions from the then existing Maine Rules of Civil Procedure and Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure. Except for a completely new rule governing development of the appendix, M.R. App. P. 8, the new rules generally tracked provisions that appeared in either the Civil Rules, the Criminal Rules, or a combination of both.

The rule drafting style of the Civil Rules and Criminal Rules, transitioned into the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure, was based on drafting practices of the 1950s through the 1970s, when each of the major Maine rules governing court practice and ethics practice was developed. That drafting practice included rules that were divided by rule number, subdivisions, and then paragraphs, but with many relatively long paragraphs that sometimes included, under a single paragraph heading, sentences addressing several issues without further numbering or separation within the paragraphs. This drafting style had the advantage of aggregating under one heading the rules directions related to that heading. However, the individual rules directions within the paragraphs were more difficult to identify and could be missed by attorneys and members of the public who were not thoroughly familiar with rules practice.

In the past decade, several initiatives, nationally and within the State of Maine, have focused on making court rules more understandable to the bench, the bar, and the public by modernizing the language of rules that were based on practice and experience from the 1950s through the 1970s. Besides modernizing language, changes included revising large paragraphs to separate each direction within the paragraphs into individually numbered, or at least individually separated, provisions. On some subjects, the American Bar Association developed revised model rules for areas such as attorney ethics and professional conduct, attorney discipline and enforcement, and judicial conduct. The ABA drafts were utilized, in each instance with adjustments to recognize differences in Maine practice, to develop the Maine Rules of Professional Conduct, adopted in 2009, the revised Maine Bar Rules, adopted in 2015, and the revised Maine Code of Judicial Conduct, also adopted in 2015.

A separate initiative led to the restyling of the Federal Rules of Evidence, effective in 2012. This restyling resulted in division of large paragraphs containing several directions into separate smaller subdivisions focused on one subject or direction in implementing the rules. The Maine Rules of Evidence had been based on the Federal Rules of Evidence. After adoption of the restyled Federal Rules of Evidence, the Advisory Committee on the Maine Rules of

Evidence initiated a restyling of the Maine Rules of Evidence, implementing the more modern language and drafting practices, and the restyled set of rules was adopted, effective January 1, 2015.

The Maine Supreme Judicial Court initiated review of the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure, necessitated by the statewide implementation of Unified Criminal Dockets. The unification of criminal processes began with rules initiatives in Cumberland County in 2009 and continued progressively through several other counties until statewide adoption of the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure in 2015.

Following these other rule revisions, in 2015 the Supreme Judicial Court initiated a restyling of the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure to bring into appellate practice the more modern language and drafting style recognized in other recent rule revisions. The draft restyled Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure, developed with the assistance of the Advisory Committee on the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure, incorporate more modern language and the greater internal paragraph separation and numbering practice utilized in other rules revisions. Like the restyled Rules of Evidence, this revision generally tracks the numbering of the existing rules to aid in reading and understanding the restyled rules and identifying relevant precedent addressing each rule.

Within this restyling, several numbering changes are of note. Rule 2, which addressed several different issues, is separated into three rules: Rule 2A addressing the notice of appeal and filing the appeal; Rule 2B addressing the time for filing an appeal and extension of time for filing an appeal upon timely filing of certain motions; and Rule 2C, applicable to civil cases, addressing cross-appeals, multi-party appeals, and appeal bonds. Rule 8, controlling drafting of the appendix to the briefs, is reorganized to place its most important requirements earlier in the Rule structure. What was formerly Rule 9 relating to form and content of briefs becomes Rule 7A to immediately follow Rule 7. This puts the two rules that address briefing together within the body of the rules. What were formerly Rule 15, addressing time computation, and Rule 16, addressing definitions, are redesignated as Rules 1A and 1B to appear at the start of the revised rules, as their terms govern the rules that follow.

There are some substantive changes to recognize matters identified as a result of practice implementing the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure over

the past two decades, and to recognize modernization of practice in other Maine Rules or the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure as applied in the First Circuit.

The substantive changes within the restyling of the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure are as follows:

1. The need to identify potential issues on appeal as part of the filing of the notice of appeal from a civil judgment, stated in current Rules 2(a)(2) and 5(b)(2), is eliminated. In practice, this requirement proved not particularly useful, and sometimes counterproductive, as when an appeal is prosecuted or defended by a different attorney than handled the matter in the trial court.

2. Rule 2A(b)(2) is new and addresses appearances by counsel or an unrepresented party in an appeal. The Rule is designed to reduce uncertainty as to which parties, other than appellants, who were parties to a trial court or administrative proceeding that is subject to an appeal will participate in the appeal.

3. Rule 2A(e) adds a clarification that documents returned by the trial court clerk as insufficient are not deemed to be filed for purpose of calculating compliance with any time limits. This clarification reflects current practice but had not been stated in the Appellate Rules.

4. Former Rules 2(b)(2) and 2(b)(3), restyled as Rules 2B(b) and 2B(c), are amended to clarify that there is no need to file a notice of appeal from an original judgment while timely post-judgment motions, listed in the Rules, are pending in the trial court. An appeal can instead be taken from the order on that post-judgment motion, within 21 days after its entry, and that single notice of appeal, following ruling on the post-judgment motion, will be treated as an appeal from both the original judgment and the post-judgment order.

In the alternative, a notice of appeal can be filed within 21 days after the entry into the docket of the original judgment, and the subsequent timely filing of certain post-judgment motions does not render ineffective the previously filed notice of appeal. The previously filed notice of appeal preserves for review any claim of error in the original judgment and in the order of the post-judgment motion. Former Rule 2(b)(4), relating to preservation of issues in an

appeal filed after a ruling on a post-judgment motion is removed, and the content is instead made part of Rules 2B(b) and 2B(c).

5. Rule 2B(a)(2) is added, indicating that parties who are present in court when a particular final judgment or other court action is announced by the court or who, while at the courthouse after the court's announcement, sign a document signifying acknowledgment of the court's action, are presumed to have learned of the entry of judgment at that time. The amendment is designed to minimize claims of lack of knowledge of entry of judgments at later times when appeal deadlines may have been missed and parties seek to either reopen or collaterally attack a judgment.

6. Rule 2C(a)(1) clarifies when an appellee must file a cross-appeal to preserve an issue. If a change in the judgment is sought, a cross-appeal must be filed.

7. Rule 3 is amended to clarify that the trial court retains authority to act on certain post-judgment motions, as provided by Rule 3(c), without leave of the Law Court. Rule 3(d) is added to outline the procedure for seeking leave of the Law Court to permit trial court action not otherwise permitted by Rule 3(c).

8. In Rule 3(c)(4), a ruling on a motion to dismiss that does not resolve all pending claims is added to the list of trial court orders from which an appeal may be taken without causing the trial court to cease action on the matter pending resolution of the appeal. The change results in rulings on motions to dismiss being treated the same as rulings on motions for summary judgment, which are already addressed in the rule. Adding the reference to motions to dismiss creates no approval for interlocutory appeals. It only notes that while such interlocutory appeals are pending, trial court consideration of the case can continue.

9. Rule 4(a)(2)(B) is added to specify the time within which a cross-appeal may be voluntarily dismissed. This Rule and Rule 7A(f)(1), relating to length limits for briefs, address the particular circumstances of cross-appeals that are recognized in the Federal Rules, but have not previously been recognized in the Maine Rules.

10. In Rule 5(b)(1)(A), the standard transcript in criminal cases is expanded to include closing arguments in jury trials and hearings on motions to suppress or motions in limine, if a ruling on such motions is an issue on appeal, and sentencing hearings, if sentencing is an issue on appeal. As presently, the appellant is responsible for ordering the transcript; the transcript is not ordered by the court.

11. In the discussion of civil transcripts in Rule 5(b)(2)(B)(iii), reference is made directly to M.R. Civ. P. 91(f)(2), addressing the circumstances in which, for indigent parties, a recording or statement in lieu of a transcript may be submitted in lieu of a transcript for parties who request such and are qualified for such in the trial court pursuant to M.R. Civ. P. 91(f).

12. Rule 6(a)(1) is revised to introduce a 28-day period in which the trial court clerk will retain the trial court record for most appeals. The purpose of the change, concurrent with amendment to Rule 3(b)-(d) and Rule 6(a)(2), is to hold the record in the trial court to allow for the filing and trial court resolution of timely post-judgment motions listed in Rules 2B(b)(2) and 2B(c)(2).

As part of the change in the time for filing the record in the Law Court, the Rule is also amended to clarify that the record in extradition appeals must be filed within 7 days after filing of the notice of appeal. The amendment to restyled Rule 6(a)(3) also clarifies that the trial court record may be temporarily retained for an additional period of time, by order of the trial court or stipulation of the parties, when such a retention is necessary, for example, to accomplish trial court action permitted by Rule 3(c) of these rules.

13. Rule 6(b)-(d) is subject to significant editing to recognize more modern issues and developments relating to preparing records and the context of records, particularly the treatment of videos and digital evidence and the means by which such videos and digital evidence may be prepared and transmitted to the Law Court. Further, the portion of the rule regarding what may be retained in the trial court is expanded to include other items that, absent court order or apparent need, should be retained with the trial court file rather than transmitted as part of the appeal to the Law Court.

14. Rule 6(d) is added, addressing direct appeals to the Law Court from proceedings in which a record may be prepared only in electronic or digital

format, without a printed or paper copy of the record. In such appeals, the record filed with the Law Court must include a printed or paper index to each separate document or item in the record, and the electronic or digital record itself must include a search feature permitting searches for documents or items in the record by index number or title and by key words within the document.

15. The Track A briefing schedule in Rule 7(b)(1) is expanded to include appeals of any parentage proceeding as defined in the Maine Parentage Act.

16. In the briefing schedule for those appeals not subject to the Track A briefing schedule, Rule 7(b)(2), the two-week time for a reply brief is changed to three weeks in consideration of delays that may be encountered in receiving an appellee's brief.

17. Standards for filing and consideration of a motion to expedite an appeal are added to Rule 7(b)(4). A motion to expedite may be filed in any appeal, rather than just in Track B appeals, as in current Rule 7(b)(2).

18. Rule 7A(a)(6) adopts a list of items that may not be included in or attached to a brief. A similar limitation applies to the appendix pursuant to Rule 8(g)(1)-(3).

19. The length limits for briefs are placed in one paragraph, Rule 7A(f)(1), rather than being stated separately for each category of briefs filed. The allowable length of a brief is reduced from 50 pages to 40 pages for the principal brief of an appellant, an appellee, or an amicus and from 20 pages to 15 pages for any reply brief. Word limits are added as an alternative way to measure length of briefs: 10,000 words for a principal brief, 4,500 words for a reply brief. A 50-page or 13,000-word limit is adopted for an appellee's brief that also supports that appellee's cross-appeal. A 30-page or 9,000-word limit is adopted for an appellant's reply brief that also addresses an appellee's cross-appeal. As presently, longer briefs may be filed, but only with approval of the Court upon a showing of good cause.

The 40- and 15-page limits compare to limits of 30 pages for principal briefs and 15 pages for reply briefs in Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 32(a)(7)(A). The Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure, revised effective December 1, 2016, have page size and format requirements similar to those in

the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure, including the 14-point font requirement. Fed. R. App. P. 32(a)(4), (5). The Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure do offer another two alternatives for counting length of a brief, either a word limit (13,000 words) or a line limit (1,300 lines). Fed. R. App. P. 32(a)(7)(B). For federal appeals, a reply brief has a word limit of one half of the principal brief. *Id.*

20. Rule 7A(g)(1)(B) is adopted permitting the filing, with the electronic copy of a brief, of an electronic certificate of signature that, for qualifying counsel, may avoid the necessity of signing a print copy of a brief.

21. Rule 7A(i)(2) is amended to require the filing of one electronic copy of each brief, rather than being optional as in the present Rule. *See* First Circuit Local Rule 32.0(a) (requiring, when a party is represented by counsel, the filing of one copy of a brief over 10 pages in length on a “computer readable disk”).

22. Rule 7A(j) is adopted to recognize current practice allowing a party to an appeal to submit a letter indicating supplemental or newly discovered authorities to support an appeal up to the time of oral argument or six weeks after the deadline for filing the appellee’s brief in an appeal in which oral argument has not been scheduled. This amendment, and its 350-word limit, is similar to Fed. R. App. P. 28(j), though the Federal Rule allows submission of post-argument briefs by permitting such letters anytime “before decision.” The draft would allow post-argument filings only on the invitation of the Court.

23. Because of the frequency of observed problems in complying with the directions in the Rules regarding the appendix, Rule 8 is significantly reorganized. The mandatory items that must be included in the appendix are now identified in Rule 8(d) and (e). The mandatory items are also expanded to include pre- or post-judgment motions that are at issue on appeal, wills, deeds, leases, trusts, or insurance policies that are at issue on appeal, guardian ad litem reports, if any, when parental rights are at issue on appeal, and several items related to criminal appeals.

24. The list of materials that may not be included in the appendix, stated in Rule 8(g)(1)-(4), is expanded to include any documents that are, or include, pictures, videos, or other images (A) of minor children, (B) of adults subject to a guardianship or mental health commitment proceeding, or (C) that depict nudity or sexual or sexualized acts; and, for cases other than child



protective proceedings, any documents made confidential by statute or court order and not required to be included in the appendix by subdivisions (d) or (e).

25. Rule 10(a)(2) is adopted to require that an attorney representing a party in an appeal who seeks an extension of time or a delay of more than 7 days, or who seeks a continuance of any scheduled hearing, oral argument, or other court proceeding, must notify the party represented by that attorney of the request for an extension of time or continuance.

26. As with briefs, the amended Rule 10(d) requires that the text of motions, other than footnotes or quotations, must be in 14-point font. *See* Fed. R. App. P. 27(d)(1) (cross-referencing to the page formatting requirements for briefs).

27. Rule 13(b)(1) is amended to limit recoverable costs for briefs to 70 pages for a principal brief and 20 pages for a reply brief. The current Rule 13(b) limits recoverable costs for briefs to a total of 75 pages.

28. Rule 14(a)(2) is amended to specify that, as with criminal appeals, addressed in Rule 14(a)(1), the mandate of the Law Court in a civil appeal involving a child protective matter, a parental rights matter, a guardianship, a contempt, or a temporary or permanent injunction shall issue the day of or the day after decision. Concurrently with this change, the process to stay the mandate or otherwise seek further review after certification is clarified.

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**STATE OF MAINE  
SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT**

**MAINE RULES OF APPELLATE PROCEDURE**

WITH RESTYLING NOTES AND ADVISORY NOTES

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- (a) When Certified
- (b) Contents of Certificate
- (c) Preparation of Certificate
- (d) Costs of Certificate
- (e) Hearing Before the Law Court
- (f) Intervention by the State

RULE 25. Notes

**MAINE RULES OF APPELLATE PROCEDURE  
WITH ADVISORY NOTES**

**I. GENERAL APPEAL PROCEEDINGS**

**RULE 1. SCOPE OF RULES**

These Rules govern the procedure for review of any judgment, order, or ruling by a Unified Criminal Docket, the District Court, the Superior Court, the Business and Consumer Docket, the Probate Courts, a single justice of the Supreme Judicial Court, or consideration of a question certified by the federal courts, which is by law reviewable by the Law Court. They shall be construed to secure the just, speedy, and inexpensive determination of every appeal.

The restyled Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure shall apply to all appeals in which the notice of appeal is filed on or after September 1, 2017.

**Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 1 is changed to add references to the Unified Criminal Dockets, the Business and Consumer Docket, and questions certified by the federal courts and to indicate a September 1, 2017, effective date for the restyled rules.

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**[Advisory Notes to Rule 1 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

**Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

The Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure are adopted to apply to all appeals from the trial courts to the Law Court in which the notice of appeal is filed on or after January 1, 2001. This is the effective date of court unification amendments that eliminate most appeals from the District Court to the Superior Court and allow for direct appeal from the District Court to the Law Court of most District Court criminal and civil decisions. For appeals filed on and after January 1, 2001, these rules replace Rules 72, 73, 74, 74A, 74B, 74C, 75, 75A, 75B, 75C, 75D, 76, 76A, 76B and 76I of the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure, and Rules 37, 37A, 37B, 39, 39A, 39B, 39C, 39D, 40B, 40C, 78 and 90

of the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure, and Rules 72, 73, 74, 74A, 74B, 74C, 75, 75A, 75B, 75C, 75D, 76 and 76A of the Maine Rules of Probate Procedure.

Adoption of a single Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure is necessary because, although the appeal rules in the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure<sup>2</sup> and the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure are similar in substance on most significant matters, they include significant timing and process differences that could create considerable confusion for many clerk's offices, the Bar, and the public attempting to apply the differing sets of rules, for the first time, in many appeals from District Court.

The present rules governing appeals, listed above, shall continue in effect for appeals to the Law Court filed on or before December 31, 2000. Each of those rules is being amended to include a clause limiting its application to such appeals. Further, as all appeals should be fully processed pursuant to the present rules within one year, the above listed rules will be abrogated effective December 31, 2001. These amended rules provide a uniform procedure for all appeals, criminal and civil, from the trial courts to the Law Court.

### **RULE 1A. TIME COMPUTATION**

In computing any period of time prescribed or allowed by these Rules, by order of court, or by any applicable statute, the day of the act, event, or default after which the designated period of time begins to run is not to be included. The last day of the period so computed is to be included, unless it is a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday, in which event the period runs until the end of the next day which is not a Saturday, a Sunday, or a legal holiday.

When the period of time prescribed or allowed is 6 days or fewer, intermediate Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, and days when, by order of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court, pursuant to M.R.U. Crim. P. 54(b) or M.R. Civ. P. 77(c), the clerk's office is closed, shall be excluded in the computation. When the office of the Clerk of the Supreme Judicial Court is closed before 4:00 p.m. on any regular business day, a required filing shall be timely if filed on the next regular business day that the office is open for business.

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<sup>2</sup> The Maine Rules of Probate Procedure incorporate the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure appeal rules.

## Restyling Notes – June 2017

Rule 1A replaces former Rule 15 relating to time computation. Along with former Rule 16 definitions, moved to become Rule 1B, it is moved to an earlier point in the rules because its terms apply to many subsequent rules.

Rather than cross-reference to Rule 6(a) of the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure, as in replaced Rule 15, the terms related to time computation are stated directly in Rule 1A. There are adjustments to recognize the Rule's placement in the Appellate Rules structure. For example, the term "less than 7 days" in M.R. Civ. P. 6(a) is replaced with the term "6 days or fewer" in Rule 1A to reduce the potential confusion as to the counting rules that may apply to a time period of 7 days. Seven-day or one-week increments are the most common basis for time calculations in the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure. In addition, court-ordered closures on regular business days are directly addressed in the Rule. Also, the effect of a closure of the Law Court Clerk's Office before 4:00 p.m. on a regular business day is specifically addressed.

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### [Advisory Notes to former Rule 15, now Rule 1A, of Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]

#### Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001

Rule 15 applies the time computation provisions of Rule 6(a) of the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure to time computations under these rules. The text is not restated, so that there is no risk of inconsistency should the text of M.R. Civ. P. 6 change.

### **RULE 1B. DEFINITIONS**

Unless specified to the contrary by statute or these Rules, the following words, whenever used in these Rules shall have the following meanings:

**(a)** The term "appellant's attorney" or "appellee's attorney" or any like term shall include the party appearing without counsel, and the word "appellant" or "appellee" or any like term shall include the party appearing with counsel.

**(b)** The word “court” or “trial court” shall include any Unified Criminal Docket, the Business and Consumer Docket, any judge of the Probate Court, any judge of the District Court, any justice of the Superior Court, any single justice of the Supreme Judicial Court, and any administrative agency from which an appeal lies directly to the Law Court.

**(c)** The term “plaintiff’s attorney” or “defendant’s attorney” or any like term shall include the party appearing without counsel, and the word “plaintiff” or “defendant” or any like term shall include the party appearing with counsel.

**(d)** The word “reporter” means a court reporter, the Office of Transcript Operations, or a transcriber of an electronically recorded record.

**(e)** The term “docket entries” shall include case information maintained by the trial court clerk in the registry of actions.

**(f)** The term “decision of the Law Court” or “decision resolving the appeal” or any like term shall mean a decision of the Law Court reported pursuant to Rule 12(c) resolving an appeal.

**(g)** The term “order of the Law Court” or any like term shall mean an order signed by one or more justices on behalf of the Law Court other than a decision of the Law Court, including an order acting on a motion pursuant to Rule 10(b).

### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

This amendment clarifies the distinction between “decisions” and “orders” of the Law Court by defining those terms in Rule 1B(f) and (g). This change coincides with the adoption of new Rule 10(a)(5) governing motions for reconsideration of orders of the Law Court, and amendment of Rule 14(b) governing motions for reconsideration of decisions of the Law Court.

### **Advisory Note – October 2021**

Rule 1B is amended by adding a definition for the term “docket entries” that includes case information maintained by the trial court clerk in the registry of actions in a court or region that has implemented an electronic case management and filing system.



## **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 1B is former Rule 16 relating to time computations. The principal changes from Rule 16 render the numbering of subdivisions consistent with the rest of the rules and add reference to a Unified Criminal Docket and the Business and Consumer Docket in addressing the definition of “trial court” and add a reference to the Office of Transcript Operations in the definition of the word “reporter.”

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### **[Advisory Notes to former Rule 16, now Rule 1B, of Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

#### **Advisory Notes – July 1, 2010**

The amendment to Rule 16(2) clarifies that, unless the context requires otherwise, state administrative agencies from which there is a direct appeal to the Law Court are treated as if the agency was the trial court for purpose of application of these rules. The chief administrative executive of the agency would be treated as if that person were the clerk of the trial court.

#### **Advisory Notes – September 10, 2001**

The definitions in proposed Rule 16 are derived from the definitions in M.R. Civ. P. 83. The principal change in the definitions is that the definitions do not include a definition for the “clerk.” *See* M.R. Civ. P. 83(2). Within the appellate rules, the Clerk of the Law Court is usually referred to as the Clerk of the Law Court, other references to clerk are usually references to the clerk of the appropriate trial court. Such references are easily determinable from the context of the rule but could be confused by a limiting definition. The term “reporter” is also defined in Rule 5(a). The other significant changes from Rule 83 are: (a) the definition of the word “court” is expanded to include reference to judges of probate; and (b) the definition indicating that references to parties or attorneys are interchangeable regardless of whether a party is represented

or not is expanded by the references in subparagraph (1) to appellant and appellee.

## **RULE 1C. SIGNATURES**

**(a) Form of signature.** Where a signature is required on any document filed with the Clerk of the Law Court, a person may sign the document by using one of the following methods:

- (1)** Physically signing the document;
- (2)** Embedding in the document an image of the person's physical signature; or
- (3)** Typing “/s/” followed by the person's name, all on the signature line.

**(b) Signature block to follow signature.** Every person who signs a document must include a signature block immediately below that person's signature. A signature block must include the following:

- (1)** The person's printed name;
- (2)** The person's mailing address;
- (3)** The person's email address, if any; and
- (4)** If the person is an attorney,
  - (A)** the attorney's Maine bar number,
  - (B)** the attorney's law office or firm name, if any,
  - (C)** the attorney's telephone number, and
  - (D)** the name of each party on whose behalf the document is filed.

**(c) Effect of signature.** A person's signature on a document constitutes a representation that the document, together with any associated

exhibits or other documents, is filed in good faith and conforms to the page or word limits and the form and formatting requirements of the applicable rule or rules.

**(d) Authenticity of signature.** The filing of a document constitutes a representation by the person actually filing the document that each signature on the document is authorized by the person whose signature it purports to be. If a party has a good-faith basis to believe that an image or typed signature was not authorized by the person whose signature appears on a document, the party challenging the signature may file a motion with the Court. If the Court determines that there is a substantial possibility that the signature was not authorized by the person whose signature it purports to be, the Court may strike the challenged document, direct that the challenged document be filed and served again with an original handwritten signature, or impose any other requirement it deems necessary.

### **Advisory Committee Note – July 2022**

Rule 1C is adopted to provide a uniform rule on signatures and to expand the types of permissible signatures, primarily to allow for lawyers to “sign” documents electronically and to direct another attorney or an assistant to place a signature on a document. It is modeled on provisions from existing Rule 7A(g)(1) and from Pandemic Management Order PMO-SJC-2(G) (as amended December 14, 2020). It has four subdivisions.

Subdivision (a) permits a signature to be placed on a document by methods other than the traditional handwritten, or “wet ink,” signature. A person may sign a document by physically signing the document by hand (as always), by incorporating an image of a handwritten signature, or by typing “/s/” followed by the person’s name. Filers should note that a mere “/s/,” without a typed name following the signature, is insufficient. For example, a signature might be “/s/ Jane Smith.”

Subdivision (b) sets out the requirements for the “signature block” following a signature. The signature block must contain the listed information about the person whose signature appears on the signature line. Each client must be named; an indication that the attorney is the “Attorney for appellants” is not sufficient. If more than one attorney from a single firm signs the document, the common information need not be repeated. For example, the

signatures and signature block on a document filed by two attorneys on behalf of three appellants should take this form:

Respectfully submitted,  
/s/ Andrea Attorney  
Andrea Attorney  
Maine Bar No. 11111  
aattorney@attylawyer.com

/s/ Lawrence Lawyer  
Lawrence Lawyer  
Maine Bar No. 22222  
llawyer@attylawyer.com

Attorney & Lawyer, LLC  
100 Main St  
Anytown, Maine 04999  
207-555-5555

Attorneys for John Doe, Jane Roe, and Charlene Client

Subdivisions (c) and (d) set out the effect of a signature, similarly to M.R. Civ. P. 11(a).

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### **Advisory Notes to former Rule 2 of the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure**

[The 2017 restyling of the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure separated former Rule 2 into three individual rules covering Notice and Filing of Appeal (Rule 2A), Time for Appeal (Rule 2B), and Multiple Appeals and Bonds in Civil Cases (Rule 2C). The Advisory Notes for Adoption of and Amendments to former Rule 2, because they relate to a single Rule, could not be separated into Advisory Notes applicable to one of the three new Rules. Therefore, the Advisory Notes to the former Rule 2 are added at this point. They should be reviewed when seeking to examine the history, prior to restyling of the three new Rules. Note: Amendments to former Rule 2(a) generally relate to restyled Rule 2A; amendments to former Rule 2(b) generally relate to restyled Rule 2B;

and amendments to former Rule 2(c) generally relate to restyled Rule 2C. Sometimes one paragraph in the Rule 2 Advisory Notes may relate to amendment to more than one subdivision of former Rule 2.]

### **Advisory Note – August 2015**

Because of the adoption of the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure, effective throughout the State of Maine as of July 1, 2015, all references and citations to the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure have been replaced with references and citations to the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure.

All references to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated in the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure are updated to refer to the Maine Revised Statutes.

### **Advisory Note – October 2012**

The amendment [to Rule 2(a)(5)] is a technical change to recognize the new title for what is now called the Office of Transcript Production.

### **Advisory Note – July 2012**

Rule 2(a)(1) and (4) and Rule 2(b)(3) are amended to make clear the need for payment of the filing fee in those appeals for which a filing fee is required. This requirement is also discussed in M.R. Civ. P. 5(f).

### **Advisory Note – November 2011**

Rule 2(c)(3) is clarified to indicate that, unless the parties agree or it is ordered otherwise, the first party to file a notice of appeal is the “appellant” and all others are “appellees.” The former rule referred to “both” parties, leaving uncertainty as to how to interpret the rule when there were more than two parties in the case. The rule is also amended to indicate that if both parents appeal from an order impacting both parents’ parental rights in a child protection, guardianship, or grandparents’ visitation proceeding, both parents are treated as appellants, unless otherwise ordered.

## Advisory Notes – January 2004

This amendment to M.R. App. P. 2(b)(5) establishes two time periods within which a party may seek an extension of time to file an appeal. Subparagraph (A) allows the court to extend the time period for filing an appeal for up to 21 days from the expiration of the original time limit for filing an appeal—usually 21 days from entry of judgment—upon a showing of good cause. This is the time period for an extension of time specified in the current rule.

Subparagraph B allows the court to extend the time period for filing an appeal for up to 140 days (20 weeks) from the expiration of the original time limit for filing an appeal—usually 21 days from entry of judgment—upon a showing of the three criteria indicated in subparagraph B. The extension of time provisions in subparagraphs A and B are in the alternative and are not cumulative. Both start running from the expiration of the original time limit for filing an appeal.

The purpose of this amendment to M.R. App. P. 2(b)(5) is to provide greater flexibility to courts to extend time for filing a notice of appeal, particularly in instances where the clerk has not sent a copy of the judgment to the parties or otherwise notified the parties that judgment has been entered. To accomplish this objective, two changes are adopted. First, the standard for review for requests to extend time in paragraph A is changed from “excusable neglect” to “good cause.” The good cause standard is viewed as one which is more lenient than the excusable neglect standard. *See MOORE’S FEDERAL PRACTICE* (3d. 2002), section 304.14[2][a] (excusable neglect) and [b] (good cause). It is the same standard that is applied in M.R. Civ. P. 55(c) for setting aside defaults.

Second, the rule change in subparagraph B allows an extension of the time to file a notice of appeal exceeding 21 days, but not exceeding 140 days, from the expiration of the original time for filing an appeal, for those cases where the moving party demonstrates that the clerk failed to send notice of entry of judgment to the parties. The moving party is also required to demonstrate that they did not otherwise learn of the entry of judgment and that any other party will not be unfairly prejudiced by the requested extension of time. This amendment gives the court some flexibility to mitigate the potentially harsh affects of a failure to notify parties of entry of a judgment which, under appellate practice, was not allowed to be considered in evaluating a motion to extend time. *Bourke v. City of S. Portland*, 2002 ME 155,

806 A.2d 1255; *Harris Baking Co. v. Mazzeo*, 294 A.2d 445, 451 (Me. 1972). These changes, however, recognize the importance of the finality of judgments. A time extension would be barred if the moving party had otherwise learned of the entry of the judgment or if any party would be unfairly prejudiced by allowing the after the deadline appeal. Notably, claims of lack of receipt of notice would be insufficient to justify an extension of time under this rule amendment. Some failure of action in a clerk's office must be demonstrated. The Committee recognizes that claims of lack of receipt of notice may be a frequent excuse for sloppy record keeping, poor office management, inattentive litigation practices or failures to keep a court and litigants aware of changes in addresses. It should also be noted that the exception relating to the failure of the clerk to send notice would only be generated in cases where the clerk was obligated to send notice of entry of judgments. This exception would not be generated, therefore, in situations such as entry of default judgments, where the clerk may have no obligation to send a copy of the judgment to a litigant who has failed to appear or otherwise plead in a matter.

### **Advisory Notes – July 2003**

This amendment to M.R. App. P. 2(b)(2)(B) recognizes the change in the time limit for filing an extradition appeal adopted by P.L. 2003, ch. 17, §§ 1 & 2, enacting 15 M.R.S.A. § 210-B, setting the time limit for filing an appeal at 7 days after entry of order. The prior law specified a 10-day time period.

### **Advisory Notes – October 15, 2001**

Rule 2(b)(2) is amended to recognize 15 M.R.S.A. § 210-A(2) which requires that any appeals from orders entered in extradition proceedings be filed within ten (10) days of entry of the order appealed from. This amendment is necessary in light of the addition to the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure of rules governing discretionary appeals including appeals of extradition orders which are being moved from the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure into Rule 19 of the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure.

### **Advisory Notes – September 10, 2001**

The Rule 2, subdivision (a), paragraph (2) amendment adds a cross-reference to the statement of issues requirement of M.R. App. P. 5(b)(2)(A) which must be included with civil notices of appeal.

The amendments to Rule 2(b), based on the recommendation of the Court Unification Implementation Committee, and authorized by P.L. 2001, ch. 17, create a uniform appeal filing deadline of 21 days after entry in the docket of the judgment or order appealed from, unless a different time is explicitly provided by law. This change adds one day to the present 20-day limit for filing criminal appeals, and reduces by nine days the present 30-day limit for filing civil appeals. The amendments are intended to further the intent of the original CUTAF legislation to improve appeal processing times. The changed dates apply to appeals of judgments or orders entered on and after January 1, 2002.

The amendment to subdivision (c), paragraph (3), clarifies the Court reference in the rule.

### **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 2(a)(1) is based on provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 73(a) & (b) and M.R. Crim. P. 37(a) & (b). It provides in essence that review of any judgment, order, or ruling of the trial courts shall be by appeal to the Law Court where that judgment, order, or ruling is by law reviewable by the Law Court. The appeal must be commenced by filing a notice of appeal with the clerk of the court from which the appeal is taken. Accompanying the notice of appeal must be a transcript order form for those portions of the transcript that the appellant intends to include in the record on appeal. The notice of appeal and transcript order form must be signed by the appellant or the appellant's attorney.

Rule 2(a)(2) is based on a portion of M.R. Civ. P. 73(b). It continues the present requirement that the notice of appeal specify the parties taking the appeal and designate the judgment or other court order from which the appeal is being taken. This specific requirement is now extended to criminal cases.

Rule 2(a)(3) & (4) involve special provisions for criminal appeals, derived from the last paragraph of M.R. Crim. P. 37(b) and the last paragraph of M.R. Crim. P. 37(c).

Paragraph (3) adopts the present requirement of M.R. Crim. P. 37(c) that, upon imposing any sentence after trial, or after a plea to murder or a Class A, B or C crime which involves a sentence that was not agreed to by the defendant, the court must advise the defendant of the rights of appeal of both the underlying conviction and the sentence. The sentence appeal advice must be



given only if the sentence involves a term of imprisonment, either underlying or imposed, of more than one year. *See* 15 M.R.S.A. § 2151.

Where a criminal defendant is not represented by counsel and requests that a notice of appeal be filed, the court clerk is to prepare and file a notice of appeal on behalf of the defendant. The requirement imposed on the clerk is necessarily limited to the notice of appeal, as the clerk would have no basis to make any determination regarding the appropriate nature of any transcript to be ordered with a transcript order form.

Paragraph (4) of the rule reflects the statutory requirement of 15 M.R.S.A. § 2115-A(5) that any appeals by the State in criminal cases, except post-conviction case appeals, must be approved, in writing, by the Attorney General. The approval must be filed with the clerk of the trial court and noted on the docket. A copy must be mailed by the clerk to the attorney for the defendant, or, if the defendant is unrepresented, directly to the defendant.

Rule 2(a)(5) is based on a portion of M.R. Civ. P. 73(b) and M.R. Crim. P. 37(b). It requires that, once the notice of appeal is filed, the clerk must date stamp it and mail a copy of the notice of appeal and transcript order form to the Clerk of the Law Court, the court reporter or Electronic Recording Division, and the attorney of record for each party to the appeal other than the appellant. Where a party is not represented by an attorney, the clerk fulfills the duty of sending a notice of appeal to that party by sending the notice to the last known address of the party appearing in the court file. In cases arising under the Maine Tort Claims Act, the clerk must send a copy of the notice of appeal to the Attorney General at the same time that the clerk sends copies of the notice of appeal to other parties in the action.

Subdivision 5 also recognizes that a clerk's failure to send a notice of appeal, required by this section, does not affect the validity of the appeal. Notice to a party is sufficient when mailed by the clerk regardless of the death of the party or the party's attorney prior to sending of the notice. The clerk is to note in the docket the names of the parties to whom copies of the notice of appeal were mailed and the date of mailing.

Rule 2(b)(1) states that the date a judgment is deemed to be entered for purposes of this rule and for calculating the time periods for filing an appeal, is the date on which the judgment is entered in the docket. If the date appearing on the judgment is different from the date of docketing, the date of docketing

controls. This reflects current requirements as stated in M.R. Civ. P. 58 and M.R. Crim. P. 37(c).

A notice of appeal filed at an earlier time, after a verdict or an order or other action of the court, but before entry of that judgment or other order in the docket, is treated as filed on the day of entry into the docket.

Rule 2(b)(2) governs the time for filing appeals in criminal cases. The notice of appeal must be filed within 20 days after entry of the judgment or order appealed from in the docket unless a shorter time is provided by law. *See* 15 M.R.S.A. § 2115 (Supp. 1999).<sup>3</sup> The rule reflects current M.R. Crim. P. 37(c) in providing a list of exceptions that allow delay of filing of the notice of appeal until 20 days after entry of a ruling on the listed motions, provided that the motion at issue is itself filed within 20 days after entry of judgment. The deadline for filing a notice of appeal is not stayed unless one of the specifically listed motions is filed within 20 days after entry of judgment.

Rule 2(b)(3) governs the time for filing notices of appeal in civil cases. This rule is based on M.R. Civ. P. 73(a). Notice of appeal must be filed within 30 days after entry of the judgment or order appealed from except where a shorter time is provided by law. *See* 14 M.R.S.A. § 1851.<sup>4</sup>

If one party to a civil case files a timely notice of appeal, any other party to the case may file a notice of appeal within 14 days of the date on which the first notice of appeal was filed, or within 30 days after entry of judgment, whichever time expires last. As with the criminal rules, the time for filing an appeal is stayed by one of the listed motions if the motion itself is filed within

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<sup>3</sup> Title 15 M.R.S.A. § 2115 states in part:

**§ 2115. Appeals from the Superior Court**

In any criminal proceeding in the Superior Court, any defendant aggrieved by a judgment of conviction, ruling or order may appeal to the Supreme Judicial Court, sitting as the Law Court. The time for taking the appeal and the manner and any conditions for the taking of the appeal shall be as the Supreme Judicial Court provides by rule.

<sup>4</sup> The last sentence of 14 M.R.S.A. § 1851 states:

In any civil case any party aggrieved by any judgment, ruling or order may appeal therefrom to the law court within 30 days or such further time as may be granted by the court pursuant to a rule of court.

the time specified for filing the motion. Where such a motion is filed, the time for filing appeal begins to run from entry of the order ruling on the listed motions. Thus, if a specific enumerated motion is filed within the time required for filing the motion, or within the appeal period if no time period is set for the motion, the time for filing an appeal is extended to 30 days after an order ruling on the indicated motion.

Rule 2(b)(4) states that an appeal taken from a judgment including an appeal taken after entry of an order on a post-judgment motion as addressed in 2(b)(2) and 2(b)(3) allows review of any properly preserved claim of error in the original record or any orders entered based on post-judgment motions. The rule also clarifies that filing of motions and entry of subsequent orders does not render a previously filed notice of appeal ineffective. Appeals designated as being taken from orders on post-judgment motions are treated as appeals from the judgment itself. This provision is based on similar language in M.R. Civ. P. 73(a) and M.R. Crim. P. 37(c).

Rule 2(b)(5) is derived from M.R. Civ. P. 73(a) and M.R. Crim. P. 37(c). It allows the court, on a showing of excusable neglect, before or after a particular appeal deadline has expired, to extend the time for filing a notice of appeal otherwise allowed for a period not to exceed 21 days from the expiration of the original time prescribed in this rule, 20 days for criminal appeals and 30 days for civil appeals. *The 21-day additional period is a change from current rules which allow an additional 30 days in both criminal and civil cases.*

Rule 2(c) adopts provisions that are carryovers from the present appeal rules without any significant change in language. Rule 2(c)(1) carries over present Rule 73(c). Rule 2(c)(2) carries over present M.R. Civ. P. 73(d), and Rule 2(c)(3) carries over present M.R. Civ. P. 73(e). The provisions of 2(c) are only applicable to civil cases. Note that bail for criminal appeals is governed by M.R. Crim. P. 46 which is not affected by these amendments.

## **RULE 1D. FILING AND FORMATTING OF DOCUMENTS**

**(a) Method of Filing.** All papers or electronic or digital content required by these Rules to be filed with the Law Court or with any Justice of the Law Court must be filed with the Clerk of the Law Court.

**(1) Attorneys Must File Electronically.** A document filed with the Clerk of the Law Court by an attorney must be filed electronically as provided

by subdivision (c) of this Rule, except where these Rules specifically require paper copies to be filed.

**(2) Unrepresented Parties May File on Paper or Electronically.** A document filed with the Clerk of the Law Court by an unrepresented party may be filed either electronically as provided by subdivision (c) of this Rule or on paper as provided by subdivision (b) of this rule.

**(b) Filing of Paper Documents and Copies.**

**(1) Where Made.** Filing of paper documents shall occur at the office of the Clerk of the Law Court, 205 Newbury Street, Room 139, Portland, Maine 04101-4125, unless another office is designated by order of the Chief Justice.

**(2) When Effective—Attorney or Non-Incarcerated Party.** A paper document filed with the Clerk of the Law Court by an attorney or by a non-incarcerated unrepresented party is deemed to be filed on the date that the Clerk receives it, unless the Clerk's office is not open at the time of receipt, in which case the filing is deemed to be filed on the next date that the Clerk's office is open for all or part of the day.

**(3) When Effective—Incarcerated Party.** A paper document filed with the Clerk of the Law Court by an incarcerated party personally (and not through counsel) is deemed to be filed when it is deposited in the incarcerated party's institution's mail system for delivery to the Clerk and is accompanied by any necessary forms and payment that the institution requires for mailing.

**(c) Electronic Filing of Documents.**

**(1) How Made.** Where these rules permit or require a party to file a document electronically, the filing must be made by transmitting the document as an attachment to an email sent to the Clerk of the Law Court at the email address provided by the Clerk in any notices issued by the Clerk. If the document is too large to send as an attachment to an email, the filer must contact the Clerk of the Law Court for instructions on an alternative method of transmitting the document.

**(2) Format.**

**(A)** Any document filed electronically must be in the form of a Portable Document Format (pdf) file.

**(B)** A document or portion of a document that is created for the appeal must be converted from the original word processing document into a text-based pdf file.

**(C)** Appendices, exhibits to documents, and other documents that the filer does not possess in the form of a word-processing document may be scanned into a pdf file.

**(D)** A filing consisting of both a document created for the appeal and one or more exhibits or other scanned documents must be filed as one combined pdf file.

**(E)** The Clerk of the Law Court may, for good cause shown, relieve a party of one or more of the requirements of this subdivision (2).

**(3) When Effective.** A document filed electronically is deemed to be filed on the day that the Clerk of the Law Court receives the email, as indicated by the Clerk's email system, if the Clerk's office is or was open for any portion of that day, regardless of the time of day that the Clerk receives the email. If the Clerk's office is not open for any part of the day on which the Clerk receives the email, the document is deemed to be filed on the next day that the Clerk's office is open for all or part of the day.

**(d) Formatting of Documents.** Motions, responses, and other documents not required to be produced in a manner prescribed by Rule 7A(g) must be typewritten on pages that are 8-1/2 x 11 inches in size, with the typed matter double spaced in at least 14-point font, except that footnotes may be single spaced and may appear in 11-point font. Each document shall contain a caption setting forth the name of the Court (i.e., the Supreme Judicial Court sitting as the Law Court), the title of the case, the Law Court docket number, and a brief descriptive title of the document. Paper copies of the document must be printed or otherwise duplicated upon opaque, unglazed paper 8-1/2 x 11 inches in size and shall be stapled in the upper-left corner.

**(e) Indication of Service.** Every filed document must contain or be accompanied by an indication that the document was served on each other party as required by Rule 1E. The indication may be in the form of “cc” addressees on an email, a “cc” indication on a cover letter accompanying the document, or a statement in or accompanying the document that states that the other parties were served with the document.

### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

See the November 2024 Advisory Committee Note following Rule 1E for notes on the adoption of Rule 1D.

### **RULE 1E. SERVICE OF DOCUMENTS**

**(a) Requirement.**

**(1) Service of Filed Documents.** A copy of each document filed with the Clerk of the Law Court must be served on each other party to the appeal as provided in this Rule.

**(2) Service of Documents Issued by the Law Court or the Clerk of the Law Court.** The Clerk of the Law Court must serve each party to the appeal with all orders, notices, decisions, and other documents issued by the Law Court or the Clerk.

**(3) Persons to be Served.** Where these rules require service upon a “party,” service must be made on the following person or persons:

**(A)** if the party is unrepresented, service must be made on the party personally;

**(B)** if the party is represented by counsel and service is being made electronically, service must be made on each attorney of record for the party;

**(C)** if the party is represented by counsel and a paper document is being served, service must be made on at least one attorney of record for the party.

**(b) Method of Service.**

**(1) When Service of Paper Copies is Required.** Service of a document upon another party must be made by serving a paper copy as provided in subdivision (c) of this rule when

**(A)** these Rules specifically require that a paper copy of a document be served on other parties; or

**(B)** the party to be served is an unrepresented party who has not opted in to electronic service.

**(2) When Party May Elect Electronic Service or Service of Paper Copies.** Except where service of a paper copy is required by paragraph (1) of this subdivision (b), an unrepresented party who has not opted in to electronic service and who files a document on paper may serve the document upon the other parties either by serving a paper copy as provided in subdivision (c) of this rule or by serving the party electronically as provided in subdivision (d) of this rule.

**(3) When Electronic Service is Required.** Except as required by paragraph (1) of this subdivision (b) or permitted by paragraph (2) of this subdivision (b), service of a document upon a party must be made electronically as provided in subdivision (d) of this Rule.

**(c) Service of Paper Copies.** When this Rule requires or permits service of paper copies, service of the paper copies must be made by

**(1)** delivering the copy to the attorney or party by (A) handing it to the attorney or party; (B) leaving it at the office of the attorney or party with an employee in the office, or, if there is no employee present, leaving it in a conspicuous place in the office; or (C) leaving it at the party's dwelling house or usual place of abode with some person of suitable age and discretion then residing at the house or abode; or

**(2)** mailing the copy to the last known regular mailing address of the attorney or party, postage prepaid, or, if no mailing address is known, by leaving it with the Clerk of the Law Court.

**(d) Electronic Service.** When this Rule requires or permits service of a document electronically,

**(1)** electronic service of a document on an attorney must be made by transmitting the pdf document as an attachment to an email sent to the email address provided by the attorney as part of the attorney’s annual registration pursuant to M. Bar R. 4(a);

**(2)** electronic service of a document on an unrepresented party who has opted in to electronic service must be made by transmitting the pdf document as an attachment to an email sent to the email address provided by the party on the party’s statement opting in to electronic service; and

**(3)** if a person who has served a document electronically receives an email notification that an addressee did not receive the email containing the document, the person serving the document must serve the addressee with a paper copy of the document.

#### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

Rule 1D adopts filing of documents by email and makes several additional major changes to the rules regarding filing of documents. Rule 1E adopts service of documents by email and makes several additional major changes to the rules regarding service of documents.

The electronic filing and service processes established by Rules 1D and 1E are temporary and will be replaced by the electronic filing system currently being implemented by the Judicial Branch once that system is implemented in the Law Court. Although the rule provides for electronic filing through email, the Maine Rules of Electronic Court Systems do not apply in the Law Court. *See* M.R.E.C.S. 2(A)(21), (22) (defining “electronic filing” for purposes of those rules as “transmission of a document . . . through the electronic filing system,” and defining “electronic filing system” as “the system approved by the Maine Judicial Branch for the filing and service of electronic documents”).

The new procedures for filing and service by email are intended to make filings and service quicker and easier for counsel and unrepresented parties and more efficient for the Court. The new system will also help to avoid the



delays caused in recent years by the handling of mail by the United States Postal Service.

Attorneys and unrepresented parties must ensure that an email address used to receive emails from the Court and other parties is configured so that either (1) legitimate messages are not filtered and sent to a spam or junk folder or (2) any spam or junk folder is monitored so that the attorney or party does not miss any email from the Court or other parties.

The most significant change to the system for filing and serving documents is that attorneys must file, serve, and receive virtually all documents electronically. The only exception to this rule is for documents that are required to be filed on paper, such as the multiple copies of briefs (Rule 7A), appendices (Rule 8), and petitions and responses in workers' compensation appeals (Rule 23). Unrepresented parties may file documents either electronically or on paper.

The rule also adopts the following significant provisions regarding filing and service of documents:

- A paper filing by an incarcerated party is deemed to have been made on the date that the filing is deposited in the party's institution's mail system.
- Electronic filings must be made by emailing a pdf file to the email address provided by the Clerk of the Law Court in the Clerk's notices.
- An electronic filing is deemed to have been made on the date that the Clerk's email system receives the email, regardless of the time of day that the email is received, as long as the Clerk's office was open for any part of that day. If the Clerk's office was not open for any part of that date, the electronic filing is deemed to have been filed on the next day that the Clerk's office is open for at least part of the day.
- With some exceptions, service of a document on the parties must be made by email on attorneys and on unrepresented parties who opt in to electronic service and by sending paper copies to unrepresented parties who do not opt in to electronic service.

- An unrepresented party who has not opted in to electronic service may serve other parties paper copies of a document if the party filed the document on paper. If the unrepresented party files a document electronically, then the party must serve other parties (except for other unrepresented parties who have not opted in to electronic service) electronically.
- Instead of a formal certificate of service on other parties, a document must merely contain an indication, such as a “cc” list, that the document was served on other parties.
- Service of paper documents must be made in a manner similar to the method of service of paper documents required by M.R. Civ. P. 5(b).

The provisions of former Rule 10(d), regarding the form of motions and other papers, are moved to Rule 1D(d).

## **RULE 2A. NOTICE AND FILING OF APPEAL**

**(a) Commencing Appeal.** Review of any criminal or civil judgment, order, or ruling of the District Court, the Superior Court, any Unified Criminal Docket, the Probate Courts, or a single justice of the Supreme Judicial Court that is by law reviewable by the Law Court shall be by appeal.

### **(b) Notice and Appearances.**

**(1) Notice.** The appeal shall be commenced by filing a notice of appeal with the clerk of the trial court from which the appeal is taken. A notice of appeal shall be filed in conformity with the rules then in effect for the trial court from which the appeal is taken. The notice of appeal shall be signed by each appellant or the appellant’s attorney. The notice of appeal shall specify the party taking the appeal and designate the judgment or part thereof appealed from. A copy of the notice of appeal shall be served on the other parties to the trial court proceeding.

**(2) Appearances. (A) Criminal Appeals.** In criminal appeals, a member of the Maine bar or unrepresented party filing the notice of appeal shall be deemed to be representing the appellant unless new counsel appears or counsel withdraws pursuant to M.R.U. Crim. P. 44(a)(2) and 44B; and the member of the Maine bar or unrepresented party representing the appellee in

the trial court at the time the appeal is filed shall be deemed to be representing the appellee unless new counsel appears or counsel withdraws pursuant to M.R.U. Crim. P. 44(a)(2) and 44B.

**(B) Civil Appeals.** In civil appeals, a member of the Maine bar or unrepresented party filing the notice of appeal shall be deemed to be representing the appellant unless new counsel appears or counsel withdraws. A member of the Maine bar representing a party who has not filed a notice of appeal in the trial court shall be deemed to be representing that party in the appeal unless new counsel appears, counsel withdraws, or the party elects not to participate in the appeal. An unrepresented party, other than the appellant, in the trial court proceeding at the time the appeal is filed shall be deemed to be appearing in the appeal unrepresented unless counsel appears or the party elects not to participate in the appeal.

**(C) Visiting attorneys.** A visiting attorney permitted to practice in the trial court pursuant to M.R. Civ. P. 89(b) or M.R.U. Crim. P. 55 may not appear in the Law Court without permission of the Law Court and payment of the designated fee. The provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 89(b) shall govern the appearances of visiting attorneys in the Law Court.

**(c) Filing Fee.**

**(1)** No filing fee is required for appeals in criminal cases. The required filing fee for appeals in civil cases shall be paid to the clerk of the trial court at the time of the filing of the notice of appeal, or pursuant to M.R.E.C.S. 39 if applicable in the trial court from which the appeal is taken.

**(2)** A person who believes that he or she cannot afford to pay the filing fee may file a request to have the fee waived pursuant to M.R. Civ. P. 91 and M.R.E.C.S. 39(B) if applicable in the trial court from which the appeal is taken. If the request to have the filing fee waived is denied, the party who sought the waiver shall pay the filing fee in full within 7 days after the entry of the order denying the request for waiver of the filing fee, or the appeal shall be dismissed by the trial court.

**(d) Transcript Order.** If an appellant intends to include any portions of the transcript in the record on appeal, that appellant must order those portions either by using the online transcript order form found on the Judicial

Branch website, [www.courts.maine.gov/programs/oto/index.html](http://www.courts.maine.gov/programs/oto/index.html), or by using the official Judicial Branch paper order form.

**(1)** To use the online transcript order form on the Judicial Branch website, the appellant must

**(A)** complete all information required on the online form, including the dates of the proceedings that the appellant wishes to have transcribed;

**(B)** file the printed confirmation sheet with the notice of appeal; and

**(C)** serve a copy of the printed confirmation sheet on the other parties.

**(2)** To use the official Judicial Branch paper transcript order form, the appellant must

**(A)** complete all required information on the form, including the dates of the proceedings that the appellant wishes to have transcribed;

**(B)** sign the form;

**(C)** file the original form with the notice of appeal; and

**(D)** serve a copy of the form on the other parties.

**(e) Insufficient Filing.** If a notice of appeal or transcript order is not signed, the appeal shall not be accepted for filing. If the appeal is not accepted for filing, the provisions of M.R.E.C.S. 35(D)-(E) shall control if applicable in the trial court from which the appeal is taken. If the Maine Rules of Electronic Court Systems do not apply in the trial court, the trial court clerk shall docket the receipt and return of the non-accepted documents, and then return all documents to the party who filed them. Documents that are returned to the party who filed them shall not be deemed as filed for the purpose of calculating compliance with time limits.

**(f) Criminal Appeals: Particular Requirements.**

**(1)** In a criminal case, when a court imposes any sentence on a defendant (A) after trial, or (B) after a plea to murder or a Class A, B, or C crime,

with a term of one year or more that is not agreed to pursuant to M.R.U. Crim. P. 11A, the defendant shall be advised by the trial court of the right to appeal. If a criminal defendant not represented by counsel so requests, the trial court shall cause a notice of appeal to be prepared and filed on behalf of the defendant forthwith.

**(2)** A notice of appeal filed by the State in a criminal case shall be accompanied by a written approval of the appeal signed by the Attorney General, pursuant to Rule 21(b), or a representation that the Attorney General has approved the appeal and a written approval will be filed within 7 days. The State shall serve a copy of the written approval on the other parties, in addition to the notice of appeal and transcript order form as required by Rules 2A(b) and (d). The clerk of the trial court shall file the approval, note the filing in the criminal docket, and mail a date-stamped copy of the approval to the defendant or, if the defendant is represented by counsel, to the attorney for the defendant. If the Maine Rules of Electronic Court Systems apply in the trial court, the clerk of the trial court need not take the actions set forth in the preceding sentence.

**(g) Trial Court Clerk Actions.**

**(1)** The trial court clerk shall notify (A) the Clerk of the Law Court and (B) the court reporter or Office of Transcript Operations of the filing of the notice of appeal and transcript order form. The trial court clerk shall cause the notice of appeal and transcript order form to be transmitted to the attorney of record of each party other than the appellant, or, if a party is not represented by an attorney, then to the last known address of that party. This notification is sufficient notwithstanding the death or incapacity of the party or of the party's attorney prior to or subsequent to the mailing of the notification.

**(2)** Unless the notice of appeal and transcript order form are transmitted to the attorneys of record or parties not represented by an attorney pursuant to the Maine Rules of Electronic Court Systems, the clerk shall note in the docket the names of the parties to whom the clerk mails the copies, with date of mailing.

**(3)** The trial court clerk's failure to comply with Rule 2A(g)(1) does not affect the validity of the appeal, but no appeal shall be deemed to be filed and commenced in the Law Court pursuant to Rule 3(a)(2) until the Clerk of the Law Court receives the notification of the notice of appeal from the trial court clerk.

**(4)** In any action based on the Maine Tort Claims Act, 14 M.R.S. § 8101 et seq., whether the action involves the State or a local government, the trial court clerk shall cause any notice of appeal that is filed to be transmitted to the Attorney General at the same time as the notice is transmitted to the parties to the action.

### **Advisory Committee Note – July 2022**

Subdivision (b)(1) is amended to remove the unnecessary provision containing a requirement that the notice of appeal contain a notice to the other parties that they must file an appearance in order to be heard in the appeal. No notice of appearance was required by any other rule.

Subdivision (b)(2) is amended to clarify that when an appeal is docketed in the Law Court, only members of the Maine bar are deemed to represent parties in the appeal. An out-of-state attorney admitted in the trial court as a visiting attorney must seek permission from the Law Court to appear in the appeal. If a notice of appeal is signed by only a visiting attorney, the notice of appeal is a nullity and will be dismissed by the Law Court. *See* M.R. Civ. P. 89(b) (requiring members of the Maine bar to sign all papers filed with the court); M.R.U. Crim. P. 55(a) (same).

Subdivision (b)(2)(C) is adopted to clarify that visiting attorneys may not appear in an appeal without permission of the Law Court. The subdivision makes any appearance by a visiting attorney subject to M.R. Civ. P. 89(b), whether the appeal is from a civil or criminal matter.

### **Advisory Note – October 2021**

Rule 2A(b)-(g) is amended to recognize the implementation of an electronic case management and filing system by the Maine Judicial Branch and the adoption of the Maine Rules of Electronic Court Systems.

### **Advisory Note – May 2018**

The amendment permits, but does not require, an appellant with access to the internet to use the Judicial Branch’s online transcript order form to order any transcript. Currently, the online form can be used to order transcripts for

reference but not for appeals. The online form will allow the appellant to print a document that confirms the order and contains all details of the order. The appellant must then file that confirmation form with the notice of appeal and serve a copy on the other parties.

The Judicial Branch prefers that parties use the online form. Using the online form will ensure that the appellant has provided all necessary information for the transcript order and will make the process of ordering and producing the transcript more efficient.

### **Restyling Notes - June 2017**

The revision of Rule 2 applies restyling practice to add significant separations and internal numbering to what were long paragraphs in the original Rule. The original rule has also been divided into three distinct Rules. Rule 2A addresses the notice and filing of the appeal. Rule 2B addresses the time for taking an appeal. Rule 2C addresses cross-appeals, multiple appeals, and bonds in civil cases.

Rule 2A is reorganized to address first the commencement of the appeal, then the notice of the appeal, then the filing fee and transcript order. The Rule also clarifies the trial court clerks' actions when filings are insufficient and, in Rule 2A(c), specifies what may happen when a waiver of the filing fees is requested but is denied, indicating that when there is a denial, the filing fee must be paid within 7 days after the denial or the appeal would be dismissed by the trial court clerk. The 7-day payment or dismissal requirement is drawn from M.R. Civ. P. 91(d) which applies in all circumstances when a fee waiver is denied.

The requirement of former Rule 2(a)(2) that notices of appeal in civil actions include a statement of the issues is removed.

Rule 2A(b)(2) adds requirements for appearances to participate in criminal or civil appeals that the unrepresented party or attorney representing each party other than the appellant in the trial court shall be deemed to be representing that party on the appeal unless new counsel appears, or counsel withdraws, or a party elects not to participate in the appeal.

Rules 2A(b), (d), and (f)(2) add the requirement that the appellant must serve on the other parties the notice of appeal, transcript order form, and, when applicable, written approval of the Attorney General or a representation that the Attorney General's approval has been obtained and will be filed within 7 days.

Rule 2A(e) clarifies that the documents returned by the trial court clerk as insufficient are not deemed as filed for purpose of calculating compliance with any time limits.

Rule 2A(f) includes, with slight modification, what were formerly paragraphs 3 and 4 in Rule 2(a).

Rule 2A(g) is a restyling of what is currently Rule 2(a), paragraph 5 with the addition of several separations and internal numbering. A requirement that the trial court clerk mail a copy of the docket sheet to the Clerk of the Law Court is added to Rule 2A(g)(2).

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[Advisory Notes to former Rule 2 can be found above the text of Rule 2A.]

## **RULE 2B. TIME FOR APPEAL**

**(a) (1) Time of Entry of Judgment.** A judgment or order is entered within the meaning of this Rule when it is entered into the docket. A notice of appeal filed after a verdict or an order, finding, or judgment of the court, but before entry in the docket shall be treated as filed on the date of entry into the docket.

**(2) Knowledge of Judgment Presumed.** A party shall be presumed to have learned of the entry of a judgment if that party, or an attorney representing that party, was present in open court when a judgment, verdict, ruling on a motion, or sentence was announced, or if that party, at the courthouse, signed a document, such as a sentencing document, a disclosure order, or other document acknowledging the entry of final judgment in the proceeding.



**(b) Criminal Cases.**

**(1) Time to File.** Except for extradition appeals addressed in Rule 2B(b)(3), the time within which an appeal may be taken in a criminal case shall be 21 days after entry into the docket of the judgment or order appealed from, unless a shorter time is provided by law.

**(2) Time to File Extended by Timely Filing of Certain Motions.** If a timely motion for:

- (A)** arrest of judgment under M.R.U. Crim. P. 34; or
- (B)** judgment of acquittal after verdict under M.R.U. Crim. P. 29; or
- (C)** a new trial under M.R.U. Crim. P. 33; or
- (D)** correction or reduction of sentence under M.R.U. Crim. P. 35(a) or 35(c)

is filed within 21 days after entry of judgment, a notice of appeal need not be filed within 21 days after entry of judgment. Instead, a notice of appeal may be filed at any time after the entry of judgment but not later than 21 days after the entry of the order on the motion. A notice of appeal so filed shall be treated as an appeal from both the judgment and the order on the motion, even if the notice of appeal is filed before the trial court has acted on the motion. If a notice of appeal is filed within 21 days after entry of judgment, the subsequent timely filing of one of the motions listed in subparagraphs (A)-(D) does not render ineffective the notice of appeal and preserves for review any claim of error in the order on the motion. A notice of appeal so filed shall be treated as an appeal from both the judgment and the order on the motion. This paragraph does not apply to any motion that is not listed in subparagraphs (A)-(D).

**(3) Extradition Appeals.** The time within which an appeal may be taken from an order making a final disposition of a petition contesting extradition shall be 7 days after entry into the docket of the order appealed from.

**(c) Civil Cases.**

**(1) Time to File.** The time within which an appeal may be taken in a civil case shall be 21 days after entry into the docket of the judgment or order appealed from, unless a shorter time is provided by law.

**(2) Time to File Extended by Timely Filing of Certain Motions.** If a timely motion:

**(A)** for judgment as a matter of law under M.R. Civ. P. 50(b); or

**(B)** to make or amend findings of fact or conclusions of law under M.R. Civ. P. 52(a) or (b); or

**(C)** for a new trial under M.R. Civ. P. 59; or

**(D)** to alter or amend the judgment, including a motion for reconsideration of the judgment under M.R. Civ. P. 59; or

**(E)** for reopening or reconsideration before the Public Utilities Commission pursuant to its rules of practice

is filed within the time allowed by statute or rule after entry of judgment, a notice of appeal need not be filed within 21 days after entry of judgment. Instead, a notice of appeal may be filed at any time after the entry of judgment but not later than 21 days after the entry of the order on the motion. A notice of appeal so filed shall be treated as an appeal from both the judgment and the order on the motion, even if the notice of appeal is filed before the trial court or the Public Utilities Commission has acted on the motion. If a notice of appeal is filed within 21 days after entry of judgment, the subsequent timely filing of one of the motions listed in subparagraphs (A)-(E) does not render ineffective the notice of appeal and preserves for review any claim of error in the order on the motion. A notice of appeal so filed shall be treated as an appeal from both the judgment and the order on the motion. This paragraph does not apply to any motion that is not listed in subparagraphs (A)-(E).

**(d) Extension of Time.** Except when prohibited by statute:

**(1) Twenty-One Days.** Upon a showing of good cause, the trial court may, before or after the time has expired, with or without motion and notice, extend the time for filing the notice of appeal otherwise allowed for a period not to exceed 21 days from the expiration of the original time for filing an appeal prescribed by Rule 2B(b) or 2B(c).

**(2) One Hundred Forty Days.** An extension of the time to file the notice of appeal exceeding 21 days, but not exceeding 140 days, from the expiration of the original time for filing an appeal prescribed by Rule 2B(b) or 2B(c) may be granted by the trial court on a motion with notice only upon a showing that (A) the trial court clerk, although required to do so, failed to send notice of the entry of judgment to the moving party; and (B) the moving party did not otherwise learn of the entry of judgment; and (C) any other party will not be unfairly prejudiced by the extension of time to file the notice of appeal.

### **Advisory Committee Note – July 2022**

Rule 2B(b)-(c) is amended to make clear that when a party timely files certain post-judgment motions, the period for filing a notice of appeal is extended to 21 days after the entry of the order disposing of the post-judgment motions. In other words, a party that timely files any of the post-judgment motions listed in paragraphs (b)(2) or (c)(2) within 21 days of the entry of judgment may file one notice of appeal at any time after the entry of judgment but not later than 21 days after the entry of the order on the post-judgment motions, and the notice of appeal will be treated as an appeal from both the judgment and the order.

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 2B (Former Rule 2(b)) relating to calculation of the time to file an appeal has been subject to significant editing and addition of many separations and internal numbering, with some editing for clarification. Of particular note, the motions which can cause the time to file an appeal to be extended in criminal or civil appeals are each separated out for easy identification.

Rule 2B(a)(2) is added, indicating that a party who is present in court when a particular final judgment or other court action is announced by the court or who, while at the courthouse after the court's announcement, signs a document signifying acknowledgment of the court's action, is presumed to have learned of the entry the judgment at that time. This amendment is added to minimize claims of lack of knowledge of entry of judgments at later times when appeal deadlines may have been missed and parties seek to either reopen or collaterally attack a judgment.

Former Rules 2(b)(2) and 2(b)(3), restyled as Rules 2B(b) and 2B(c), are amended to clarify that there is no need to file a notice of appeal from an original judgment while certain post-judgment motions, if timely filed, are pending in the trial court. A notice of appeal can instead be taken from the order on that post-judgment motion, within 21 days after its entry, and that single notice of appeal will be treated as an appeal from both the original judgment and the post-judgment order. In the alternative, a notice of appeal can be filed within 21 days after the entry into the docket of the original judgment, and the subsequent timely filing of certain post-judgment motions does not render ineffective the previously filed notice of appeal. The previously filed notice of appeal preserves for review any claim of error in the original judgment and in the order on the post-judgment motion.

The provision in former Rule 2(b)(3) regarding cross-appeals is moved to Rule 2C.

Former Rule 2(b)(4) is removed, and the content is instead made part of Rules 2B(b) and 2B(c).

[Advisory Notes to former Rule 2 can be found above the text of Rule 2A.]

## **RULE 2C. MULTIPLE APPEALS AND BONDS IN CIVIL CASES**

### **(a) Cross-Appeals.**

**(1) Need to File.** If the appellee seeks any change in the judgment that is on appeal, the appellee must file a cross-appeal to preserve that issue. The notice of cross-appeal shall be filed with the clerk of the trial court from which the appeal is taken, and shall be processed in the same manner as a notice of appeal filed pursuant to Rule 2A(b)(1). An appellee need not file a notice of

appeal if no change in the judgment is sought. An appellee may, without filing a cross-appeal, argue that alternative grounds support the judgment that is on appeal.

**(2) Time to File.** If a timely notice of appeal is filed by a party, any other party may file a notice of appeal (accompanied, when required, by the filing fee or a request to have the fee waived pursuant to M.R. Civ. P. 91) within 14 days after the date on which the first notice of appeal was filed, or within the time specified by Rule 2B(b) or 2B(c), whichever period last expires.

**(3) Status of Parties.** When more than one party has appealed, the party who first appeals shall, unless otherwise agreed by the parties or ordered by the Law Court, be treated as the appellant in applying these Rules to such cross-appeals, and all other parties shall be treated as appellees.

**(b) Joint or Consolidated Appeals.** If two or more parties are entitled to appeal from a civil judgment or order, and their interests are such as to make joinder practicable, they may file a joint notice of appeal or may join in an appeal after filing separate timely notices of appeal, and they may thereafter proceed on appeal as a single appellant. Appeals may be consolidated after docketing in the Law Court by order of the Law Court upon its own motion or upon motion of a party.

**(c) Parents' Appeals.** If both parents of a child appeal from an order of the District Court or the Probate Court finding jeopardy to the child as to both parents, terminating both parents' parental rights to the child, awarding a guardianship over the child to a third person, or awarding a grandparent visitation rights, both parents shall be treated as appellants, unless otherwise agreed by the parties or ordered by the Law Court.

**(d) Bond; Continuance in Effect.** Any bond given at the commencement or during the pendency of a civil action, unless otherwise provided by law or by direction of the court ordering the judgment appealed from, shall continue in effect until the final disposition of any appeal of the action and until the conditions of such bond have been fulfilled.

## Advisory Committee Note – July 2022

The change to Rule 2C(a)(1) provides additional clarification regarding the circumstances in which an appellee must file a cross-appeal to preserve a legal or factual argument. Under the rule, no cross-appeal is necessary if the appellee does not seek to change any aspect of the judgment. A cross-appeal is necessary only if a party seeks a change to the judgment. For example:

A defendant files a motion to dismiss a breach of contract claim, arguing that the statute of limitations bars the claim and that there was no breach of contract. The trial court grants the motion but reaches only the statute of limitations argument. The defendant need not file a cross-appeal to preserve the contract argument.

A plaintiff obtains summary judgment on a slip-and-fall claim, and the court awards \$1,000 in damages. Plaintiff believes that the court should have awarded \$2,000. The plaintiff must file a cross-appeal in order to preserve the argument that additional damages should have been awarded.

Rule 2C(a)(1), as amended, is consistent with *Argereow v. Weisberg*, 2018 ME 140, ¶ 11 n.4, 195 A.3d 1210; *Harris v. Woodlands Club*, 2012 ME 117, ¶ 16 n.8, 55 A.3d 449; and *Scott Dugas Trucking & Excavating, Inc. v. Homeplace Building & Remodeling, Inc.*, 651 A.2d 327, 329 (Me. 1994). Under Rule 2C(a)(1), as amended, cross-appeals need not be filed under the circumstances presented in *MaineToday Media, Inc. v. State*, 2013 ME 100, ¶ 28 n.17, 82 A.3d 104; and *Langevin v. Allstate Insurance*, 2013 ME 55, ¶ 6 n.4, 66 A.3d 585.

In the event of an interlocutory appeal, a cross-appeal is not necessary to preserve claims of error that could otherwise be raised in an appeal from a final judgment.

## Restyling Notes – June 2017

Rule 2C replaces Rule 2(c). Rule 2C(a) is added to address cross-appeals. A cross-appeal is commenced by filing a notice of cross-appeal with the trial court. Rule 2C(a)(1) clarifies when an appellee must file a cross-appeal to preserve an issue. If a change in the judgment is sought, a cross-appeal must be

filed. *See Lyle v. Mangar*, 2011 ME 129, ¶ 22, 36 A.3d 867; *Costa v. Vogel*, 2001 ME 131, ¶ 1 n.1, 777 A.2d 827.

Historically, the Law Court has not required an appellee to file a cross-appeal to preserve an argument that the judgment should be affirmed in every respect but simply contends that the same result could have been reached on alternative grounds. *See Harris v. Woodlands Club*, 2012 ME 117, ¶ 16 n.8, 55 A.3d 449; *Scott Dugas Trucking & Excavating, Inc. v. Homeplace Bldg. & Remodeling, Inc.*, 651 A.2d 327, 329 (Me. 1994); *State v. Me. Cent. R.R.*, 517 A.2d 55, 57 (Me. 1986); *Givertz v. Me. Med. Ctr.*, 459 A.2d 548, 556 (Me. 1983); *but see MaineToday Media v. State*, 2013 ME 100, ¶ 28 n.17, 82 A.3d 104; *Langevin v. Allstate Ins. Co.*, 2013 ME 55, ¶ 6 n.4, 66 A.3d 585; *Millien v. Colby College*, 2005 ME 66, ¶ 9 n.3, 874 A.2d 397; *Littlefield v. Littlefield*, 292 A.2d 204, 208-09 (Me. 1972).

Rule 2C also has minor editing to further clarify that the Rule applies only to civil judgments.

[Advisory Notes to former Rule 2 can be found above the text of Rule 2A.]

### **RULE 3. DOCKETING THE APPEAL AND FURTHER TRIAL COURT ACTION**

#### **(a) Docketing the Appeal.**

**(1) Trial Court Docketing.** Upon receipt of the signed notice of appeal and, when required, the requisite fee or waiver, the trial court clerk shall mark the case “Law” on the docket. The trial court clerk shall then transmit a copy of the notice of appeal together with a copy of all docket entries to the Clerk of the Law Court.

**(2) Law Court Docketing.** Upon receipt of the copies of the notice of appeal and the docket entries, the Clerk of the Law Court shall forthwith (A) docket the appeal; (B) send each party of record a written notice of the docketing, the Law Court docket number, and the date within which the record on appeal and the reporter’s transcript must be filed; and (C) send each party who is not represented by an attorney a form, with accompanying instructions, for the party to opt in to receiving service of documents electronically.

**(b) Further Trial Court Action Limited.** The trial court shall take no further action pending disposition of the appeal by the Law Court except as provided in Rules 3(c) and (d) of these Rules.

**(c) Trial Court Action Without Leave of the Law Court.** The trial court is permitted, during the pendency of the appeal and without leave of the Law Court, to take the following action:

**(1) Criminal Cases.** In criminal cases, to dispose of any post-judgment motion filed within 21 days after entry of judgment pursuant to one of the rules enumerated in Rule 2B(b)(2); to appoint counsel for an indigent defendant; to grant a stay of execution and set or revoke bail pending appeal; and to conduct proceedings either for a new trial or for the correction or reduction of a sentence pursuant to M.R.U. Crim. P. 35(a) or (c);

**(2) Civil Cases.** In civil cases, to dispose of any post-judgment motion filed pursuant to one of the rules enumerated in Rule 2B(c)(2) of these Rules; as provided in M.R. Civ. P. 27(b), 54(b)(3), 60(a), 62(a), 62(c), and 62(d); and as provided in Rule 5(e) of these Rules;

**(3) Child Protection Cases.** In child protection cases, to continue case review and processing as required by law; and

**(4) Certain Interlocutory Appeals.** The trial court is permitted to act on a case pending resolution of any appeal of an order approving, dissolving or denying an attachment or trustee process, a discovery order, a temporary restraining order or preliminary injunction; or an order granting or denying a motion for summary judgment or a motion to dismiss that does not resolve all pending claims.

Any party moving for trial court action permitted by this Rule may include, in its motion to the trial court, a request that the clerk of the trial court temporarily retain some or all of the trial court record as provided by Rule 6(a)(3) of these Rules, or retrieve the same from the Clerk of the Law Court, if necessary for the requested trial court action.

**(d) Trial Court Action With Leave of the Law Court.** A party may, during the pendency of an appeal, file a motion in the Law Court to permit a specific trial court action that is not already permitted by Rule 3(c) of these



Rules. The moving party shall include, in its motion to the Law Court, the reason for the request for trial court action and shall attach to the Law Court motion the proposed trial court motion.

### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

Rule 3(a)(2) is amended to include a requirement that the Clerk of the Law Court “send each party who is not represented by an attorney a form, with accompanying instructions, for the party to opt in to receiving service of documents electronically.”

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 3 is amended to add significant clarification and separations. This revision clarifies that the trial court retains authority to act as provided by Rule 3(c) without leave of the Law Court. Rule 3(d) is added to outline the procedure for seeking leave of the Law Court to permit trial court action not otherwise permitted by Rule 3(c).

In Rule 3(b)(4), a ruling on a motion to dismiss that does not resolve all pending claims is added to the list of trial court orders from which an appeal may be taken without causing the trial court to cease action on the matter pending resolution of the appeal. The change results in rulings on motions to dismiss being treated the same as rulings on motions for summary judgment that are already addressed in the Rule. Adding the reference to motions to dismiss creates no approval for interlocutory appeals. It only notes that while such interlocutory appeals are pending, trial court consideration of the case can continue.

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### **[Advisory Notes to Rule 3 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

#### **Advisory Note – August 2015**

Because of the adoption of the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure, effective throughout the State of Maine as of July 1, 2015, all references and citations to the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure have been replaced with references and citations to the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure.

## **Advisory Note – July 2012**

Rule 3(a) is amended to make clear the need for payment of the filing fee in those cases where a filing fee is required. This requirement is also discussed in M.R. App. P. 2(a)(1) and (4), M.R. App. P. 2(b)(3), and M.R. Civ. P. 5(f).

## **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 3(a) governs docketing of appeals in the Law Court. It is derived from M.R. Civ. P. 73(f) and M.R. Crim. P. 37(d). Upon receipt of a notice of appeal, the trial court clerk must docket the appeal and then transmit a copy of the notice plus a copy of all present docket entries to the Clerk of the Law Court. The case will also be marked “Law” on the docket of the trial court. Separately, it should be noted that pursuant to Rule 2(a)(5) the clerk must also send a copy of any transcript order form required to be filed with the notice of appeal to the Clerk of the Law Court. Upon receipt of the copies of the notice of appeal and the docket entries, the Clerk of the Law Court must docket the appeal and then send each party of record a written notice of the docketing, the Law Court docket number, and the date within which the record on appeal and reporter’s transcript must be filed.

Rule 3(b) reflects current practice as stated in M.R. Civ. P. 73(f) and M.R. Crim. P. 37(d) that, once the appeal is docketed by the marking of “Law” on the trial court docket, generally trial courts should take no further action in the matter pending disposition of the appeal by the Law Court. There are certain stated exceptions to this rule for both criminal and civil cases, and those exceptions are outlined in subparagraphs 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Rule 3(b). Subparagraph 1 applies to criminal cases. Subparagraph 2 applies to civil cases. Subparagraph 3 applies to child protective cases and recognizes the statutory requirements that processing of these cases continue while appeals are pending. Subparagraph 4 applies to all cases. The last sentence of the Rule separately excepts from application of the “no further action” rule, appeals from orders listed in the sentence.

## **RULE 4. DISMISSAL OF THE APPEAL**

### **(a) Voluntary Dismissal.**

**(1) Criminal Appeals.** Prior to the time stated in subdivision (b) of this Rule, a criminal defendant may dismiss his or her appeal by filing with the Clerk of the Law Court a written dismissal, personally signed by the defendant, and the State may dismiss its appeal by filing a written dismissal signed by the attorney for the State.

### **(2) Civil Appeals.**

**(A) Appeals.** On or before the date that the appellant's brief is filed or is due to be filed, whichever is earlier, an appellant may dismiss the appellant's appeal by filing with the Clerk of the Law Court a written dismissal signed by the appellant or the appellant's attorney. After the date on which the appellant's brief is filed or is due to be filed, an appeal may be dismissed only by stipulation pursuant to paragraph (a)(3) of this Rule.

**(B) Cross-Appeals.** On or before the date that a cross-appellant's brief is filed or is due to be filed, whichever is earlier, a cross-appellant may dismiss the cross-appellant's appeal by filing with the Clerk of the Law Court a written dismissal signed by the cross-appellant or the cross-appellant's attorney. After the date on which the cross-appellant's brief is filed or is due to be filed, a cross-appeal may be dismissed only by stipulation pursuant to paragraph (a)(3) of this Rule.

**(3) By Stipulation.** Prior to the time stated in subdivision (b) of this Rule, a civil appeal may be dismissed by stipulation entered into by all of the parties and filed with the Clerk of the Law Court.

**(b) On or After Date for Consideration.** On or after the date scheduled for oral argument or 42 days (6 weeks) after the date for filing the appellee's brief in an appeal not scheduled for oral argument, an appeal may be dismissed voluntarily or by stipulation only with leave of the Law Court.

**(c) For Failure to Perfect Appeal.** If an appellant or cross-appellant fails to comply with the provisions of these Rules within the times prescribed herein, the Law Court may, on motion of any other party or on its own initiative, dismiss the appeal for want of prosecution.

**(d) For Lack of Jurisdiction.** Whenever it appears by suggestion of the parties or otherwise that the Law Court lacks jurisdiction of the subject matter, the Law Court shall dismiss the appeal.

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 4 is edited to clarify in Rule 4(a)(1) that a criminal defendant must personally sign a voluntary dismissal, a direction that was implicit in the current rule. Rule 4(a)(2) is amended to create a separate brief-related deadline, Rule 4(a)(2)(B), for dismissal of a cross-appeal without agreement. Rule 4(b) is amended to clarify the date after which an appeal not scheduled for oral argument may be dismissed voluntarily only with approval of the Law Court. That date is 42 days (6 weeks) after the date for filing the appellee’s brief. The current Rule referencing only the date for “submission” on briefs was ineffective because the specific date for conference of an appeal on briefs is not noticed and sometimes changes.

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### **[Advisory Notes to Rule 4 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

#### **Advisory Note – July 2012**

Rule 4 is internally numbered and amended to place all provisions for voluntary or stipulated dismissal of appeals within subdivision (a) and to move the submission deadline for voluntary dismissals without Law Court approval to subdivision (b). There is no change to the process for voluntary dismissal of criminal appeals in paragraph (1).

Rule 4(a)(2) is adopted to clarify the process for unilateral or voluntary dismissal of civil appeals. To avoid the risk that an appellee may be required to expend any significant time or effort only to have an appeal voluntarily dismissed, a civil appeal may be voluntarily dismissed only on or before the date that the appellant’s brief is filed or is due to be filed, whichever is earlier. The appeal may be dismissed by filing with the Clerk of the Law Court a written dismissal signed by the appellant or the appellant’s attorney. After the date on which the appellant’s brief is filed or is due to be filed, an appeal may be

dismissed only by stipulation pursuant to paragraph (3) (formerly subdivision (b)).

As with current practice, an appeal may be dismissed only with leave of the Law Court on or after the date the appeal is scheduled to be considered at oral argument or on briefs. To clarify that this is a general rule that applies to all dismissals by parties, the provision is placed in a new subdivision (b).

Rule 4(d) is amended to clarify that it is applicable to issues of lack of subject matter jurisdiction before the Law Court. The Law Court continues to have the capacity to take appropriate action when it notices, in a matter before it, that any other court or tribunal lacked personal or subject matter jurisdiction over a party or matter before the Law Court.

### **Advisory Notes – September 10, 2001**

This language [Rule 4(d)] is virtually identical to the provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 12(h)(3) which previously governed civil appeals. It is added at this point to recognize the Court's inherent authority to dismiss matters when it is apparent that it lacks subject matter jurisdiction. *See Thomas v. City of South Portland*, 2001 ME 50, 768 A.2d 595. The only difference between the proposed rule and Rule 12(h)(3) is a change of the last word from "action" to "appeal."

### **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 4(a) generally adopts M.R. Crim. P. 37(e)(1), but with amendment to set a cutoff date for dismissals as the date on or after the date for oral argument or on briefs consideration.

Rule 4(b) generally adopts M.R. Civ. P. 73(g)(1). Under both the voluntary dismissal in criminal appeals and the stipulation of dismissal that may apply to either criminal or civil appeals, after an appeal is conferenced by the Law Court, it may be dismissed only with leave of the Law Court. The current rules limit dismissal after argument, but that limitation is changed to on or after the date set for argument or on briefs consideration.

Rule 4(c) adopts the nearly identical provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 73(g)(2) and M.R. Crim. P. 37(e)(2) allowing dismissal on motion or by the Law Court's own action for want of prosecution where an appellant fails to comply with the

requirements of these Rules and within the time prescribed by the Rules. The basis for dismissal for want of prosecution may include not only failure to meet specific time limits, but also failure to comply with other obligations relating to an appeal such as filing the requisite transcript order form, if a transcript is to be ordered, or filing a proper brief or appendix as is required by these Rules.

## **RULE 5. RECORD ON APPEAL**

**(a) Contents of Record.** The record on appeal shall consist of the trial court clerk's record and exhibits filed in the trial court, the reporter's transcript of the proceedings, if any, and a copy of the docket entries.

**(b) Transcripts.** Unless excused for good cause by a Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court, the record on appeal shall include both a print and an electronic copy of any transcript that is or becomes part of the record on appeal. The electronic copy of each transcript shall be in a native .pdf format. The appellant shall ensure that an electronic copy of any transcript that is or becomes part of the record on appeal is emailed to the Clerk of the Law Court at the email address that the Clerk of the Law Court designates.

### **(1) Criminal Cases.**

**(A) Order of Transcript.** The appellant is responsible for ordering the transcript by using one of the methods prescribed by Rule 2A(d). Except as otherwise designated, the standard transcript in a criminal appeal shall include the testimony of the witnesses at trial; any bench conferences; and, in a jury trial, the closing arguments and the court's charge to the jury. The standard transcript shall also include any hearing on a motion to suppress or a motion in limine, if a ruling on such a motion is at issue on appeal, and the sentencing hearing, if sentencing is at issue on appeal.

Appellant's counsel may add portions to this standard transcript by utilizing the requisite Judicial Branch form. Appellant's counsel shall delete from the standard transcript any portion not necessary for purposes of the appeal.

Within 7 days after receipt of appellant's transcript order, appellee's counsel may order additional portions of the transcript by utilizing the requisite Judicial Branch form.

A copy of any transcript order not filed as part of, or contemporaneously with, the notice of appeal shall be filed with the Clerk of the Law Court and served on each other party, or if a party is represented, counsel for a represented party.

**(B) Payment for Transcript.** A non-indigent appellant shall make satisfactory financial arrangements with the court reporter or Office of Transcript Operations within 14 days after filing the notice of appeal, or the transcript order shall be cancelled, in which case the appeal shall proceed without a transcript.

In the case of an indigent appellant, the cost of the transcript shall be paid for by the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services. An indigent appellant is an appellant who has been determined indigent (i) by the trial court before verdict pursuant to M.R.U. Crim. P. 44(b), (ii) by the trial court after verdict pursuant to M.R.U. Crim. P. 44A(b), or (iii) by a Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court pursuant to M.R.U. Crim. P. 44A(c).

## **(2) Civil Cases.**

**(A) Order of Transcript.** An appellant shall order the transcript or portions of the transcript deemed necessary for appeal by using one of the methods prescribed by Rule 2A(d).

If the appellant intends to urge on appeal that a finding or conclusion is unsupported by the evidence or is contrary to the evidence, the appellant shall include in the record a transcript of all evidence relevant to such finding or conclusion.

If any appellee deems a transcript of other parts of the proceedings to be necessary, the appellee shall, within 7 days after the service of the appellant's transcript order form, file with the Clerk of the Law Court and serve on the appellant a designation of additional parts of the transcript to be included. Unless within 7 days after service of such designation the appellant has ordered such parts, and has so notified the appellee, the appellee may within the following 7 days either order the parts or move in the Law Court for an order requiring the appellant to do so.

**(B) Payment for Transcript.**

**(i)** Within 14 days after filing the notice of appeal and transcript order form, a party must make satisfactory arrangements with the reporter or other person from whom the transcript is ordered for payment of the cost of the transcript. In every instance in which a reporter or the Office of Transcript Operations requests a deposit prior to beginning production of a transcript, that deposit shall be paid within 7 days after the date on which the attorney, litigant, or other interested person was notified of the amount of the deposit. In the event that the deposit has not been paid within the required time, the reporter or the Office of Transcript Operations shall consider the order canceled and shall so inform the Clerk of the Law Court, the party ordering the transcript, and the court in which the transcript was to be filed. The appeal or other matter shall then proceed without the transcript.

**(ii)** In the case of an indigent parent who is an appellant in a child protection case brought by the State, the cost of the transcript shall be paid for by the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services. An indigent parent-appellant is one who has been determined indigent (a) by the trial court before entry of the judgment or order appealed from, (b) by the trial court after entry of the judgment or order appealed from, or (c) by a Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court.

**(iii)** An electronic recording or statement of the evidence in lieu of a transcript may be filed to support an appeal only when the proceeding was recorded by the court or by an official court reporter, but, pursuant to Rule 91(f)(2) of the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure, the trial court (a) has determined that the appellant is indigent and (b) has approved the use an electronic recording or statement of the evidence in lieu of a transcript.

**(c) Condensed Transcript.** The party initially ordering the transcript or a part thereof in a criminal or a civil case may order a transcript in any format allowed by the Office of Transcript Operations. Transcripts filed as part of the record on appeal may consist of transcripts using condensed pages reproduced in accordance with M.R. Civ. P. 5(i)(2).



**(d) Unavailable Transcript.**

**(1)** In the event a hearing or trial was not recorded or a transcript of the evidence or proceedings at a hearing or trial cannot be prepared for reasons not attributable to the appellant, the appellant may prepare a statement of the evidence or proceedings from the best available means, including recollection, for use instead of a reporter's transcript.

**(2)** The appellant's statement shall be filed with the trial court and served on the appellee within 21 days after entry of judgment, or 14 days after the filing of the notice of appeal, whichever occurs first. The appellee may file and serve objections or propose amendments thereto within 7 days after service.

**(3)** After the filing of any statement of the evidence or proceedings and any objections, the statement and any objections or proposed amendments shall be submitted to the trial court for settlement and approval and, as settled and approved, shall be included in the record on appeal.

**(e) Correction or Modification of Record.** If any difference arises as to whether the record on appeal truly discloses what occurred in the trial court, or if anything material to either party is omitted from the record on appeal, the trial court may on motion or suggestion, after appropriate notice to the parties, supplement the record to correct the omission or misstatement, or the Law Court may on motion or suggestion direct that a supplemental record be transmitted by the trial court clerk. All other questions as to the content and form of the record shall be presented to the Law Court.

**(f) Record on Agreed Statement.** When the questions presented by an appeal to the Law Court can be determined without an examination of all the pleadings, evidence, and proceedings in the court below, the parties may prepare and sign a statement of the case showing how the questions arose and were decided, and setting forth only so many of the facts averred and proved or sought to be proved as are essential to a decision of the questions by the Law Court.

The statement shall include a copy of the judgment appealed from, a copy of the notice of appeal with its filing date, and a concise statement of the points to be relied on by the appellant. If the statement conforms to the truth and is

sufficiently complete, the trial court shall approve it for certification to the Law Court as the record on appeal.

### **Advisory Note – June 2019**

The Court uses both print and electronic versions of transcripts in its consideration of appeals. The electronic versions of transcripts that are ordered with a notice of appeal are provided to the Court pursuant to Rule 6(c)(1). The Court has not, however, had access to electronic versions of transcripts that are filed in the trial court before the notice of appeal and then transmitted to the Law Court with the clerk’s record.

This amendment to Rule 5(b) requires the appellant to ensure that the Court receives electronic versions of all transcripts that are part of the record on appeal, whether the transcripts were filed in the trial court and transmitted to the Law Court or were filed directly with the Law Court. For transcripts by an official court reporter or by a transcriber of electronic recordings, the appellant should contact the reporter or transcriber and ask that the electronic versions of the transcripts be emailed to the Clerk of the Law Court. For other transcripts, the appellant should contact the court reporter or transcriber who created the transcript to ask that the electronic version be transmitted directly to the Clerk of the Law Court. If that fails, however, the appellant may, with the agreement of all parties or with leave of the Court, email an electronic copy that is available to the appellant.

Electronic versions of transcripts must be text-based .pdf files that are searchable and may not be scans of the transcripts even if those scans are made searchable through character recognition software.

### **Advisory Note – May 2018**

The amendments to Rule 5(b) make clear that the appellant must order any portions of the transcript that the appellant wishes to include in the record on appeal by using one of the methods permitted by Rule 2A(d), which is simultaneously amended to permit the use of either the online form or the official paper form.

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

The restyling of Rule 5 reflects significant editing and internal numbering particularly with regard to reference of the transcript in civil cases. Of particular note, a reference to transcripts for appeals by indigent parents in Title 22 child protection cases is added to track the provision relating to transcripts in criminal cases for indigent defendants.

Because Rule 1B includes the definition of a reporter as including the Office of Transcript operations, the similar definition is removed from Rule 5(a).

In Rule 5(b)(1)(A), the standard transcript in criminal cases is expanded to include closing arguments in jury trials and hearings on motions to suppress or motions in limine if rulings on such motions are to be at issue in appeal and sentencing hearings if sentencing is an issue on appeal.

As with the amendment to Rule 2, the requirement that the notice of appeal include an issues statement is removed from Rule 5.

In discussion of the civil transcripts in Rule 5(b)(2)(B)(iii), reference is made directly to M.R. Civ. P. 91(f)(2), addressing the circumstances in which, for indigent parties, a recording or statement in lieu of a transcript may be submitted in lieu of a transcript for parties whose requests are approved by the trial court pursuant to M.R. Civ. P. 91(f).

Rule 5(c) is expanded to address transcript formatting and copying of transcripts. The Rule is clarified to allow transcript formatting choices as permitted by the Office of Transcript Operations.

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## **[Advisory Notes to Rule 5 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

### **Advisory Note – August 2015**

Because of the adoption of the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure, effective throughout the State of Maine as of July 1, 2015, all references and citations to the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure have been replaced with references and citations to the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure.

### **Advisory Note – October 2012**

The amendment [to Rule 5(b)(1) and (2)] is a technical change to recognize the new title for what is now called the Office of Transcript Production and to make the reporter reference consistent with the definition in Rule 16(4).

### **Advisory Note – July 2012**

The amendment to Rule 5(a) clarifies that the term “reporter,” as used in the Appellate Rules, includes the services of the Office of Transcript Production.

The amendments to Rules 5(c) and 6(c), below, require parties to file condensed transcripts, in accordance with M.R. Civ. P. 5(i)(2) as part of the record on appeal.

### **Advisory Note – November 2011**

Rule 5(b)(1) addresses financial responsibility for transcript production. Upon the establishment of the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services, the funds allocated for the representation of indigent persons were transferred from the Judicial Branch to the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services. This amendment clarifies that transcripts produced for those indigent parties represented by court-appointed or court-assigned counsel are to be paid for by the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services.

### **Advisory Notes – July 1, 2010**

These amendments to Rule 5(d) clarify procedures in several respects.

First, as stated in M.R. App. P. 16(1) the references to appellant or appellee refer to the parties to the action, whether represented by counsel or not.

Second, Rule 5(d) only applies when a hearing was not recorded or, if the hearing was recorded, a transcript cannot be prepared because of a failure of the recording. If a transcript can be prepared, but the appellant elects not to purchase a transcript, the rule does not apply.

Third, the amendment ends current confusion about timing and trial court notice of the need to review and act on a proposed 5(d) statement. The amended rule requires that the draft statement and any responding objections or amendments be filed with the trial court at the same time that they are served on the other party. Further the timing is shortened so that the trial court will be more likely to have a fresher memory of the event. The proposed statement must be filed with the trial court and served on the other party no later than 21 days after entry of judgment or 14 days after filing the notice of appeal, whichever is sooner. It is anticipated that the trial court would act on the statement to approve it, or approve it with amendments, as expeditiously as possible, so that the statement could be filed as part of the record on appeal. The trial court would have discretion to reject a statement upon a finding that it did not accurately reflect the record upon which the trial court's decision was based.

### **Advisory Notes – September 10, 2001**

This amendment [to Rule 5(b)(2)(A)] clarifies that a copy of any additional transcript order by an appellee shall be filed with the clerk of the Law Court so that the Law Court will have all necessary materials should any dispute arise requiring a Law Court order.

### **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 5(a) adopts contents of record provisions following current practice under M.R. Civ. P. 74(a) and M.R. Crim. P. 39(a). The contents of the record addressed means the original court file, the exhibits filed in the trial court, the transcript of any proceedings that have been transcribed and a copy of the docket entries. The rule also specifies that whenever the term “reporter” is used in the rules, it refers to a court reporter or an electronically recorded record. Subdivision (a) essentially defines the record on appeal. However, all portions of the record need not necessarily be transmitted to the Law Court. What must be transmitted to the Law Court is separately governed by Rule 6.

Rule 5(b)(1) addresses the appeal transcript in criminal cases. It follows very closely M.R. Crim. P. 39(b) but extends from 5 days to 7 days the time within which an appellee must designate and order additional portions of the transcript beyond that designated by the appellant or beyond the standard transcript. Because the record and transcript in criminal cases tends to be more

uniform, and because of the significant number of indigent appeals, the criminal transcript provisions are drawn more narrowly and specifically than the counterpart civil transcript provisions in Rule 5(b)(2).

Rule 5(b)(2) addresses transcripts in civil cases. Subparagraph (A) is a combination and condensation of the provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 74(b)(1), (2), & (3). It requires that the appellant file, with the notice of appeal and transcript order form, a statement of the issues the appellant intends to present on appeal and serve the other parties a copy of the transcript order form and the statement of issues on appeal. The statement of the issues is for initial guidance for developing the record and transcript orders, and does not preclude a party from raising on appeal other issues that have been properly preserved in the trial court.

If the appellant is making a sufficiency of the evidence challenge to the result, the appellant must include in the record a transcript of evidence relating to the finding or conclusion challenged on sufficiency evidence grounds.

The time within which an appellee must designate other parts of the transcript is reduced from 10 days in present practice to 7 days. This makes the designation requirements consistent with the designation requirements for criminal appeals which are raised from 5 to 7 days.

Rule 5(b)(2)(B) closely tracks the provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 74(b)(4). As presently organized, this only applies to civil appeals. It requires that appropriate financial arrangements be made for preparation of the transcript within 7 days after filing of the notice of appeal. The paragraph also provides that in the event acceptable financial arrangements are not made or required deposits are not paid, the court reporter or the electronic recording division may consider the order canceled and so inform the Clerk of the Law Court. When such occurs, the appeal proceeds without a transcript.

Rule 5(c) authorizes ordering of condensed transcripts. It follows M.R. Civ. P. 74(b)(5). There is no similar provision in the criminal rules. However, 5(c) authorizing condensed transcripts, applies to both civil and criminal appeals.

Rule 5(d) addresses circumstances when a transcript cannot be prepared. It tracks the language of M.R. Civ. P. 74(c) and M.R. Crim. P. 39(b).

The initial service and response times are changed from present practice of 30 days and 10 days to 28 days and 7 days which follows the general effort to make times for action and response follow in defined numbers of weeks from the date of the triggering event.

Rule 5(e) regarding correction or modification of the record follows the language of current M.R. Civ. P. 74(e) and M.R. Crim. P. 39(g).

Rule 5(f) regarding the record on an agreed statement of facts follows the current language of M.R. Civ. P. 74(d) and M.R. Crim. P. 39(i). Note that, even though the statement is agreed to, the statement must be submitted to the trial court for approval as the record on appeal to the court. This helps assure that any statement of appeal to the Law Court, even if prepared by agreement of the parties, accurately reflects the challenged trial court action.

## **RULE 6. FILING THE RECORD WITH THE LAW COURT**

### **(a) Filing the Record.**

**(1) Twenty-Eight-Day Retention Period.** After receipt of a notice of appeal and, when required, the requisite fee or waiver of payment of fees, the trial court clerk shall transmit the trial court record to the Clerk of the Law Court no earlier than 28 days and no later than 35 days after the filing of the notice of appeal. The 28-day period does not apply to extradition appeals. The trial court clerk shall file the trial court record in an extradition appeal with the Clerk of the Law Court within 7 days following the filing of the notice of appeal.

**(2) Effect of Certain Post-Judgment Motions.** If, during the 28 days following the filing of the notice of appeal, a timely post-judgment motion listed in Rule 2B(b)(2) or 2B(c)(2) is filed, the trial court clerk shall not transmit the trial court record to the Clerk of the Law Court until the trial court has acted on the motion. The trial court clerk shall file the trial court record with the Clerk of the Law Court no later than 7 days after the entry of the order on that post-judgment motion.

**(3) Temporary Retention of the Record by Order of the Trial Court.** Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (1) and (2) of this Rule, if the record or any part thereof is required in the trial court for use pending the appeal, the trial court may order, or the parties may stipulate, that the clerk

of the trial court shall retain the record or parts thereof, subject to the request of the Law Court. Upon entry of such an order or stipulation, the trial court clerk shall transmit to the Clerk of the Law Court a copy of the order or stipulation. Upon filing in the Law Court of the brief of the appellee, or at such earlier time as the parties may agree or the Law Court may order, the appellant shall request the clerk of the trial court to transmit the record to the Clerk of the Law Court.

**(4) Record for Preliminary Hearing in the Law Court.** If prior to the time the record is transmitted, a party desires to file and have considered a motion in the Law Court for dismissal, for a stay pending appeal, or for any intermediate order, the clerk of the trial court, at the request of any party, shall transmit to the Law Court such parts of the original record as any party shall designate.

**(b) Contents of the Record.**

The trial court clerk's record shall include a copy of the complete docket entries and originals of the following, or, if the Maine Rules of Electronic Court Systems apply, the following as they appear in the electronic case file: any opinion, order, or judgment by the trial court; the pleadings; motions and actions thereon; documentary exhibits; a list of retained exhibits; correspondence between the parties and the trial court; the verdict or the findings of fact and conclusions of law, together with the direction for the entry of judgment thereon; and the notice of appeal with the date of filing.

When more than one appeal is taken following a single trial or hearing, a consolidated trial court clerk's record shall be prepared.

"Documentary exhibits" include papers, maps, photographs, videos, digital images, diagrams, CDs, DVDs, flash drives, and other similar materials. If a documentary exhibit can be easily and inexpensively reproduced, a copy thereof shall be retained by the clerk of the trial court.

Exhibits that consist of tangible objects, such as weapons, articles of clothing, liquids, computers, hard drives, or other electronic devices shall be retained by the clerk of the trial court, except upon order of the Law Court. If a documentary exhibit, other than a trial court transcript or a record of an administrative proceeding originally appealed to the trial court, is of unusual



bulk or weight, it shall be retained by the clerk of the trial court, except upon order of the Law Court.

Any party that qualifies for appointed counsel may have one copy of the trial court clerk's record without charge.

**(c) (1) Filing of Reporter's Transcript.** Unless the Law Court otherwise directs, within 56 days after the filing of the notice of appeal, the reporter shall file the reporter's transcript, reproduced in accordance with M.R. Civ. P. 5(i)(2), with the Clerk of the Law Court, furnish copies to the parties, and email an electronic copy of the transcript in native .pdf format to the Clerk of the Law Court at the email address that the Clerk of the Law Court designates.

**(2) Delayed Filing of Transcript.** If the reporter anticipates that the 56-day time limit will not be met, the reporter shall file an application with the Clerk of the Law Court requesting additional time at least five days before the expiration of the 56-day time limit. The Clerk of the Law Court is authorized to grant reasonable enlargements of time. Notwithstanding this or any other provision of these Rules, the party ordering the transcript shall exercise due diligence to assure its timely filing.

**(d) Electronic Records.**

**(1)** If an appeal from an administrative agency decision is filed directly with the Law Court, and the administrative record is prepared only in electronic or digital format, without a printed or paper copy of the record, the record filed with the Law Court shall include a printed or paper index to each separate document or item in the record, and the electronic or digital record itself shall include a search feature permitting searches for documents or items in the record by index number or title and by key words within the document.

**(2)** An electronic or digital record shall be submitted by use of a CD, DVD, flash drive, or hard drive, with the record submitted in two identical electronic or digital copies by whatever means submitted. The copies of the record shall be in a format that allows them to be read as .pdf documents or is otherwise compatible with Maine Judicial Branch computer systems for reading documents.

### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

Rule 6(b) is amended to allow “[a]ny party that qualifies for appointed counsel” to obtain one free copy of the trial court clerk’s record.

### **Advisory Note – October 2021**

Rule 6(a)-(b) is amended to recognize the implementation of an electronic case management and filing system by the Maine Judicial Branch and the adoption of the Maine Rules of Electronic Court Systems.

### **Advisory Note - June 2019**

This amendment to Rule 6(c)(1) changes the procedure for the filing of electronic transcripts by official court reporters. The same procedure is being adopted for the filing of transcripts created by electronic recordings. See Rule 5(b).

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 6(a)(1) is revised to introduce a 28-day period in which the trial court clerk will retain the trial court record for most appeals. Once the 28-day period expires, the trial court clerk must file the record with the Clerk of the Law Court within 7 days. The purpose of the change, concurrent with amendment to Rule 3(b)-(d) and Rule 6(a)(2), is to hold the record in the trial court to allow for the filing and trial court resolution of timely post-judgment motions listed in Rules 2B(b)(2) and 2B(c)(2).

As part of the change in the time for filing the record in the Law Court, the Rule is also amended to clarify that the record in extradition appeals must be filed within 7 days after filing of the notice of appeal. The amendment to restyled Rule 6(a)(3) also clarifies that the trial court record may be temporarily retained for an additional period of time, by order of the trial court or stipulation of the parties, when such a retention is necessary, for example, to accomplish trial court action permitted by Rule 3(c) of these Rules.

Because Rule 6(b) specifies the contents of the trial court clerk’s record, the provision in the current rule allowing parties to designate additional items

for the record is eliminated. The provision had created confusion and efforts to add items to the record. Corrections to the record are addressed in Rule 5(e).

Rule 6(b)-(d) is subject to significant editing to recognize modern developments relating to preparing records, particularly the treatment of videos and digital evidence and the means by which such videos and digital evidence may be prepared and transmitted to the Court. Further, the portion of the Rule regarding what may be retained in the trial court is expanded to include other items that, absent court order or apparent need, should be retained with the trial court file rather than transmitted as part of the appeal to the Law Court. The amendment also adds indigent parents in appeals of child protection cases filed by the Department of Health and Human Services as entitled to receive without charge a copy of the record on appeal. Presently that entitlement is limited to indigent criminal defendants.

In Rule 6(c)(1), the deadline for filing the reporter's transcript is changed to 56 days after the filing of the notice of appeal, rather than the later receipt of the notice of appeal mailed from the trial court clerk. The reference to "native" .pdf format means a .pdf format that allows limited cutting and pasting from the .pdf document to a Word document.

Rule 6(d) is added, addressing appeals filed directly with the Law Court from proceedings in which a record may be prepared only in electronic or digital format, without a printed or paper copy of the record. In such appeals, the record filed with the Law Court must include a printed or paper index to each separate document or item in the record, and the electronic or digital record itself shall include a search feature permitting searches for documents or items in the record by index number or title and by key words within the document.

Rule 6(d)(2) indicates the procedure for preparing and submitting digital records to the Law Court, which includes submitting the record by use of a CD, DVD, flash drive, or hard drive, with the record submitted in two identical electronic copies by whatever means submitted. Further, the copies must be in a format that allows them to be read as .pdf documents or is otherwise compatible with Maine Judicial Branch computer systems for reading documents.

As this draft is being prepared, the only agency known to prepare and file such electronic or digital records in Law Court appeals is the Maine Public Utilities Commission. However, the Rule anticipates that this record filing practice may expand to other agencies in the future, and may apply to court records after implementation of electronic filing. At that time, with experience gained by implementation of this change, further adjustment of the electronic record filing requirement may be necessary.

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## **[Advisory Notes to Rule 6 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

### **Advisory Note – July 2012**

Rule 6(a) is amended to make clear the need for payment of the filing fee in those cases where a filing fee is required. This requirement is also discussed in M.R. App. P. 2(a)(1) and (4), M.R. App. P. 2(b)(3), M.R. App. P. 3(a), and M.R. Civ. P. 5(f).

The amendments to Rules 5(c), above, and 6(c) require parties to file condensed transcripts, in accordance with M.R. Civ. P. 5(i)(2) as part of the record on appeal.

### **Advisory Notes – August 2004**

This amendment to M.R. App. P. 6(c) directs the Electronic Recording Division and court reporters, when they file a paper transcript with the Law Court to also include with the transcript sent to the Clerk of the Law Court, an electronic copy of the transcript in whatever format they have used to prepare and print the transcript. This electronic copy is not intended to replace the paper transcript but is intended to be available to the Justices of the Law Court, in addition to the paper transcript, to support their review of the record on appeal.

### **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 6(a) relating to filing the record with the Law Court follows the provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 74A(a) and M.R. Crim. P. 39(e). The requirement in the present criminal rule that the clerk must copy and furnish copies of the

record to the State and the defense is eliminated. The current practice places a significant burden on the clerk's offices that is largely unnecessary with today's record keeping where both the State and the defense already have copies of most materials that are in the record. Where parties believe that their record material may be incomplete, they are, of course, free to review the clerk's file and request copies of any materials they do not have.

The rule continues the provision allowing indigent criminal defendants to have a copy of the clerk's record without charge.

Rule 6(b) addresses the contents of the clerk's record to be submitted to the Law Court. It tracks very closely the current language of M.R. Civ. P. 74A(b) and M.R. Crim. P. 39(c). However, the requirement in the current rules that the clerk prepare a table of contents of a sometimes voluminous record is eliminated. The contents of any record may be easily reviewed by following the docket entries which are presumed to accurately reflect the history of the case. As the rule notes, exhibits that are tangible objects generally are not forwarded from the trial court to the Law Court except upon special order of the Law Court. Likewise, documentary exhibits of unusual bulk or weight are to be retained by the clerk of the trial court unless specially ordered by the Law Court. The contents of the record are, of course, to be distinguished from the material required to be included in the appendix. An appendix, as addressed in Rule 8, is to include only those selected portions of the record required by the rule or otherwise deemed by the parties of particular importance to appellate review of the trial court's actions.

The provision of this rule allowing any party to designate additional portions of the trial court clerk's record within 7 days of the filing of the notice of appeal is not designed to allow parties to supplement the record by filing materials not presented to the trial court in the course of its decision making process. An attempt to supplement the record by filing and attempting to designate materials not considered by the trial court is inappropriate and may subject the person attempting to file such materials to sanctions on appeal. This provision allowing designation of additional portions of the trial court clerk's record relates to requests to submit tangible object exhibits or bulky documentary exhibits to the Law Court or to include with the record other materials that were available to the trial court for consideration but may not have been included in the official clerk's record. Examples of such materials would be visual aids that were displayed to the fact-finders or other visual aids

or exhibits that the record will reflect were displayed or offered for admission into evidence but may not have been admitted or otherwise become part of the clerk's record.

Rule 6(c) relating to filing of the reporter's transcript tracks similar provisions presently in M.R. Civ. P. 74A(b) and M.R. Crim. P. 39(d). The rule emphasizes that, even if the reporter may have some difficulty meeting the 56-day time limit, the party ordering the transcript is expected to exercise due diligence to promote and assure the timely filing of the transcript. *See Putnam v. Albee*, 1999 ME 44, ¶¶ 6-9, 726 A.2d 217, 219.

Rule 6(d) relates to retention of the record in the Superior Court for use by the parties in preparing appellate papers or for further trial court use. It consolidates the significantly repetitive provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 74A(c), (d), (e), & (f). Although there is no comparable provision in the criminal rules, subdivision (d) will apply to both criminal and civil cases. In addition to this subdivision, parties may use M.R. App. P. 14(c) to seek adjustment of record transfer requirements.

Rule 6(e) makes provision for special transmission of parts of the original record to the Law Court where such is required for preliminary hearings in the Law Court. This reflects present practice adopted in M.R. Civ. P. 74A(g) and M.R. Crim. P. 39(h).

## **RULE 7. SCHEDULE FOR BRIEFING AND CONSIDERATION**

**(a) Briefing Schedule.** Upon determining that the record on appeal is complete, the Clerk of the Law Court shall promptly send to each counsel of record and each party that is not represented by counsel a written notice stating (1) the dates on which the appellant's brief, the appellee's brief, and the appendix are due to be filed and served on the other parties; and (2) the number of days after the filing of the appellee's brief within which the appellant's reply brief, if any, is due to be filed and served on the other parties. The due dates stated in the notice for briefing, filing the appendix, and consideration are not affected by any later transcript order, procedural motion, or court order unless the Law Court orders otherwise.

**(b) Time for Filing Briefs.**

**(1) Track A Appeals.** In a Track A appeal, the appellant shall file the appellant's brief within 28 days (4 weeks) after the date that the record on appeal is complete. The appellee shall file the appellee's brief within 56 days (8 weeks) after the date that the record on appeal is complete, and the appellant may file a reply brief within 14 days (2 weeks) after the date that the appellee's brief is filed.

An appeal is a Track A appeal if it results from a trial court judgment that:

- (A)** determines jeopardy pursuant to 22 M.R.S. § 4035;
- (B)** terminates parental rights pursuant to 22 M.R.S. § 4055 or 18-C M.R.S. § 9-204;
- (C)** grants a decree of adoption pursuant to 18-C M.R.S. § 9-308;
- (D)** grants, modifies, or denies the termination of, a guardianship of a minor pursuant to 18-C M.R.S. §§ 5-201 to 5-212;
- (E)** grants, modifies, or denies the termination of, a guardianship of an adult pursuant to 18-C M.R.S. §§ 5-301 to 5-319;
- (F)** establishes or changes contact between a parent and child pursuant to 19-A M.R.S. § 1653(2) or (10);
- (G)** establishes, disestablishes, or denies the establishment of, the parentage of a child pursuant to the Maine Parentage Act, 19-A M.R.S. §§ 1831-1939;
- (H)** grants rights of visitation or access to a minor child pursuant to the Grandparents and Great-grandparents Visitation Act, 19-A M.R.S. §§ 1801-1806;
- (I)** orders the involuntary commitment of a person to any institution, hospital, facility, or program listed in 34-B M.R.S. § 3801;
- (J)** orders the involuntary medication or medical treatment of a

person pursuant to 15 M.R.S. §§ 106, 107; 22 M.R.S. § 4071; 34-A M.R.S. § 3049; or 34-B M.R.S. §§ 3864, 3873-A;

**(K)** determines that a criminal defendant is not criminally responsible by reason of insanity in accordance with 17-A M.R.S. § 39;

**(L)** resolves an appeal from the denial of a request made pursuant to the Freedom of Access Act, 1 M.R.S. §§ 400-414;

**(M)** results in a juvenile adjudication or disposition pursuant to 15 M.R.S. §§ 3310 or 3314; or

**(N)** either binds or does not bind a juvenile over for prosecution as an adult pursuant to 15 M.R.S. § 3101(4).

**(2) Track B Appeals.** In an appeal from a trial court judgment that does not fall within Track A, the appellant shall file the appellant's brief within 56 days (8 weeks) after the date that the record on appeal is complete. The appellee shall file the appellee's brief within 105 days (15 weeks) after the date that the record on appeal is complete, and the appellant may file a reply brief within 21 days (3 weeks) after the date that the appellee's brief is filed.

**(3) Extensions of Time.** No extensions of time for filing a brief shall be granted except (A) pursuant to Rule 12A(b)(1)(A), (B) when preparation of the brief requires review of transcripts from more than five days of trial testimony and/or more than 2,000 pages of documentary exhibits first presented to the court from which the appeal is taken, or (C) upon a showing of a significant and unanticipated emergency that prevents a timely filing of a brief.

**(4) Expediting Appeals.** If a party to an appeal wishes to expedite the appeal, that party may file a motion for expedited consideration of the appeal, following the requirements for motion practice contained in Rule 10. The motion shall (A) state the reasons why an expedited appeal is requested; (B) propose a schedule for due dates for filing the briefs and the appendix that allows the non-moving party or parties no less time than the moving party to meet the proposed briefing and appendix filing due dates; and (C) represent that the moving party has contacted the non-moving party or parties, and indicate whether the non-moving party or parties support or oppose the



motion for expedited consideration of the appeal.

**(c) Method of Filing and Serving Briefs.**

**(1)** A brief must be filed electronically, on or before the date on which the brief is due, as provided in Rule 1D(c).

**(2)** Simultaneously with the electronic filing of the brief, the party filing the brief must serve a copy of it on each of the other parties as provided in Rule 1E. A paper copy of the brief served as provided in this paragraph need not have a cover or be bound.

**(3)** The Clerk of the Law Court will review the contents and formatting of the electronically filed brief and will notify the parties via email whether the Clerk approves or rejects the electronically filed brief, along with a description of any deficiencies in the brief. If the Clerk rejects the electronically transmitted version of the brief, the filer must electronically file a corrected version of the brief within 7 days after the Clerk sends the email rejecting the brief. The corrected version must contain the changes necessary to remedy the deficiencies noted by the Clerk but may not contain any other changes from the rejected brief.

**(4)** If the Clerk of the Law Court approves the electronically filed brief, the filer must file, within 7 days after the Clerk's emailed approval, 10 printed copies of the brief and must simultaneously serve one printed copy of the brief on each other party to the appeal.

**(5)** The Clerk of the Law Court may relieve a party of the requirement of filing a pdf version of the brief and require that printed copies of the brief be filed and served on or before the date that the brief is due to be filed electronically.

**(d) Consequence of Failure to File Briefs.** If an appellant fails to comply with this Rule, the Law Court may dismiss the appeal for want of prosecution. If an appellee fails to comply with this Rule, and if oral argument is scheduled, the appellee will not be heard at oral argument except by permission of the Law Court.

**(e) Scheduling of Consideration.** All appeals shall, unless the Law Court otherwise directs, be in order for oral argument or other consideration 21 days after the date on which the appellee’s brief is due to be filed or is filed, whichever is earlier.

### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

Rule 7(a) is amended to (1) make clear that briefs must be served on the same date that they are filed and (2) require the briefing schedule to provide the number of days after the filing of the appellee’s brief within which the appellant’s reply brief must be filed and served, rather than providing a specific date.

Rule 7(c) adopts a new procedure for the filing and serving briefs. The new procedure is intended to ensure that briefs substantially comply with the rules and to make the process for rejecting and replacing briefs quicker, more efficient, and less expensive, mostly by reducing the number of motions to enlarge the time to file documents that are completed at the last minute, removing the need for formal Court orders rejecting briefs, and removing the need to reprint documents that are filed on paper and then rejected.

The new procedure is based on the local rules of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. A party’s brief must be filed and served electronically (and served on paper to an unrepresented party who has not opted in to electronic service) by the due date. The Clerk of the Law Court will then review the brief to ensure that it substantially complies with the applicable rules. If the Clerk rejects a brief, the party must file a corrected version within 7 days. If the Clerk approves a brief, the party must file and serve the required number of paper copies within 7 days after the Clerk’s approval. The Clerk may relieve a party of the requirement to file the brief electronically, and it is expected that the Clerk will do so for any unrepresented party who is unable to file a brief electronically, such as incarcerated parties and parties who do not have access to computers or email.

### **Advisory Committee Note – July 2022**

In addition to minor restyling, Rule 7(b) is amended to replace citations to former Title 18-A with citations to Title 18-C, allow appeals of orders that modify guardianships to qualify as Track A appeals, strike the reference to “de

facto parenthood” because it is already included within the meaning of “parentage,” replace the term “individual” with “person,” correct the short title of the Grandparents and Great-grandparents Visitation Act, clarify that an appeal of an order involuntarily committing a person to any facility listed in 34-B M.R.S. § 1851 qualifies as a Track A appeal, include appeals from judgments ordering involuntary medical treatment, strike the reference to “agency” where the Freedom of Access Act broadly applies to public proceedings held by bodies other than agencies, add statutory citations, and replace the disfavored “et seq.” abbreviation with citations to a range of statutes.

### **Advisory Note – October 2021**

Rule 7(b) is amended to add appeals of bind-over decisions in juvenile criminal matters to the list of appeals subject to expedited briefing and to correct the statutory reference to juvenile adjudication and disposition proceedings.

### **Advisory Note – June 2019**

This amendment, recommended by the Advisory Committee on the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure, adds appeals of a juvenile adjudication or disposition to the list of appeals subject to expedited briefing.

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

The adjustments to Rule 7 follow the editing and internal numbering practices of the rules restyling effort.

The Rule 7 amendments also include a number of substantive changes:

In Rule 7(b)(1), the Track A briefing schedule is expanded to include appeals from any parentage proceeding defined in the Maine Parentage Act at 19-A M.R.S. § 1834. The change extends the Track A coverage to paternity determinations and may also cover a few parental rights determinations not addressed in other parts of the Rule. With this expanded coverage, there is some duplication between subdivision H and other subdivisions in Track A to assure that most matters directly impacting the interests of minor children are covered in Track A.

In Rule 7(b)(1)(F), the Track A briefing schedule is also expanded to include the denial of a termination of an adult guardianship.

Each category in Track A, set forth in Rule 7(b)(1), is given a letter designation, and the time for filing reply briefs is extended from 10 to 14 days to follow the timing practice of using 7-day increments.

In Rule 7(b)(2), for Track B appeals, the briefing schedule is not changed except that the time for filing a reply brief for Track B appeals is extended from 2 weeks to 3 weeks after filing of the appellee's brief.

In Rule 7(b)(3)(B), a new category for appeals with extra large trial court records is added to the grounds that may support the granting of an extension of time to file briefs. The extra large record must have been created in the court from which the appeal is taken, not in a previous proceeding that was reviewed by the court from which the appeal is taken. Previous proceedings with large records that would not justify an extension of time to file a brief would include criminal trial records that were reviewed in a post-conviction review proceeding or administrative appeal records that were reviewed in a Rule 80B or 80C proceeding.

The capacity to file a motion to expedite appeals, Rule 7(b)(4), previously limited to Track B appeals, now extends to all appeals. Allowing any party to an appeal to file a motion to expedite the appeal. In addition, the draft rule adds specific standards for filing and consideration of a motion to expedite an appeal.

Rule 7(c) addressing printed and electronic copies of briefs is moved to become restyled Rule 7A(i), placing it more appropriately in the Rule addressing the form of briefs.

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## **[Advisory Notes to Rule 7 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

### **Advisory Note – June 2014**

The amendment to Rule 7(b) establishes Track A and Track B appeals, defines the matters that are to be placed on Track A, establishes the time for

briefing in appeals on each track, and authorizes motions to expedite an appeal that has been placed on Track B.

### **Advisory Note – October 2012**

The amendment [to Rule 7(b)] returns the time limit for an appellant to file a reply brief to 14 days after the filing of the appellee’s brief. This time limit applied for the first eight years of operation of this Rule and is consistent with Rule 7(e), specifying that any appeal is in order for consideration 14 days after the appellee’s brief is filed or is due to be filed, whichever is earlier. The 2009 amendment had created confusion and uncertainty as to when an appeal was in order for Law Court consideration in those instances when an appellee’s brief was filed in advance of its filing time limit.

### **Advisory Note – July 2012**

Rule 7(b) is amended to clarify that the indicated time for preparing all briefs runs from the date that the record on appeal is complete, and to notify the parties that the specific filing dates will be listed on the written notice sent by the Clerk of the Law Court.

Rule 7(c)(1) is amended to clarify that printed copies of briefs are what is required. Rule 7(c)(2) is adopted to encourage parties to file an electronic copy of each brief in addition to the required printed copies. The electronic copy is due on the same date as the printed copies, but only receipt of printed copies is considered in determining compliance with the filing deadlines. The rule permits the Clerk of the Law Court, for good cause, to relieve a party of any of the requirements of paragraph 2, including the requirement that the copy be in .pdf format. Good cause might include a party’s technical inability to produce a .pdf copy of the brief.

### **Advisory Note – November 2011**

The amendment to Rule 7(b) changes the start of the running of the briefing schedule from the date on which the record is filed in the Law Court, a date that may not be apparent to the parties, to the date stated in the written notice sent to the parties to the appeal by the Clerk of the Law Court indicating that the record on appeal is complete.

## **Advisory Note – November 2011**

Rule 7(a) is amended to (1) establish the completion of the record as the trigger for issuing the briefing schedule, and (2) clarify that once the briefing schedule issues, the dates in it are firm and are not automatically changed by later filings. The reference to completion of the record replaces language stating that the schedule would be issued upon “docketing of the reporter’s transcript and the trial court clerk’s record.” That language was incomplete because there are often multiple transcripts or a transcript and a statement in lieu of a transcript, and there may be alternatives to the clerk’s record.

The amendment also adds a sentence providing that a briefing schedule is not affected by a later transcript order, to clarify that once the record is deemed complete, later additions to, or efforts to add to, the record on appeal do not affect the due dates for briefs and the appendix unless the Court otherwise indicates. In the past, some parties have assumed that when they order a new transcript, it means that the record is no longer complete and that the briefing schedule is no longer valid. Because the rules do not permit later additions to the record without leave of court, any untimely transcript order form does not affect the progress of the appeal absent Court order.

## **Advisory Notes – July 9, 2009**

The amendments to Rule 7(a) recognize that many appeals involve one or more unrepresented parties by clarifying language to be consistent with established practice that all parties, not just “counsel,” receive notices. The amendments also recognize that Law Court scheduling is no longer tied to terms. Further, with the Court’s current workload, it is no longer possible to accurately identify the month in which an appeal may be considered.

The amendment to Rule 7(b) significantly changes briefing schedule practice to (1) extend by three weeks the time to plan, prepare and file the appellant’s brief and the appellee’s brief; (2) identify a specific date, 105 days (15 weeks) following filing of the record when an appellee’s brief is due, and another specific date, 14 days (2 weeks) after the appellee’s brief is due for the filing any reply brief; and (3) limit the consideration of motions to extend the time for filing a brief to those few situations when a significant and unanticipated emergency may justify a request for an extension of time.

With the additional three weeks to plan for, prepare and file briefs being allowed to both the appellant and the appellee, the Court will no longer entertain motions to extend time for filing briefs based on poor planning or scheduling, the claimed press of other business or court dates, vacations, school or family events, non-emergency medical procedures and other similar events that now require the Court to consider a very large volume of motions to extend time for filing briefs. It is anticipated that from this point forward, extensions of time to file briefs will be rarely requested and even more rarely granted, and then only in cases of significant and unanticipated emergencies. It would be an unusual case that could demonstrate insufficient opportunity to plan and prepare a brief within the eight week window of time to prepare the appellant's brief and the additional seven week or longer window of time to prepare the appellee's brief. Leaving brief preparation to the last minute will be bad practice, as accommodation of last minute difficulties will be far less likely than in the past.

Specific dates will be identified in the briefing schedule sent by the Clerk of the Law Court. In current practice the time for filing the appellee's brief has been entirely dependent on the time of receipt of the appellant's brief. This made work planning difficult in some busy practices. The change should not result in significant delay in considering most appeals. In recent experience, over 95% of appellants' briefs are filed at or very close to the filing deadline.

### **Advisory Notes – September 10, 2001**

The purpose of this amendment [to Rule 7(b)] is to clarify the briefing schedule and tie it to a specific event, the filing of the record in the Law Court. This is consistent with practice before adoption of these rules and as authorized by former M.R. Civ. P. 75(a).

The amendment to Rule 7(c) clarifies that the copy requirements apply regardless of whether a party is represented or not.

### **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 7 relating to establishing the briefing schedule follows the language of M.R. Civ. P. 74B and 75, and M.R. Crim. P. 39(f) and 39A, combining those two rules regarding the briefing schedule into one.

In subdivision (b), the time for filing briefs is made uniform at 35 days after notice of docketing the record for the appellant's brief and 28 days after service of the appellant's brief for the appellee's brief. The current civil rules provide 40 days for the appellant's brief. The criminal rules provide 30 days for the appellant's brief. Both rules presently provide 30 days for the appellee's brief, that number is being reduced to 28. The 35 day and 28 day figures which are made now uniform for both criminal and civil appeals are intended to adopt the weekly calculation for timing for court unification time period amendments.

Subdivision (c) continues the requirement of filing 10 copies of each brief which presently appear in M.R. Civ. P. 75(b) and M.R. Crim. P. 39A(b).

Subdivision (d) is likewise similar to subdivision (c) of the current counterpart rules.

Subdivision (e) is changed from the current counterparts in M.R. Civ. P. 75 and M.R. Crim. P. 39A to add the words "or other consideration" after the words "for oral argument." This change reflects current practice under which many cases are considered by the Law Court on briefs without oral argument. The reference to "other consideration" reflects consideration on briefs in lieu of oral argument. Thus, under subdivision (e), all appeals may be considered by the Law Court either by oral argument or on briefs at any time 14 days after the date on which the appellee's initial brief is due to be filed or is filed, whichever is earlier.

## **RULE 7A. BRIEFS: FORM AND CONTENT**

**(a) Brief of the Appellant. (1)** The brief of the appellant shall contain, unless otherwise indicated, the following sections under appropriate headings and in the order here indicated:

**(A)** A table of contents, with page references.

**(B)** A table of authorities—listing each case, statute, or other authority cited in the brief—with page references.

**(C)** A short introduction stating the nature of the case. This section is optional.



**(D)** A statement of the facts of the case—including the procedural history—with citations to the pages in the appendix, transcript, or record that support each fact.

**(E)** A statement of the issues presented for review.

**(F)** A summary of the argument. This section is optional.

**(G)** An argument. The argument shall contain the contentions of the appellant with respect to the issues presented and the reasons supporting each contention, with citations to the authorities upon which the appellant relies. The argument for each issue presented shall begin with a statement of the standard(s) of appellate review applicable to that issue.

**(H)** A short conclusion stating the precise relief sought.

**(2)** A brief shall not include:

**(A)** any documents or images that are not a part of the trial court file or the record on appeal;

**(B)** any documents that are, or include, pictures, videos, or other images (i) of persons under 18 years of age, (ii) of adults subject to a guardianship or mental health commitment proceeding, or (iii) that depict nudity or sexual or sexualized acts;

**(C)** except for a brief prepared by the State in a child protective case, any documents or information made confidential by statute or court order, or made “nonpublic” by the Maine Rules of Electronic Court Systems. Documents or information precluded by this section may be included in a brief only with leave of the Court.

**(b) Brief of the Appellee.** The brief of the appellee shall conform to the requirements of subdivision (a) of this Rule, except that a statement of the issues and standards of appellate review or of the facts or procedural history of the case need not be included unless the appellee is dissatisfied with the statements of the appellant.

**(c) Reply Brief.** Any reply brief filed by the appellant must be strictly confined to replying to new facts asserted or arguments raised in the brief of the appellee. No further briefs may be filed except by leave of the Law Court.

**(d) Briefs on Cross-Appeals.** If a cross-appeal is filed, the brief of the second party to the appeal shall contain the issues and argument involved in the cross-appeal as well as the answer to the brief of the appellant.

**(e) Brief of an Amicus Curiae.**

**(1) General.**

**(A)** Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subdivision, or when amicus briefs are invited by a notice from the Law Court, a brief of an amicus curiae may be filed only if accompanied by written consent of all parties or by leave of the Law Court. A motion for leave shall identify the interest of the applicant and shall state the reasons why a brief of an amicus curiae is desirable.

**(B)** An amicus curiae brief shall be filed by the date on which the appellee's brief is due to be filed, unless the Law Court, for good cause shown, grants leave for later filing. Any party may file a reply brief addressing new matter raised by an amicus curiae within 14 days after service of the brief of an amicus curiae or within such other time as the Law Court may specify in granting leave for later filing to the amicus curiae.

**(C)** The motion of an amicus curiae for leave to participate in the oral argument shall be granted only for extraordinary reasons.

**(2) Maine Tort Claims Act.**

**(A)** In any action under the Maine Tort Claims Act, 14 M.R.S. § 8101 et seq., the Attorney General shall have the right to appear before the Law Court by brief and oral argument as an amicus curiae when the Attorney General is not otherwise appearing on behalf of a party to the action.

**(B)** Unless all parties otherwise consent, in any such action when the Attorney General has received notice of appeal as provided in Rule 2A(g)(4), the Attorney General shall file an amicus brief within the time allowed the party

whose position as to affirmance or reversal the brief will support, unless the Law Court for cause shown shall grant leave for later filing. In that event, the Law Court shall specify within what period an opposing party may reply to the Attorney General's brief.

**(f) Length of Briefs; Attachments.**

**(1) Page or Word Limits.** The principal brief of any party and any amicus brief shall not exceed the greater of 40 pages or 10,000 words, and any reply brief allowed by these Rules shall not exceed 15 pages or 4,500 words, without prior approval of the Law Court, which shall be granted only upon a showing of good cause. An appellee's brief that also addresses that appellee's cross-appeal shall not exceed the greater of 50 pages or 13,000 words. An appellant's reply brief that also responds to an appellee's cross-appeal shall not exceed the greater of 30 pages or 9,000 words.

**(2) Attachment.** The principal brief of an appellant or an appellee may include, as an attachment not exceeding 3 pages, copies of documents, photographs, or diagrams that are part of the trial court record and are not prohibited from inclusion in the brief by Rule 7A(a)(2). Any document, photograph, or diagram included as an attachment may be marked to add emphasis.

**(3) Page or Word Limit Calculations.** The cover page, the table of contents, the table of authorities, the certificate of service, and any appendix bound with the appellant's brief are not counted in calculating the page or word limits set in this Rule.

**(g) Form of Briefs.**

**(1) Signature.** At least one paper copy of each party's brief filed with the Law Court shall be signed, in a manner authorized by Rule 1C, by an attorney who prepared the brief, or, if the party or parties, or amicus or amici, filing the brief are unrepresented by counsel, by each party or amicus filing the brief.

**(2) Form and Formatting.** Briefs may be reproduced by standard printing or by any duplicating or copying process capable of producing a clear black image on white paper, with printing on only one side of each page. All

printed matter must appear in at least 14-point font on opaque, unglazed paper, except that footnotes may appear in 11-point font. Pages shall be 8-1/2 x 11 inches with margins of 1 inch on the top, bottom, and each side of the page, and with double spacing between each line of text except for footnotes and block quotations. Briefs must be prepared using a word processor's double space function.

**(3) Page Numbering.** The pages of the brief must be sequentially numbered, beginning with the cover page as page 1 and using only Arabic numerals for page numbers (i.e., 1, 2, 3), including for the table of contents and table of authorities. Any blank pages must also be numbered. The page number may be suppressed and need not appear on the cover page.

**(4) Binding.** Briefs shall be bound on the left-hand margin with comb or spiral binding that permits the pages to lie flat when the document is open.

**(5) Contents of Front Cover.** The front cover of the brief shall contain: (A) the name of the Supreme Judicial Court sitting as the Law Court and the Law Court docket number of the case; (B) the title of the case; (C) the nature of the proceeding before the Law Court (e.g., Appeal; Report; Certified Question) and the name of the court, agency, or other entity from which the appeal is taken or the question is presented; (D) the title of the document (e.g., Brief for Appellant); and (E) the names and addresses of counsel representing the party on whose behalf the document is filed or the name and address of the party filing the brief, if not represented by counsel.

**(6) Color of Front Cover.** The cover of the brief of the appellant shall be blue; that of the appellee, red; that of an intervenor or amicus curiae, green; and that of any reply brief, gray.

**(h) Briefs in an Appeal Involving Multiple Appellants or Appellees.** In an appeal involving more than one appellant or appellee, including consolidated cases, any number of appellants or appellees may join in a brief, and any party may adopt by reference another's brief or any part thereof. Parties may also join in reply briefs. Adoption of a brief or portion thereof may be by letter to the Clerk of the Law Court, with a copy to all other parties, if the adopting party does not otherwise file a brief. A party adopting another's brief or part thereof shall do so on or before the due date for that party's own brief.

**(i) Supplemental Legal Authorities After Briefing.** If important, relevant legal authorities come to a party’s attention after the party’s brief has been filed and before a decision resolving the appeal has been issued, the party may promptly advise the Clerk of the Law Court of such by a letter that sets forth citations to the supplemental authorities. The letter must state the reasons for providing the supplemental authorities and must refer to the pages of the brief or to any points argued orally that the supplemental authorities address. The body of the letter must not exceed 350 words. The party may file the letter using any method permitted by Rule 10(d) of these Rules and must serve a copy of the letter on all other parties by any method permitted by Rule 5 of the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure. Any response must be made promptly and must be similarly limited. The Law Court need not wait for a response.

### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

Several changes are made to Rule 7A. First, headings are added for subdivisions (f) and (f)(1).

Second, a new paragraph (3) is added to subdivision (g) to prescribe the method that parties must use to number the pages of the briefs in order to make navigation of the pdf version of a brief easier. Rule 8(k) is amended simultaneously in a corresponding manner, so that the methods of numbering the pages in the briefs and the appendix are identical.

The difficulty in navigating current pdf versions of briefs was described in a 2017 white paper by the American Bar Association:

A typical [current] example is a brief in which the cover or caption page has no page number, the table of contents and table of authorities have Roman numeral page numbering (i, ii, iii,...), and the body has Arabic numeral page numbering (1, 2, 3,...).

When a brief using this type of pagination is converted to PDF for e-filing, the Arabic page numbers used in the substantive part of the brief do not correlate to the PDF page numbers. For example, a page may be identified in the footer as page “15” but actually be page 21 of the whole document. Page 21 is the page number that will display in the PDF reader and that will be needed to jump to that page, yet page 15 is what it will say in the footer and in

references in the table of contents and authorities. Using a different page number in the footer thus makes it more difficult to navigate within the PDF.

This unnecessary obstacle to internal navigation can be avoided by requiring a single run of pagination for the entire brief. The use of Arabic numbers that begin on the first page of the document and continue until the last page is recommended.

American Bar Association Council of Appellate Lawyers, *The Leap from E-Filing to E-Briefing: Recommendations and Options for Appellate Courts to Improve the Functionality and Readability of E-Briefs* 27 (2017), available at [https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/appellate\\_lawyers/2017\\_cal\\_ebrief\\_report.pdf](https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/appellate_lawyers/2017_cal_ebrief_report.pdf), [<https://perma.cc/32MU-U5R5>] (last visited May 17, 2024).

Some courts permit parties to continue to use Roman and Arabic numerals as long as the page number on each page of the electronic version of the brief matches the page number on the printed version. The new paragraph (3) here does not permit that, however, in order to make both the creation and the navigation of the pdf document more straightforward.

Third, former paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) of subdivision (g) are renumbered as paragraphs (4), (5), and (6); the heading of new paragraph (5), governing the cover, is expanded to indicate that the paragraph governs the contents of the cover; and a heading is added to new paragraph (6), which governs the color of the cover.

Fourth, subdivision (i), which governed the filing of a brief on paper and electronically, is repealed. The provisions of former subdivision (i) are now in Rule 7(c).

Fifth, subdivision (j), governing citation of supplemental authorities, is redesignated as Rule 7A(i).

### **Advisory Committee Note – July 2022**

In addition to minor restyling, Rule 7A(a) is amended to add the option of including a short introduction stating the nature of the case; to require citations

to the pages in the appendix or transcript—or to the record for documents or exhibits that are not included in the appendix—that support each fact in the statement of the facts; to clarify that a summary of the argument is always optional; to eliminate the requirement of including citations to the appendix or record in the argument section; and to require a short conclusion stating the precise relief sought. An introduction, if included, should be a short statement summarizing the procedural posture of the appeal. For example, “This is an appeal from the grant of the insurer’s motion for summary judgment in a slip-and-fall action,” or “This is a theft case in which the defendant appeals from the denial of a motion to suppress statements allegedly obtained in violation of his right against self-incrimination,” or “The mother appeals after the trial court granted the father’s post-divorce motion to amend the divorce judgment to give the father final decision-making authority over medical decisions for the parties’ minor children.”

Rule 7A(g)(1) is amended to allow an unrepresented party, and not just an attorney, to sign a brief “electronically,” and to provide clearer guidance on signatures. The amendment accomplishes this by (1) removing the provisions relating to the effect of a signature and electronic signatures and (2) incorporating by reference new Rule 1C, which governs signatures.

Rule 7A(g)(2) is amended to allow only footnotes to appear in 11-point font and to clarify spacing requirements. The amendment eliminates any ambiguity in the term “double spacing” by providing that briefs must be prepared using a word processor’s double space function, rather than by using a word processor’s “exactly” line spacing function or other point-based line spacing.

Rule 7A(j) is amended to enlarge the period in which a party may alert the Law Court to newly discovered authorities or new developments in the law that came to the party’s attention after briefing. The Rule is further amended to allow a party to electronically file a letter of supplemental authorities and to serve a copy of the letter on other parties by any method provided by Rule 5 of the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure. Additionally, the Rule is amended to require that any response be filed within 7 days and that the Law Court is not required to wait for a response. Although Rule 7A(j) now allows the filing of a letter of supplemental authorities after oral argument, a party may not file such a letter as a form of rebuttal.

## **Advisory Note – October 2021**

Rule 7A(a)(2)(C) is amended to recognize the implementation of an electronic case management and filing system by the Maine Judicial Branch and the adoption of the Maine Rules of Electronic Court Systems.

## **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 7A is a restyling of Rule 9 in the current Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure. This adjustment allows the rules relating to the form and filing of the briefs to appear together in the Appellate Rules. The heading of the rule is amended to clarify that it applies to form and content of briefs, while Rule 7 relates to scheduling and consideration of briefs.

Rule 7A(a)(2) is new and lists specific items that may not be included in a brief or an attachment to a brief. The listing is similar to the list of items that may not be included in an appendix. *See* Rule 8(g)(1)-(3). The listing is designed to protect the privacy interests of minors and persons with mental health issues, and to avoid the potential that publicly available briefs or appendices could cause unnecessary embarrassment to parties, victims, witnesses, or other participants in cases that might make such individuals reluctant to seek the access to justice that the courts provide.

Rule 7A(e), addressing amicus briefs, is amended to clarify that when the Law Court invites amicus briefs on a particular appeal, the filing of an amicus brief does not require approval of the parties to the appeal, or the filing of a motion.

In the editing of what is now Rule 7A, the repetitive page limit statements that appeared with each type of brief addressed in the rules are eliminated and replaced with a single page limit statement that now appears at Rule 7A(f)(1). The Rule is also amended to allow, in Rule 7A(f)(2), an attachment to a brief, not exceeding 3 pages, to include copies of documents, photographs, or diagrams that are part of the trial court record. Those items may be marked to add emphasis, even if the emphasis markings do not appear on the original items in the trial court record.



In a substantive change, the permitted length of briefs, provided in Rule 7A(f)(1), is reduced from 50 pages to 40 pages for principal briefs and from 20 pages to 15 pages for reply briefs. New categories added for (1) an appellee's brief that also addresses that appellee's cross-appeal, with a 50-page limit, and (2) an appellant's reply brief that also replies to an appellee's cross-appeal, with a 30-page limit. The First Circuit Rules, Fed. R. App. P. 37(a)(7)(A), have limits of 30 pages for principal briefs and 15 pages for reply briefs. The First Circuit generally applies the same page size, spacing and 14-point font requirements as are stated in Rule 7A.

The revised Rule also includes, as an alternative to page limits, word limits of 10,000 for principal briefs, 4,500 for reply briefs, 13,000 for appellee's briefs that also argue that appellee's cross-appeal, and 9,000 for appellant's reply briefs that also respond to an appellee's cross-appeal. Longer briefs may be filed with prior approval of the Law Court after filing of a motion demonstrating good cause for having to file a longer brief.

The First Circuit has allowed filing of briefs measured by word limits for several years, with recent changes effective December 1, 2016. *See* Fed. R. App. P. 28.1(e)(2) and 32(a)(7)(B).

Current Rule 7(c) addressing printed and electronic copies of briefs is moved to become Rule 7A(i). Filing of an electronic copy of a party's brief, which is discretionary in current Rule 7(c)(2), is required in the restyled rules. The reference to "native" .pdf is to indicate the .pdf format that allows cut-and-pasting from a .pdf to a Word document. The .pdf documents do not need to indicate an actual signature, which can only be reproduced using the .pdf picture format. As currently, the filing of an electronic copy of a brief does not alter the obligations to file printed copies of the brief.

A provision is added to Rule 7A(g)(1)(A) indicating that an attorney's or party's signature on the brief constitutes a representation that the filing is in good faith and is in compliance with the rules governing briefing, including page and/or word limits and font size. A specific certificate of compliance with the word limits is required only if a brief exceeds the specified page limits. Rule 7A(g)(1)(B) is added allowing, subject to the conditions specified in the Rule, electronic filing of a certificate of signature in place of an actual signature on a copy of a printed brief.

Rule 7A(j) is added, tracking closely Rule 28(j) of the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure. The only difference with the federal rule is that the federal rule (1) allows such filings at any time “after oral argument but before decision” and (2) does not address appeals considered without oral argument. Rule 7A(j) now limits such filings to the time “before” oral argument or before 42 days have passed following the date set for filing the appellee’s brief if a case will be considered on the briefs. Filings after oral argument may occur only if invited by the Court.

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**[Advisory Notes to former Rule 9, now Rule 7A, of Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

**Advisory Note – August 2015**

All references to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated in the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure are updated to refer to the Maine Revised Statutes.

**Advisory Note – October 2014**

Rule 9(f) is amended to omit the requirement that briefs be printed in Bookman font, to change the minimum size of the font from 12-point font to 14-point font, and to standardize formatting.

**Advisory Note - November 2011**

The reference [in Rule 9(a)] to “pages” of the record was an outdated reference from the time when the trial court clerks individually numbered each page of the record before forwarding the record to the Law Court pursuant to M.R. App. P. 6. To ease review of briefs, citations to the record should continue to be as precise as possible. Pursuant to the amendment, citations to the record must indicate the particular document or exhibit referenced, including page numbers when page numbers exist.

### **Advisory Note – November 2011**

Rule 9(h) is adopted to establish the proper procedure when one or more parties to an appeal elect to adopt another party’s argument or brief. The first two sentences of Rule 9(h) are identical to Fed. R. App. P. 28(i). The last two sentences are added to provide a mechanism for adopting another party’s brief when the adopting party is not otherwise filing a brief and to provide the due date for any adoption.

### **Advisory Notes – August 1, 2009**

Rules 9(a) and 9(b) are amended to require that for each issue presented for appeal, the brief also state the standard of appellate review that will be applicable to resolution of each issue. This is to help assure consideration of the proper standard of review for each issue presented on appeal, an area that has been ignored in some brief writing practice. The appellate standard of review for most issues will fall into one of three broad categories: (i) “de novo” review, (ii) “clear error” or “sufficiency of evidence” review, and (iii) “abuse of discretion” or “unreasonable exercise of discretion” review. The law regarding standards of review is addressed in Chapter 4 of *Maine Appellate Practice* (2008).

### **Advisory Notes – September 10, 2001**

The amendments to subdivision (f) add more specification to the printing and type or font size requirements and make clerical corrections to the original Rule. The signing requirement reflects current practice carried over from previously applicable rule requirements. *See* M.R. Civ. P. 11.

### **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 9 tracks very closely the generally comparable provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 75A and M.R. Crim. P. 39B. The key changes from those comparable rules relating to the nature and content of briefs on oral arguments are as follows:

— The reference to an appendix in M.R. Crim. P. 39P(a)(6) is eliminated as the appendix is now governed by M.R. App. P. 8.

— Subdivision (d) of both M.R. Civ. P. 75A and M.R. Crim. P. 39B which relates to reproductions of statutes, rules, regulations, etc. is eliminated. Any supplemental authorities which parties desire to file should be included in a separate supplement, filed with the appendix as specified in M.R. App. P. 8(l).

— A cap of 50 pages is placed on the length of briefs on cross-appeals. M.R. Civ. P. 75A(e) included a 75-page limit. M.R. Crim. P. 39B(e) had no page limit.

— Subdivision (e) relating to briefs of an amicus curiae generally follows the language of M.R. Civ. P. 75A(f). The more expansive language is necessary particularly to accommodate the special provision that needs to be made regarding filing of a brief relating to the Maine Tort Claims Act, which is, of course, unique to civil cases. The more formal approval provisions for filing a civil amicus brief are also included in this rule now applicable to both criminal and civil cases.

— The type or font size requirements addressed in subdivision (f) are designed to achieve clear, easy to read text. Plain roman type or font styles should be used, although italics or boldface may be used for emphasis. Appropriate type styles to use include Bookman, Courier, Geneva, Georgia, or other similar type styles. Type styles such as Arrus, Script, or Times should be avoided.

— Subdivision (g) is added to note, as under present practice, that the pages for the table of contents and table of authorities are not counted in calculating the page limits for the briefs.

## **RULE 8. APPENDIX TO THE BRIEFS**

**(a) By Whom Filed.** In every appeal, the party that files the first notice of appeal shall prepare and file an appendix to the briefs, except that in child protection matters, 22 M.R.S. §§ 4001-4071, the State shall be responsible for preparing and filing the appendix.

**(b) Filing and Service of Appendix.**

**(1)** The party designated by subdivision (a) of this rule shall electronically file the appendix as provided in Rule 1D(c) on or before the following date:

**(A)** If the appeal is in a child protection matter, 14 days before the date on which the appellant's brief is due to be filed electronically;

**(B)** If the appeal is not in a child protection matter and the parties do not agree otherwise, the date on which the appellant's brief is due to be filed electronically; or

**(C)** Any date to which the parties have agreed that falls on or before the date on which the appellee's brief is filed electronically or due to be filed electronically, whichever occurs first.

**(2)** Simultaneously with the electronic filing of the appendix, the party filing the appendix must serve a copy of it on each of the other parties as provided in Rule 1E. A paper copy of the appendix served as provided in this paragraph need not have a cover or be bound.

**(3)** The Clerk of the Law Court will review the contents and formatting of the electronically filed appendix and will notify the parties via email whether the Clerk approves or rejects the electronically filed appendix, along with a description of any deficiencies in the appendix. If the Clerk rejects the electronically filed appendix, the responsible party must electronically file a corrected version of the appendix within 7 days after the Clerk sends the email rejecting the appendix.

**(4)** If the Clerk of the Law Court rejects an appendix and an appellant's brief contains citations to the rejected appendix, the appellant must file, within 7 days after the Clerk sends the email rejecting the appendix, a replacement brief correcting citations to the appendix but making no other changes.

**(5)** If the Clerk of the Law Court approves the electronically transmitted version of the appendix, the party designated in subdivision (a) of this rule must file, within 7 days after the Clerk's emailed approval, eight printed copies of the appendix that conform with the requirements of

subdivision (k) and must simultaneously serve one printed copy of the appendix on each other party to the appeal.

**(6)** The Clerk of the Law Court may relieve a party of the requirement of filing a pdf version of the appendix and require that printed copies of the appendix be filed and served on or before the date that the appendix would be due to be filed electronically.

**(c) Contents, Generally.** The purpose of the appendix is to make available to each Justice of the Court those documents from the record that are essential to the review of the issues on appeal. Duplication must be avoided. No document shall appear in the appendix more than once.

**(d) Contents, Mandatory - ALL APPEALS.** The following documents shall be contained in the appendix in the following order:

**(1)** A table of contents.

**(2)** All docket entries from the proceeding(s) below.

**(3)** Each trial court decision, ruling, or judgment that will be addressed in the appeal, including the original final judgment and any subsequent orders amending the original final judgment.

**(A)** If the decision is in written form, a copy of the decision shall be included;

**(B)** If the decision or judgment includes more than one order or set of findings, a copy of each court action that constitutes the decision or judgment shall be included;

**(C)** If any part of the decision was stated orally on the record, a copy of the transcript of the decision shall be included. When a decision or ruling stated orally on the record was preceded by a colloquy with the court, the colloquy shall be included in the appendix if the colloquy does not exceed 20 pages in the appendix.

(4) The complaint, indictment, information, petition, motion, or post-judgment motion that initiated the proceeding in the trial court and any subsequent amendment to the document that initiated the proceeding.

(5) Any pre-judgment or post-judgment motion or petition that was subject to an order or other action or inaction by the trial court that is at issue in the appeal. If the motion or other request to the trial court was made orally, a transcript of the on-the-record discussion of the motion or other request to the trial court, including the court's ruling, shall be included.

(e) **Contents, Mandatory - SPECIFIC PROCEEDINGS.** Following the contents required by subdivision (d), the appendix shall contain the following contents for specific proceedings:

(1) **Summary Judgment.** If the appeal relates to the entry or denial of a summary judgment, a copy of the parties' statements filed pursuant to M.R. Civ. P. 56(h).

(2) **State and Local Government Administrative Appeals.**

(A) If the appeal addresses a decision of a State or local administrative agency, including a municipality, board, commission, or other administrative body, a copy of the agency's decision, whether written or transcribed.

(B) If the agency decision was based on a municipal ordinance, a State or local regulation, or a Private and Special Law, a copy of the relevant section or sections from that ordinance, regulation, or Private and Special law, shall be included. For appeals from decisions of a municipal agency, a copy of the section or sections of the municipal ordinance that establish the authority of the agency to act on the matter subject to the appeal shall be included. Copies of relevant sections of the Maine Revised Statutes shall not be included.

(3) **Jury Instructions.** If the appeal includes a challenge to a jury instruction or jury instructions, a copy of the transcript of the jury instructions and a copy of any written instructions given to the jury, a copy of the transcript containing the discussion of or objection to the instructions, and copies of any relevant oral or written requests to the trial judge for different instructions than those given to the jury by the trial judge.

**(4) Jury Verdict, Special Verdict Form.** If the appeal is from a judgment entered on the verdict of a jury, and the jury reported its verdict on a written form, a copy of that form and a transcript or copy of the objections to that form, if any.

**(5) Contract, Deed, Lease, Trust, Will, or Insurance Policy.** If the appeal relates to the interpretation or enforcement of a contract, deed, lease, trust, will, or insurance policy: a copy of that document.

**(6) Domestic Relations, Parentage, or Child Protection Matters.** If the appeal is from a decision related to a domestic relations, parentage, or child protection matter: the child support affidavits, if child support is at issue on appeal; the financial statements of the parties, if property distribution or child or spousal support is at issue on appeal; the report of the guardian ad litem, if any, if a parental rights or parentage decision is at issue on appeal.

**(7) Criminal Appeals.** If the appeal is from a decision in a criminal matter: the presentence report, if any, if a sentence is at issue on appeal; the search warrant or arrest warrant and any affidavit in support of issuance of the warrant, if a search warrant or arrest warrant or actions pursuant to a search warrant or arrest warrant are at issue on appeal; and the Attorney General's authorization, if required, for any State appeal brought pursuant to Rule 21.

**(f) Contents, Discretionary.** The following materials from the trial court record may be included in an appendix but are not required:

**(1) Exhibits.** If particular exhibits are essential to the Court's understanding of the issues on appeal, the appendix may include copies of those exhibits. Copies of exhibits, including photographs, maps, charts, or diagrams that were presented in color to the trial court or administrative agency shall be reproduced in color by any means, such as scanning or color printing, that reproduces the exhibit in the appendix to appear as close as possible to the way the exhibit appeared in the trial court record.

**(2) Other Pleadings.** Copies of other pleadings or filings that appear in the trial court record may be included, but only if they are essential to the Court's understanding of the issues on appeal.



**(3) Placement.** Documents from the trial court record, other than those that are designated “mandatory,” that are essential for understanding the specific issues on appeal shall be placed in the appendix following the documents required by Rule 8(d) or (e).

**(g) Exclusions from the Appendix.** The appendix shall not include:

**(1)** any documents or images that are not a part of the trial court file or the record on appeal, other than a supplement of legal authorities authorized in subdivision (n) hereof;

**(2)** any documents that are, or include, pictures, videos, or other images (A) of persons under 18 years of age, (B) of adults subject to a guardianship or mental health commitment proceeding, or (C) that depict nudity or sexual or sexualized acts;

**(3)** except for an appendix prepared by the State in a child protective case, any documents made confidential by statute or court order that are not required to be included in the appendix by subdivisions (d) or (e) hereof; or

**(4)** any portion of the transcript from the trial court other than on the record statements or discussions required to be included in the appendix by subdivisions (d) or (e) hereof.

**(h) Failure to Comply with Rules.** An appendix that (1) fails to include mandatory documents; (2) does not present documents in the required order: first documents required by subdivision (d), then documents required by subdivision (e), then documents, if any, included pursuant to subdivision (f); (3) includes duplicate copies of documents; (4) includes documents or images excluded by subdivision (g); or (5) otherwise is not prepared in compliance with these Rules may be rejected, with the party that prepared the appendix being required to prepare and file a replacement appendix that complies with these Rules or being subject to another appropriate sanction, including dismissal of the appeal.

**(i) Contents, Agreement of the Parties.** The parties shall confer and attempt to reach agreement on the contents of the appendix in compliance with this Rule. If the parties do not agree:

**(1)** No later than 14 days before the appellant’s brief is due to be filed, the appellant shall deliver to the appellee a list of the documents that the appellant proposes to include in the appendix. In child protection cases in which the State is the appellee, the appellant shall deliver to the appellee the list of the documents that the appellant proposes to include in the appendix at least 14 days before the appendix is due to be filed.

**(2)** If the appellee wishes to have additional documents included in the appendix, the appellee must, within 7 days after notice of the appellant’s list of documents, designate additional documents for inclusion in the appendix, and the appellant shall include those documents in the appendix, unless otherwise ordered by the court.

**(j) Content, Costs.** Unless otherwise agreed by the parties, the appellant shall be responsible for the costs of producing the appendix. If the appellee designates documents for inclusion and the appellant concludes that such documents are not essential to understanding of the issues on appeal, the appellant shall include such documents in the appendix, but may seek recovery of the costs for inclusion of such documents after decision on the appeal. Following an appeal in a civil case, any of the costs incurred in the production of the appendix may be taxed to either party by the Law Court pursuant to Rule 13.

**(k) Content; Format.**

**(1) Separate Document.** Except as permitted by paragraph (2) of this subdivision, the appendix must be filed as a separate electronic document and a separately bound paper document with a white cover page designated “Appendix” and carrying the Law Court docket number, case title, and the names and addresses of counsel representing the party or parties filing the document or the name and address of the party or parties filing the document, if not represented by counsel.

**(2) Option for Small Appendices.** If the appendix consists of 20 pages or fewer, not including any title page, the table of contents, or oversize or electronic exhibits, it need not comply with paragraphs (1), (3), (4), or (5) of this subdivision and may be filed with the appellant’s brief as a single electronic and bound document. The pages must be numbered as part of the brief’s page numbering scheme pursuant to Rule 7A(g)(3).

**(3) Binding.** The appendix must be spiral bound or bound by a similar process, such as comb binding, that permits the pages to lie flat when the document is opened. Plastic or metal spikes, staples, or posts may not be used in binding.

**(4) Page numbering.** The pages of the appendix must be sequentially numbered, beginning with the cover page as page 1 and using only Arabic numerals for page numbers (i.e., 1, 2, 3), including for the table of contents. Any blank pages must also be numbered. The page number may be suppressed and need not appear on the cover page.

**(5) Page limit.** No volume of an appendix may exceed 150 sheets of paper printed on both sides, not including the cover, any title page, the table of contents, or any oversize or electronic exhibits, and no appendix shall exceed one volume without prior approval of the Court.

**(6) Printing.** The appendix shall be reproduced by standard printing or by any duplicating or copying process capable of producing a clear black image on white paper. Printing shall be on both sides of the paper. Except for oversize or electronic exhibits, the paper shall be 8-1/2 x 11 inches.

**(7) Oversize and electronic exhibits.** Oversize exhibits—such as plans or maps—and electronic exhibits on a disc, a flash drive, or another medium may be attached to the appendix in any method that permits the appendix to be handled as a bound volume.

**(l) Failure to File an Appendix.** The failure to file an appendix, or the failure to include in the appendix any document required to be included as set out in this Rule, may result in the dismissal of the appeal or other sanction.

**(m) Hearing on the Original Record Without the Necessity of an Appendix.** The Law Court may, on good cause shown in a motion filed prior to the filing deadline for appellant's brief, dispense with the requirement of an appendix and permit appeals to be heard on the original record, with such copies of the record, or relevant parts thereof, as the Law Court may require.

**(n) Supplement of Legal Authorities.** A supplement of legal authorities is not required. The parties may, at their discretion, provide the

Court with a brief supplement, separate from the appendix, containing important, relevant legal authorities such as statutes or court decisions from other jurisdictions. It is not necessary to provide copies of any or all cited authorities. The supplement of legal authorities is not counted in computing the appendix page limit.

### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

Two changes are made to Rule 8. First, subdivision (b), governing filing and service of the appendix, is replaced with a new procedure. The new procedure is intended to ensure that appendices substantially comply with the rules and to make the process for rejecting and replacing appendices quicker, more efficient, and less expensive, mostly by reducing the number of motions to enlarge the time to file documents that are completed at the last minute, removing the need for formal Court orders rejecting appendices, and removing the need to reprint documents that are filed on paper and then rejected.

The new procedure is based on the local rules of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. An appendix must be filed and served electronically (and served on paper to an unrepresented party who has not opted in to electronic service) by the due date. The Clerk of the Law Court will then review the appendix to ensure that it substantially complies with the applicable rules. If the Clerk rejects an appendix, the party filing the appendix must file a corrected version within 7 days. If the Clerk approves an appendix, the party must file and serve the required number of paper copies within 7 days after the Clerk's approval. The Clerk may relieve a party of the requirement to file the appendix electronically, and it is expected that the Clerk will do so for any unrepresented party who is unable to file an appendix electronically, such as incarcerated parties and parties who do not have access to computers or email.

Second, a new paragraph (4) is added to subdivision (k) to prescribe the method that parties must use to number the pages of the appendix in order to make navigation of the pdf version of an appendix easier. Rule 7A(g) is amended simultaneously in a corresponding manner, so that the methods of numbering the pages in the briefs and the appendix are identical. The November 2024 Advisory Committee Note to the amendment to Rule 7A(g) explains the reasons for the changes.

Subdivision (k) is also significantly reorganized, some minor changes are made to existing language, and titles for the paragraphs are added. Subdivision (k)(2) is amended to (1) clarify the option to produce a brief and appendix as a single document where the appendix consists of 20 pages or fewer; (2) prescribe the method of numbering the pages in a combined brief and appendix; and (3) clarify what provisions of subdivision (k) apply to an appendix that is combined with a brief.

### **Advisory Note – June 2018**

When the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure were initially redrafted in the process leading to the 2017 restyling, the specific requirement regarding inclusion of the transcript in the appendix was included in the draft of Rule 8(e)(6). As finally adopted, the restyled Rules, and specifically Rule 8(g)(4), barred inclusion of transcripts in the appendix, except where required by other Rules. The transcript requirement in Rule 8(e)(6) should have been removed to be consistent with the later drafted Rule 8(g)(4). Leaving the transcript requirement in Rule 8(e)(6) was a drafting oversight which is corrected with this amendment. Transcripts of proceedings on appeal must be prepared and included in the record on appeal as required by Rule 5(b)(2), but full transcripts of domestic relations, parentage, or child protection matters should not be included in the appendix.

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Despite its relatively explicit language, compliance with the requirements in Rule 8, by the bar and by unrepresented litigants, has been less than ideal. [See *Hall v. Camden Hills Farm By The Sea, LLC*, 2017 ME 150, ¶¶ 12-20, 167 A.3d 557.] Repeated problems have been observed in (1) failure to include in the appendix documents that are required to be included by current Rule subdivisions 8(g) and 8(h); (2) failure to place documents included in the appendix in the order specified by current Rule subdivisions 8(c)(5) and 8(g); and (3) inclusion of duplicates of documents in the appendix, despite the explicit prohibition in current Rule 8(c)(4) that “[no] document shall appear in the appendix more than once.”

To address these problems, Rule 8 is reorganized to place these explicit directions earlier and more prominently in the Rule. What were formerly Rule 8(g) and 8(h) are now Rule 8(d) and 8(e). In addition, practitioners may

anticipate that the explicit directions in Rule 8 will be more rigorously enforced than in the past, with failure to comply with the Rule more likely to lead to a rejection of the appendix and a requirement that a new appendix be prepared or another sanction, including dismissal of the appeal, being imposed.

In addition to this reorganization and to minor editing to accomplish the objectives of restyling, Rule 8(g) is adopted to explicitly list items that may not be included in the appendix. The listed exclusions include any images of persons under 18 years of age, images of adults subject to guardianship or mental health commitment proceedings, and images that depict nudity or sexual or sexualized acts, and, except for child protective cases, any documents deemed confidential by statute or court order, except documents that are subject to the mandatory inclusion requirements of Rule 8(d) and 8(e). Because Rule 8(d) and 8(e) speak primarily to pleadings, docket entries, court orders, and the like, it would be rare for a document made confidential by statute or court order to be subject to mandatory inclusion in an appendix.

The exclusions also extend to transcripts or portions of transcripts, other than portions of transcripts included as mandatory items by Rule 8(d) and 8(e). The mandatory items have been expanded to include dialogue between the trial court and the parties that precedes a court ruling, order, or decision that is at issue on appeal. Any relevant portion of a transcript may, of course, be cited and, if particularly important, quoted in a party's brief. With filing of electronic copies of transcripts, transcripts are available for review by any Justice. All items excluded from the appendix, including print copies of transcripts, do remain part of the record and are available for Law Court review on appeal.

In other changes, the reference to "Family matters" in former Rule 8(h)(6), is expanded in restyled Rule 8(e)(6) to include domestic relations, parentage, and child protection matters. Further, the mandatory items that must be included in the appendix are expanded to include pre- or post-judgment motions that are at issue on appeal; wills, deeds, leases, trusts, or insurance policies that are at issue on appeal; and several items related to criminal appeals.

The listing of discretionary items that may be included in an appendix, if essential to the understanding of the issues on appeal, is clarified. Particularly, Rule 8(f)(1) is amended to require that copies of exhibits, including photographs, maps, charts, or diagrams that were presented in color to the trial

court or administrative agency shall be reproduced in color by any means, such as scanning or color printing, that reproduces the exhibit in the appendix to appear as close as possible to the way the exhibit appears in the trial court record. This change should end past practice of including poor quality, copy machine reproduced black and white copies of color photos in the appendix.

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## **[Advisory Notes to Rule 8 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

### **Advisory Note - July 2012**

Rule 8(f) is amended in two respects. First, the meaning of “page” is clarified. As the rule exists, there is confusion over whether the limit of “150 pages printed on both sides” means 75 sheets of paper printed on both sides of the paper for a total of 150 numbered pages, or 150 sheets of paper printed on both sides of the paper for a total of 300 numbered pages. The amendment clarifies that the limit is for 150 sheets of paper printed on both sides of the paper, for a total of 300 numbered pages. A “page” is one side of the paper, and each side of the paper should therefore be numbered.

Second, the rule now specifically permits what has been a common practice: attaching oversized exhibits and electronic storage media to the appendix. The Court encourages inclusion in the appendix of important maps, plans, and other oversized exhibits, as well as important electronic exhibits such as audio or video recordings. Like with paper exhibits, oversized and electronic exhibits should be included in the appendix only if they are important to an issue on appeal, and should be included in the table of contents.

### **Advisory Notes - July 1, 2010**

Rule 8(b)(1) is changed to allow the parties to agree that the appendix will be filed later than the due date set by the rule. The court does not need the appendix until the appeal is ready for consideration on the briefs or for oral argument. If each appellee does not object to receiving the appendix closer to the date the appellee’s brief is due, then there is no reason to require permission from, or even notice to, the Law Court to enlarge the time for the filing of the appendix. However, the appendix must be filed no later than the date that the appellee’s brief is filed or is due to be filed, whichever occurs first.

The appendix must be filed even if the appellee's brief is not filed by its due date.

### **Advisory Notes – August 1, 2009**

Rule 8 is amended in several respects to clarify current practice regarding preparation and filing of the appendix. In Rule 8(a) and at other points references to the Department of Human Services are replaced with references to the State. State responsibility for preparation of the appendix in child protective actions is limited to those cases in which the State initiated the action. It does not apply to actions initiated by private parties in the Probate Courts.

Rule 8(b)(1) is amended to change the time for filing the appendix from the present 14 days before the appellee's brief is due to 14 days after the appellant's brief is due. The appellant's brief is due at a time certain, 56 days (8 weeks) after the filing of the record. This change makes the appendix due at a time certain, 70 days (10 weeks) after the filing of the record. The Court's schedule for filing briefs and appendices provided to each party in each case, will indicate specific dates for filing of the appellant's brief, the appendix, and the appellee's brief as a result of the changes adopted in this rules amendment order. If the time for filing the appellant's brief is extended, the time for filing the appendix will be similarly extended.

Rule 8(c)(3) is amended to clarify that documents that are not mandatory pursuant to Rules 8(g) and 8(h) should be placed in the appendix following the mandatory documents.

Rule 8(c)(5) is adopted to specify areas where, in the past, there has been a significant lack of compliance with the appendix rules and to caution that such lack of compliance, in the future, is more likely to invite sanctions. Sanctions may range from being required to redo the appendix in proper form to dismissal of the appeal. The areas in which there has been a significant lack of compliance with the rules in past practice include: failure to include within the appendix those documents designated as mandatory by Rules 8(g) and 8(h); failure to present the mandatory documents in the required order in the appendix; and excessive duplication of documents in the appendix despite the directive of Rule 8(c)(4) that duplication of documents should be avoided. After a document appears in the appendix once, future places where that document



should appear should include only a one page cross-reference to the document at the point where it originally appears.

There has been a significant practice of filing appendices with documents organized in chronological order from the first documents that appear in the record to the most recent documents that appear in the record. This is improper under rules that have been in effect since 2001. All appendices should include documents in the following order: (1) a table of contents; (2) the trial court docket entries, including all docket entries if the matter was transferred from the District Court to the Superior Court or was subject to a venue transfer from one court to another court; (3) the judgment or judgments and court orders that will be addressed in the appeal, including the final judgment; (for example, if a ruling on a motion to suppress is subject to challenge, the court order addressing the motion to suppress must be included and also the final judgment must be included), (4) the charging document or complaint which initiated the action and, if the complaint was amended, a copy of the amended complaint that served as the basis for the judgment. Following these documents should be any documents that are mandatory pursuant to Rule 8(h).

Rule 8(e) is amended to clarify that an appellant is entitled to request that an appellee pay for part of the cost of preparing an appendix only if the documents that the appellee seeks to include, and that the appellant believes are unnecessary, are not mandatory documents.

Rule 8(f) is amended, in a manner similar to a recent rules amendment adopted by the First Circuit Court of Appeals, to require that the appendix be printed on both sides of each page. With this change, the size of the appendix is limited to one volume not exceeding 150 pages printed on both sides, unless the Court approves a larger number of pages. The actual amount of printed material that may appear in the appendix (presently 300 pages of printing) is not changed, because printing may now appear on both sides of 150 pages. The amendment also clarifies that use of staples is not appropriate for binding an appendix.

Rule 8(g)(3) is amended to clarify that in the appendix, following the docket entries, each trial court judgment, order, or decision that will be addressed in the appeal, including the final judgment, must appear.

Rule 8(h)(2) is amended to add a requirement that for appeals from municipal agency decisions, the appendix must include a copy of those sections of the municipal ordinance authorizing the action of the municipal agency from which the appeal is taken. Entire volumes of municipal ordinances should not be included. Only those sections of the ordinance related to the issues on appeal and the municipal agency's authority to act on the matter should be included. This is to assure that the Court has available the authorizing ordinance to determine, for example, whether the agency should have considered the matter de novo or as an appellate body, and whether the agency had jurisdiction to hear the matter presented to it.

Rule 8(h)(7) is amended to remove the requirement that the appellant file with the Court an additional copy of the transcript of any proceeding, beyond the copy that has already been provided to the court by the court reporter. As amended, Rule 8(h)(7) notes that the portions of transcripts included in the appendix should include only those limited and focused portions of the transcript that are necessary to a full understanding of the issues on appeal.

### **Advisory Notes – September 10, 2001**

The amendment to subdivision (f) clarifies that printing shall only be on one side of each page.

The amendment changes in Rule 8(h)(7) are to remove the requirement that the appellant provide an original transcript to the Court. The original is separately filed by the court reporter pursuant to Rule 6(c). The appellant remains responsible for filing one complete copy of the transcript or transcripts. Unless the transcript is very brief, it should not be included in full in the appendix. The appendix should include only those limited and focused portions of the transcript that are necessary to a full understanding of the issues on appeal.

### **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

The rule regarding the appendix to the briefs is significantly rewritten and intended to change current practice. Thus, it is significantly different from M.R. Civ. P. 74C. Other than a brief reference to an appendix in M.R. Crim. P. 39B(a)(6), there is no counterpart provision in the current criminal rules. The

terms of Rule 8 are self-explanatory. It makes significant change from current practice because of dissatisfaction with the current practice which frequently results in necessary materials not being in the appendix and thus available to the justices of the Law Court and in appendixes which, while lacking important materials, are sometimes disorganized and over-inclusive. Key features of the revised rule:

— Makes certain contents mandatory and requires that those portions of the appendix that are mandatory for all cases appear in a certain order in the appendix.

— Specifies that 8 copies of the appendix are to be prepared and filed, such that one copy will be available to each justice.

— Changes the time for filing the appendix to 14 days before the date on which the appellee's brief is due to be filed. This is later than the current practice which requires filing contemporaneously with the appellant's brief. For Department of Human Services Child Protective cases, the appendix must be filed 14 days before the appellant's brief is due. This difference reflects a request by the Attorney General's Office and recognizes the differing nature of child protective cases, where DHS, as the appellee, must prepare the appendix.

— Limits the length of the appendix to 150 pages for each volume and no more than 2 volumes (i.e. 300 pages) without prior approval of the Law Court).

— Authorizes a separate supplement of legal authorities which does not count towards the appendix page limit.

The rule continues the present practice under M.R. Civ. P. 74C(f) which allows hearing on the original record without the necessity of an appendix where the Law Court allows such on demonstration of good cause. This provision, in subdivision (k) of Rule 8, applies to both criminal and civil cases.

**RULE 9. [RESERVED]**  
[Moved to become Rule 7A.]

## **RULE 10. MOTIONS AND OTHER PAPERS IN THE LAW COURT**

### **(a) Motions.**

**(1) General Requirements.** Unless another form is prescribed by these Rules, an application to the Law Court for an order or other relief shall be by motion, shall state with particularity the grounds therefor, and shall set forth the order or relief sought, and shall be signed in a manner authorized by Rule 1C. Supporting papers shall be served and filed with the motion. Motions and supporting papers shall be typewritten and shall conform to Rule 1D(d).

**(2) Notification; Disclosure of Opponent's Position.** A motion must state

**(A)** that the movant has notified opposing counsel and unrepresented parties, including any incarcerated unrepresented parties, or why the movant was unable to do so;

**(B)** opposing counsel's and unrepresented parties' positions on the relief requested; and

**(C)** whether any opposing counsel or unrepresented party intends to file a response to the motion.

**(3) Notification of Party by Counsel; Indication of Notification.** Any motion filed by counsel representing a party in an appeal that seeks an extension of time or a delay of more than 7 days or that seeks a continuance of any scheduled hearing, oral argument, or other court proceeding, shall indicate that the party represented by counsel filing the motion has been notified of the filing of the motion, and in fact the party represented by counsel shall be notified by counsel of the filing of the motion.

**(4) Emergency Motions.** A motion seeking emergency or expedited relief must

**(A)** be preceded by as much advance notice of the intent to file the motion as possible to the clerk, other counsel, and other unrepresented parties;

**(B)** be labeled "Emergency Motion";

**(C)** if filed electronically contain the words “Emergency Motion” in the subject line of the email;

**(D)** state the nature of the emergency and the harm that the movant will suffer if the motion is not granted; and

**(E)** state the date by which the movant believes the Law Court must act.

**(5) Motions for Reconsideration of Orders.** A motion for reconsideration of an order of the Law Court, or of a single justice acting on behalf of the Court pursuant to subsection (4) above, shall not be filed except to bring to the Court’s attention an error, omission, or new material that could not previously have been presented. A motion to reconsider an order that dismisses or otherwise disposes of an appeal shall be filed with the Clerk of the Law Court within 14 days after the date of the order. No response to a motion for reconsideration of an order shall be filed unless requested by the Law Court.

**(b) Action on Motions.** The Chief Justice, or another Justice designated by the Chief Justice, may act on motions on behalf of the Court, or may refer motions to the entire Court. All motions will be acted on without oral argument unless otherwise ordered. Motions may be acted upon at any time, without waiting for a response thereto. Motions will not necessarily be granted even though assented to by other parties.

**(c) Responses.** Any party that plans to file a response to a motion shall do so within 14 days after the motion is filed. The Law Court may shorten or extend the time for responding to any motion and may act on a motion before receiving any response. Any supporting papers shall be served and filed with the response. Responses and supporting papers shall be typewritten and shall conform to Rule 1D(d).

### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

This amendment makes seven changes to Rule 10. First, it adds a provision, as subdivision (a)(2), requiring a movant to notify opposing counsel and parties of the motion prior to filing the motion and requiring the motion to (A) either certify that the movant has done so or state why the movant was

unable to do so, (B) state the other parties' positions on the motion, and (C) state whether any other party intends to file a response. An opposing party's incarceration is not, by itself, a sufficient justification for failing to notify the opposing party or seek the party's position on the motion. This provision will increase efficiency in the Court's handling of motions.

Second, the amendment adds a provision, as subdivision (a)(4), providing specific requirements for emergency motions. Although emergency motions in the Law Court are rare, the new provision will provide guidance to parties and to the Clerk of the Law Court on how to handle them when they are made.

Third, in subdivision (c), the amendment extends the time for responses to motions from 7 to 14 days. When motions are served by mail, the 7-day period is insufficient to allow a party to receive a motion by mail, draft a response, and mail the response Clerk of the Law Court. Although electronic filing and service of motions will mitigate that problem, the extension of the time for response applies to all motions, rather than just for motions served by mail, for the sake of simplicity. The existing provision that the Court may act on a motion without waiting for a response remains, and therefore the additional time for responses to motions will not significantly delay any appeal.

Fourth, the amendment deletes the requirement, previously appearing as subdivision (b), for a certificate of service in a motion. The requirement is replaced by Rule 1D(e), which requires that a motion contain some indication, but not necessarily a formal certificate of service, that it was served on other parties.

Fifth, the amendment repeals subdivision (d), which governed the form of motions and the number of copies required to be filed. Provisions governing the form of motions are now contained in Rule 1D(d), and filing requirements are contained in Rule 1D(a).

Sixth, subdivision (a)(5), governing motions for reconsideration of orders of the Law Court, is adopted. This new provision is modeled on M.R. Civ. P. 7(b)(5). Motions for reconsideration of decisions of the Law Court continue to be governed by Rule 14(b), as amended. This change coincides with amendments to Rule 1B clarifying the distinction between "decisions" and "orders" of the Law Court. Prior to these amendments, Rule 14(b) could have

been understood to govern motions for reconsideration of orders of the Law Court, but contained procedural requirements intended to apply to motions for reconsideration of decisions of the Law Court. New Rule 10(a)(5) clarifies the procedure for seeking reconsideration of orders of the Law Court in the narrow circumstances permitted by the Rule. Orders issued by the Clerk of the Law Court are not governed by this rule but are governed by Rule 12A(b), which provides that certain orders of the Clerk are subject to review by a single justice.

Seventh, the amendment reorganizes and renumbers some of the provisions.

### **Advisory Committee Note – July 2022**

Rule 10 is amended to clarify that motions filed in the Law Court must be signed and that service must be by a method permitted by Rule 5 of the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure.

Rule 10 is further amended to remove the provision permitting quotations to appear in 11-point font. As amended, the Rule requires all typed matter other than footnotes to appear in at least 14-point font.

Rule 10 is further amended to permit electronic filing of motions by transmitting a .pdf version of the motion to the Clerk of the Law Court in the manner prescribed by the Clerk in the notice of docketing in the Law Court that the Clerk issues pursuant to Rule 3(a)(2). Unlike filing of electronic copies of briefs under Rule 7A(i)(2), electronic filing of motions pursuant to Rule 10, as amended, is optional and, if used, replaces rather than supplements traditional paper filing.

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 10 relating to filing of motions and other papers in the Law Court other than briefs and appendices is subject to only minor editing except for one substantive change. Rule 10(a)(2) is adopted to require that any motion filed by counsel representing a party that seeks an extension of time or a delay of more than 7 days or seeks a continuance of a scheduled hearing, oral argument, or other proceeding must be noticed to the party that counsel represents. The proposed amendment is designed to eliminate or reduce opportunities for

counsel to place blame for delays that they themselves have sought onto either the Court or other parties.

As with briefs, the amended Rule 10(d) requires that the text of motions, other than footnotes or quotations, must be in 14-point font. This is consistent with First Circuit practice.

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**[Advisory Notes to Rule 10 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

**Advisory Note – July 1, 2010**

Rule 10 is amended to reflect practical experience of the Court in the nine years since the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure took effect. The rule is changed substantially to: (1) remove the distinction between procedural and substantive motions; (2) require that every motion be accompanied by a certificate that the motion was served on the other parties; and (3) clarify the required format of motions and oppositions. The distinction between procedural and substantive motions is removed because it created confusion in practice, and frequently resulted in the incorrect number of copies of motions and responses being filed. Note also that motions for reconsideration of Law Court decisions are not governed by Rule 10; they are governed by M.R. App. P. 14(b).

The changes to Rule 10 are listed below:

The language in M.R. App. P. 10(a) regarding responses to motions is removed from this subdivision and placed in subdivision (c) of this rule.

Former subdivision 10(b) dealing with procedural motions is replaced with a new subdivision (b) which requires that every motion be served on the other parties and accompanied by a certificate of service on the other parties. Motions filed without a certificate of service may be returned to the party filing the motion.



Former subdivision 10(c) dealing with substantive motions is replaced with a new subdivision (c) which sets the time and requirements for responses to motions.

Subdivision 10(d) is changed to: (1) apply to motions, responses, and other papers filed with the Law Court; (2) clarify that motions need not be bound along the entire left-hand side of the paper, but need only be stapled in the upper-left corner; (3) require the original and one copy be filed for every motion and response; and (4) provide that the filing party shall provide any additional copies to the Court as requested by the Clerk of the Law Court. The Court may request that the filing party file additional copies when it determines that the motion will be considered by the entire Court.

### **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 10(a) generally tracks the language of M.R. Civ. P. 75B(a) and M.R. Crim. P. 39C(a).

Rule 10(b) generally tracks the language of M.R. Civ. P. 75(B)(b). There is no comparable provision of the criminal rules. However, the distinctions made in the civil rules between motions for procedural orders and motions for substantive relief are continued in the new rule in light of the different manner of address of such motions. Procedural motions are generally addressed by the Chief Justice or a single justice. Substantive motions are generally addressed by the Court.

Rule 10(c), relating to substantive motions, follows M.R. Civ. P. 75B(c) and has no criminal counterpart. Both Rules 10(b) and 10(c) in these rules are applicable to both criminal and civil cases. Motions for reconsideration are not considered motions for substantive relief and are separately addressed by M.R. App. P. 14(b).

Rule 10(d) generally follows the similar language of M.R. Civ. P. 75B(d) and M.R. Crim. P. 39C(b). The requirement that footnotes and quotations appear in 11-point type is taken from the civil rules.

## **RULE 11. CONSIDERATION BY THE LAW COURT**

### **(a) Scheduling of Oral Argument.**

**(1) Scheduling.** If the appeal is set for oral argument, the Clerk of the Law Court shall advise all parties of the time and place at which oral argument will be heard.

**(2) Continuance.** An application for continuance of oral argument must be made by motion filed reasonably in advance of the date fixed for hearing. When a request to continue an oral argument is granted, the Law Court shall have the option of considering the appeal on briefs without oral argument to avoid undue delay in consideration and resolution of the appeal.

**(b) Time Allowed for Argument.** Each side will be allowed up to 15 minutes for argument. The appellant may reserve up to 3 minutes for rebuttal. On motion filed at least 7 days in advance of the date scheduled for oral argument and for good cause shown, the Law Court may allow additional time for argument.

**(c) Order and Content of Argument.** The appellant is entitled to open and conclude the argument.

**(d) Cross-Appeals and Separate Appeals.** A cross-appeal or a separate appeal in the same case shall be argued with the initial appeal at a single hearing, unless the Law Court otherwise directs. If separate parties support the same argument, care shall be taken to avoid duplication of argument at the hearing.

**(e) Nonappearance at Argument.** If an appellant fails to appear for oral argument, the Law Court may dismiss the appeal, or it may hear the argument on behalf of the appellee if present and decide the case on the briefs and the argument heard. If an appellee fails to appear at oral argument, the Law Court may hear argument on behalf of the appellant and decide the case on the briefs and argument heard. If neither party appears, the case will be decided on the briefs unless the Law Court otherwise directs.

**(f) Use of Exhibits at Argument.**

**(1) Disclosure.** Any party planning to use any exhibit or display at oral argument shall notify the other parties to the oral argument and the Clerk of the Law Court of the planned use of the exhibit or display at least one business day prior to the time scheduled for oral argument.

**(2) Display.** Any exhibit or display must be presented in a manner that permits it to be easily seen by each of the Justices without limiting observation of the Court by the public or opposing parties or counsel.

**(3) Removal.** An exhibit or display shall be removed upon completion of the argument for which it is used unless the opposing party requests that the exhibit remain available for use in that party's argument.

**(g) Submission on Briefs.**

**(1)** The Clerk of the Law Court will advise counsel or an unrepresented party when the Law Court has set a case for consideration on briefs without oral argument. Within 7 days after the Clerk has sent this notice of consideration of the case on briefs, a party may file a statement setting forth the reasons why oral argument should be entertained and requesting the same.

**(2)** In an appeal scheduled for oral argument, on motion joined by all parties and for good cause shown, the Law Court may allow the parties to submit the appeal on the briefs without oral argument.

**Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

Rule 11(g)(1) is amended to eliminate the use of the word “decision,” in accordance with the new definition of that term in Rule 1B(f).

**Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 11 is subject to editing for clarification in the restyling process. It adds a sentence in Rule 11(a)(2) that when a continuance of an oral argument

is requested and granted, the Court may reset the appeal for consideration on briefs. This added note reflects current practice of the Court.

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**[Advisory Notes to Rule 11 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

**Advisory Notes – June 1, 2007**

This [amendment to M.R. App. P. 11(b)] changes [the] time for oral argument to 15 minutes for each side, to make oral argument timing similar to that of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. *See* F.R. App. P. 34, Local Rule 34(c)(1). As with current practice, the time allocation is to each side of an appeal. Where more than one party appears for oral argument as an appellant or an appellee, the parties must establish among themselves a fair allocation of the 15 minutes available for argument. The amendment also recognizes that the appellant may reserve up to three minutes for rebuttal.

Rule 11(f) relating to submission on briefs is redesignated as Rule 11(g), and a new Rule 11(f) is adopted to govern use of displays at oral argument. The amendment is intended to promote better planning for use of exhibits or displays at argument by requiring notice of planned use of exhibits or displays and suggesting more careful consideration of whether any exhibit that is used can be viewed by the Court without disrupting the capacity of interested persons to observe the argument. The new M.R. App. P. 11(f)(1) requires that any party planning to use any exhibit or display at oral argument must notify the other parties to the oral argument and the Clerk of the Law Court of the planned use of the exhibit or display at least one business day prior to the time scheduled for oral argument.

M.R. App. P. 11(f)(2) directs that any exhibit or display must be presented in a manner that permits it to be easily seen by each of the Justices without limiting the capacity of other interested persons to observe the proceedings. Any exhibit should have lettering or numbering sufficiently large that it can be easily seen by the Justices on the bench, and exhibits should avoid excessive diagramming that makes them too “busy” or difficult to explain or follow. Once an argument is completed, M.R. App. P. 11(f)(3) requires that an exhibit or display must be removed so it is not visible to the Court unless the opposing

party requests that the exhibit remain available for use in that party's argument.

### **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 11 relating to Law Court consideration essentially adopts the similar provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 75C and M.R. Crim. P. 39D, but the rule recognizes different tracks for oral argument or on briefs consideration. The time for oral argument is changed from 20 minutes to “up to” 20 minutes to allow the potential for more scheduling flexibility. Subdivision [(g)] relating to on briefs consideration is in two paragraphs, the first of which relates to submission on briefs by determination of the Law Court, and the second of which relates to submission on briefs at the request of the parties. The special findings suggested in the current rule regarding either frivolity of appeal or control of the issues by recently decided authority are eliminated. Such findings are not necessary and can be misinterpreted as an implicit adverse comment on the significance of cases submitted for decision on briefs.

### **RULE 12. COMPOSITION, CONCURRENCE, AND SESSIONS OF THE LAW COURT**

#### **(a) Constitution of the Law Court; Concurrence Required.**

**(1)** When sitting as the Law Court to determine questions of law arising in any civil or criminal action or proceeding, the Supreme Judicial Court shall be composed of those Justices then available to sit and qualified to act. When an appeal is in order for conference or oral argument and fewer than three of the Justices are then available and qualified to act, the matter shall stand continued to such time as the Court shall determine.

**(2)** The Court shall hear and determine such questions of law by the concurrence of a majority of the Justices sitting and qualified to act. A qualified Justice may participate in a decision even though not present at oral argument.

**(b) Sessions of the Law Court.** The Supreme Judicial Court sitting as the Law Court shall hold sessions each year at such times and places as shall be determined by the Chief Justice.

**(c) Decisions of the Law Court.** Decisions of the Law Court may be reported by several methods, including a signed opinion, a per curiam opinion, or a memorandum of decision. A memorandum of decision decides an appeal but does not establish precedent and will not be published as an opinion of the Court in the Maine Reporter.

### **Restyling Notes - June 2017**

Rule 12 is subject only to minor editing for clarification and additional internal numbering in the restyling process.

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### **[Advisory Notes to Rule 12 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

#### **Advisory Note - July 2008**

The direction [removed from the rule] that a judgment imposing a life sentence be reversed if three justices concur supporting a reversal was based on a sentence stating a similar requirement that appeared in 15 M.R.S. § 2115 (2007). In 2008, the Legislature amended § 2115 to remove that sentence and eliminate the possibility that a judgment imposing a life sentence could be vacated by a minority vote of the Court. PL 2008, ch 475.

The three justices provision in § 2115 was never intended to require that a judgment be vacated on a minority vote on the seven-member Court. The provision that three votes could vacate a conviction that had resulted in a life sentence was added to the law when the size of the Supreme Judicial Court was reduced from eight members to six members in 1929. Prior to that time, the voting requirements regarding a life sentence were stated in the Revised Statutes of 1916, c. 136, § 28. That section provided, in pertinent part, that on appeal by any person convicted of “any offense for which the punishment is imprisonment for life . . . the concurrence of a majority of the justices shall be necessary to [order a new trial].”

As part of the creation of the statewide Superior Court, P.L. 1929, c. 141 was enacted. Section 1 of chapter 141 reduced the size of the Supreme Judicial Court from eight members to six members. Section 3 amended R.S. 136, § 28 to

provide that in the case of a person convicted of “any offense for which the punishment is imprisonment for life . . . if 3 justices concur, the motion [for a new trial] shall be granted.” Adopting this provision as part of the law reducing the size of the Court from eight members to six members was intended to address situations involving an evenly divided court, not to create the potential that a conviction could be vacated upon the votes of a minority of the justices participating in the decision.

This law remained essentially in the same form, *see* R.S. 1954, c. 148, § 30, until amended into the present § 2115 by P.L. 1965, c. 356, § 63. Throughout all of this time the Supreme Judicial Court included a Chief Justice and five Associate Justices.

In 1976, by enactment of P.L. 1975, c. 623, § 3-A, the size of the Supreme Judicial Court was increased from six to seven members. No change was made in the voting requirements for vacating a judgment that resulted in a life sentence. As a consequence, with seven justices on the Court, it was possible that a vote of a minority of the Court could result in the vacating of a judgment that had led to a life sentence. However, that possibility did not occur in the thirty two years between the 1976 increase in the size of the Court and the 2008 amendment to § 2115.

### **Advisory Notes – August 2004**

The added M.R. App. P. 12(c) addresses the various forms for reporting decisions by the Law Court. A signed opinion is an opinion of the Law Court, including all of the justices who join the opinion, although it is issued by the individual justice named at the start of the opinion. A per curiam opinion is likewise an opinion of all of the justices in the panel who join the opinion, although it is not signed by any particular justice. Both signed opinions and per curiam opinions receive an official citation number, *e.g.*, 2004 ME 108, and become part of the permanent record of decisions of the Law Court, being published on the Judicial Branch website and in print versions of the Maine Reports.

The discussion of a memorandum of decision replaces Administrative Orders issued in 1989. A memorandum of decision decides a case and governs any future proceedings in that case, but it does not establish precedent for other cases and will not be published on the Judicial Branch website or in the Maine

Reports. A memorandum of decision has a separate citation format, *e.g.*, Mem 04-128. However, except where relevant to the history of the particular case addressed by the memorandum of decision, a memorandum of decision has no precedential value and should not be cited as precedent in legal briefs or memoranda or in judicial opinions in unrelated proceedings.

A memorandum of decision may be used to decide cases in which the law governing resolution of the case is clear and no legal principle is being newly established or modified. A memorandum of decision may affirm, vacate or modify the judgment or decision being reviewed. Its function is to provide a succinct explanation of the Law Court's decision to the trial court and the parties to the appeal. The fact that a case merits a memorandum of decision does not suggest that the decision is not important or not relevant to future related proceedings. For example, in the criminal case context, a memorandum decision continues to be highly relevant when, subsequent to the decision, the defendant seeks to collaterally attack the underlying criminal judgment at the state level by way of post-conviction review (15 M.R.S.A. ch. 305-A) or at the federal level by way of habeas corpus (28 U.S.C. § 2254).

### **Advisory Notes - January 1, 2001**

Rule 12(a) relating to the composition of the Law Court and required concurrences when deciding cases is based on M.R. Civ. P. 75D(a). There is no comparable provision in the criminal rules, but the new rule will apply to criminal and civil cases. It reflects current practice in hearing and deciding criminal and civil cases. Additionally, the rule recognizes that a qualified justice may participate in a decision even though not present at oral argument. This practice is anticipated to occur rarely and is consistent with practice in the U.S. Supreme Court and other appellate courts. References to "consideration" are substituted for the current references "oral argument" in M.R. Civ. P. 75D(a). The last sentence requiring that a sentence to life imprisonment must be reversed if 3 justices support reversal, even with a 7 justice court, reflects the statutory requirement in 15 M.R.S.A. § 2115 to that effect.

Rule 12(b) relating to sessions of the Law Court is based on M.R. Civ. P. 75D(b). There is no comparable provision in the criminal rules. The court shall hold sessions for decision-making at times and places determined by the Chief Justice. M.R. Civ. P. 75D(b) required that such determinations of times and places be announced before July 1 of each year. However, with the continuous



operation of the Law Court, requiring any particular deadline for determination of times and places by the Chief Justice appears to serve no purpose.

## **RULE 12A. THE CLERK OF THE LAW COURT**

**(a) Clerk's Office.** The office of the Clerk of the Law Court shall be open and available to receive filings during such hours as the Chief Justice may designate on all days except Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, and such other days as the Chief Justice may designate. The Clerk of the Law Court may not, unless authorized by a Justice of the Law Court, accept filings for other courts or accept paper filings, pleadings, or other documents filed with or left for the Clerk after normal business hours, except when a Justice of the Law Court has explicitly authorized an after-hours paper filing on a specific date. Any paper document filed after hours without explicit authorization shall be date-stamped and deemed to be filed on the next regular business day.

**(b) Clerk's Authority.** The Clerk of the Law Court is authorized to take the following actions for the Court:

**(1)** Grant motions filed pursuant to M.R. App. P. 10 to enlarge the time for the filing of a brief, appendix, petition, or memorandum for up to 7 days.

**(1-A)** With the agreement of the parties, consolidate appeals involving the same parties.

**(2)** Dismiss an appeal, pursuant to M.R. App. P. 7(d), when the appellant has failed to file the required brief within 7 days after expiration of the time specified by M.R. App. P. 7(b).

**(3)** Dismiss sentence review proceedings filed pursuant to M.R. App. P. 20, when the sentence sought to be appealed was less than one year of incarceration, as addressed in 15 M.R.S. § 2151.

**(4)** Reject a brief or appendix for noncompliance with these rules and reset future filing deadlines.

**(5)** After appropriate consideration by the Court, or a panel thereof, enter orders

(A) reflecting the Court’s action on motions for reconsideration pursuant to M.R. App. P. 14(b);

(B) reflecting the Court’s action on petitions to allow full appellate review pursuant to M.R. App. P. 19, 20, or 23; or

(C) inviting, requiring, or permitting further briefing, including supplemental briefs or amicus briefs, in an appeal.

Any order entered by the Clerk of the Law Court, pursuant to paragraphs 1, 1-A, 2, 3, or 4 above may be reviewed by a single justice of the Law Court upon the filing of a motion for review, filed pursuant to M.R. App. P. 10, within 7 days after the entry of the Clerk’s order from which review is sought.

#### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

Rule 12A(a) is amended to remove most of the provisions regarding the filing of documents with the Clerk of the Law Court. Filing of documents is now governed by Rule 1D. The only provisions that remain are those governing the hours that the Clerk’s office must be open to accept paper filings and the effect of a paper filing tendered outside of those authorized hours.

Rule 12A(b) is amended to authorize the Clerk of the Law Court to (1) enlarge the time for petitions and memoranda; (2) reject briefs and appendices for noncompliance with applicable rules; and (3) invite, require, or permit further briefing, including supplemental briefs or amicus briefs, in an appeal. The new actions that the Clerk is authorized to take are intended to make some processes more efficient. Parties retain the ability to challenge some of the Clerk’s actions by filing a motion for review by a single justice.

The rule is also slightly reorganized.

#### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 12A is subject to editing for clarification, including upgraded references to digital transfer devices, in the restyling process. The Clerk’s authority to receive filings is expanded to include electronic and digital content, but only when explicitly authorized or required by the Rules or by an order of a Justice of the Court. For example, Rule 5(b)(2)(B)(iii) allows filing of an

electronic recording in certain circumstances; Rule 6(c)(1) requires filing of an electronic copy of the reporter's transcript; and Rule 7A(i)(2) requires filing of an electronic copy of each brief. The prohibitions on electronic or fax filings in current Rules 12A(3) and (4) are combined into Rule 12A(4).

The Rule 12A amendment includes only one substantive change. That change amends Rule 12A(b)(2) to eliminate the direction to the Clerk of the Law Court to notify an appellant when that appellant's brief has not been timely filed. Instead, the Clerk is directed to dismiss the appeal if the appellant's brief is not filed 7 days after the filing deadline.

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**[Advisory Notes to Rule 12A of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

**Advisory Note - October 2012**

The amendment [to Rule 12A(a)(1)] recognizes the new address for the Law Court Clerk's Office.

**Advisory Note - July 2012**

Rule 12A(a)(4) is amended to be consistent with new rule 7(c)(2). It makes clear that the rules do in places encourage or permit electronic filings, but that electronic filings are never acceptable as substitutes for printed copies. Rule 7(c)(2) requires that any electronic copies be filed by email and replaces the deleted provisions of Rule 12A(a)(4) that allowed the filings by CD and not by electronic transmission of data.

**Advisory Notes - August 1, 2009**

The amendment to Rule 12A(b)(1)(A) authorizes the Clerk of the Law Court to enlarge the time for filing a brief or appendix for up to seven days upon request. The Clerk's authority under this Rule was primarily utilized to extend the time for filing briefs. With the extended briefing schedules and concurrent restrictions on obtaining extensions of time to file briefs adopted in Rule 7(b),

the Clerk's authority to grant extensions for 21 days from filing deadlines for briefs and some motions is eliminated.

### **Advisory Note - January, 2008**

This amendment [to Rule 12A] authorizes the Clerk of the Law Court to sign orders that reflect the Court's actions granting or denying motions for reconsideration and petitions to allow full appellate review of discretionary appeals regarding post-conviction and post-sentencing reviews, sentencing appeals and worker's compensation appeals. The Clerk could only act with Court approval after Court review as authorized by statute or rule.

### **Advisory Notes - July 2006**

Rule 12A is added to the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure to govern operations of the office of the Clerk of the Law Court. M.R. App. P. 12A(a) is developed from similar provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 77 that governs operations of the offices of the clerks of the trial courts. M.R. App. P. 12A(a)(1) is similar to M.R. Civ. P. 77(c). It establishes that all papers required to be filed with the Law Court or any justice of the Law Court must be filed with the Clerk of the Law Court. It then designates the proper office address for filing papers with the Clerk of the Law Court.

Filings using the United States Postal Service should be directed to the post office box. Filings relying on personal delivery or other delivery services should be addressed to the Newbury Street address.

The office of the Clerk of the Law Court is located on the first floor of the new section of the Cumberland County Courthouse. Another place for filing may be designated, but such would occur only in special circumstances based on an order of the Chief Justice. The office of the Clerk of the Law Court is open and available to receive filings during normal business hours as designated by the Chief Justice. Presently those hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., although there may be time during those hours when the office is closed due to shortage of staff. The office is not open on Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays and other days designated by the Chief Justice.

M.R. App. P. 12A(a)(2) addresses after-hours filings and is similar to M.R. Civ. P. 5(g) and 77(a). Essentially, the Clerk of the Law Court and the office of

the Clerk of the Law Court is prohibited from receiving after-hours filings or filings for other courts unless authorized to do so in specific instances by a Justice of the Law Court. Documents filed or attempted to be filed after-hours will be date stamped and deemed to be filed on the next regular business day.

M.R. App. P. 12A(a)(3) addresses fax filings by incorporating M.R. Civ. P. 5(j) by reference. This rule prohibits fax filings except in certain very limited instances. Fax filings are also covered by Administrative Order JB-05-12.

M.R. App. P. 12A(a)(4) prohibits electronic filings. It is similar to M.R. Civ. P. 5(k) incorporating an electronic filing prohibition into the Civil Rules. However, M.R. App. P. 12A(a)(4) then includes a provision, not included in the Civil Rules, that encourages voluntary electronic filing of briefs and appendices. The voluntary electronic filing is encouraged only when a document has been prepared electronically and it is possible for the party filing the document to submit an electronic copy of the document along with the paper copy for use by the Law Court in preparing and reviewing the case. However, even when there is voluntary electronic filing of a copy of a brief or an appendix, this filing is in addition to and not in replacement of the paper copies that are required to be filed by the rules. Compliance with the filing requirements of the rules can only be achieved by filing the requisite numbers of paper copies in the proper form with the Clerk of the Law Court.

M.R. App. 12A(b) is adopted to give the Clerk of the Law Court authority to act for the Court regarding certain routine matters that now must be acted on by a Justice of the Law Court. Subparagraph (b)(1)(A) allows the Clerk to grant extensions or enlargements of time for filing a brief, appendix, memorandum or petition when no party objects to the requested extension and the enlargement of time requested is 21 days or less. Extensions or enlargements of time exceeding 21 days may not be granted. The Clerk of the Law Court does not have authority to extend the time for filing any notice of appeal pursuant to M.R. App. P. 2 or to extend the time specified for filing any motion for reconsideration or other motion governed by M.R. App. P. 14.

M.R. App. P. 12A(b)(1)(B) authorizes the Clerk of the Law Court, with the agreement of the parties, to consolidate appeals involving the same parties.

Subsection (b)(2) authorizes the Clerk of the Law Court to dismiss appeals where an appellant has failed to file the required brief within the time limits specified by M.R. App. P. 7(b) and, additionally, the appellant has not responded, within 10 days, to a notice from the Clerk of the Law Court that the brief has not been timely filed.

Subsection (b)(3) authorizes the Clerk of the Law Court to dismiss sentence review proceedings pursuant to M.R. App. P. 20 when, upon review, it is apparent that the sentence sought to be challenged on appeal is less than one-year of incarceration, the minimum sentence from which a sentence appeal is authorized by 15 M.R.S.A. § 2151.

The concluding paragraph of subsection (b) indicates that any party who seeks to review an order entered by the Clerk of the Law Court in accordance with subsection (b) may request a review of the Clerk of the Law Court's order by a single Justice of the Law Court. Review is allowed only if the party seeking review files the motion pursuant to M.R. App. P. 10(b) within 7 days of the entry of the order of the Clerk of the Law Court from which review is sought.

## **RULE 12B. PUBLIC ACCESS TO PROCEEDINGS AND RECORDS**

**(a) Record on Appeal.** The record on appeal in each case, or any portion of the record on appeal, shall be available for inspection and copying by any person to the same extent as that record was available for inspection and copying in the trial court.

**(b) Law Court File.** The file maintained by the Clerk of the Law Court for each appeal, other than files for appeals from child protection proceedings and other files made confidential by statute, shall be available for public inspection and copying, except that any documents or images that were transmitted to the Law Court by the trial court under seal and any documents providing identifying information regarding parties, witnesses, or jurors shall be available for inspection and copying only to the same extent as in the trial court.

**(c) Briefs.** The briefs filed with the Law Court, other than briefs in appeals from matters listed in subsection (d)(1)-(5) below, shall be available for inspection and copying by any person.

**(d) Appendices.** The appendix shall be available for public inspection and copying, except that the appendix shall not be available for public inspection and copying in the following matters: (1) an appeal from a child protection proceeding; (2) proceedings involving an adoption or guardianship or a petition for adoption or guardianship; (3) juvenile proceedings in which the record is sealed in the trial court; (4) any proceeding in which the care, custody, and support of a minor child is an issue; and (5) any proceeding in which a document or information that is confidential, deemed nonpublic, or was filed under seal in the trial court by statute, court rule, administrative order, or trial court order, is contained in the appendix.

Any brief or appendix filed in a matter listed in this subsection (1)-(5) shall automatically be labeled and filed as “under seal” or “confidential” unless the Chief Justice or other Justice designated to act for the Chief Justice pursuant to Rule 10(a)(4) orders otherwise.

**(e) Oral Arguments.** Oral arguments on the merits of appeals are public proceedings.

**(f) Decisions.** Opinions of the Law Court on appeals and decisions of single Justices of the Law Court are public documents.

### **Advisory Note – October 2021**

Rule 12B(c)-(d) is amended to provide consistency in public access to briefs and appendices filed in matters that are confidential, nonpublic, or filed under seal in the trial court pursuant to statute, administrative order, or rule.

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 12B is subject to minor editing for clarification, with addition of internal numbering, particularly regarding treatment of certain confidential documents, in the restyling process. It includes no substantive changes.

## [Advisory Notes to Rule 12B of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]

### Advisory Notes – July 1, 2010

Rule 12B is adopted to clarify for litigants and the public the extent to which oral arguments are public and records held by the Clerk of the Law Court are available for inspection and copying. Counsel and parties must be aware that filings that the parties make in the Law Court, including copies of any documents that were also filed in the trial court, are generally available to the public without limitation.

Subdivision (a) provides that any materials that are transmitted by the trial court to the Law Court retain their public or confidential status while in the possession of the Law Court.

Subdivision (b) provides that the Law Court file in appeals, other than appeals from child protection proceedings, is available to the public, except that documents transmitted *by the trial court* to the Law Court, and documents identifying and providing personal information about parties and witnesses maintain their public or confidential status in the Law Court. Any document filed with the Law Court by a party is available to the public when it becomes part of the court record and is confidential there. This subdivision is intended to protect from public inspection the docket sheets, transcript order forms, and notices of appeal in cases with statutory confidentiality requirements, including child protection, adoption, and guardianship proceedings; and presentence investigation reports filed as part of Sentence Review Panel appeals; and other documents entitled to statutory confidentiality that are transmitted by the trial court to the Law Court.

Subdivision (c) provides that briefs are available to the public without limitation in appeals other than appeals from child protection proceedings.

Subdivision (d) provides that the appendix in an appeal is available to the public except in adoption, guardianship, child protection, and some juvenile proceedings; in any proceeding involving the care, custody or support of a minor child; and in any appeal in which the appendix contains a document that is confidential as part of the trial court record. An appellant or appellee should conspicuously label the appendix as confidential if it contains a document that



is confidential by law, except in child protection, guardianship, adoption, and juvenile cases, when it is clear from the type of case that the appendix is confidential.

Subdivision (e) states that oral arguments of appeals are public.

Subdivision (f) states that Law Court opinions in appeals and decisions of single justices are public information.

If a party wishes to maintain the confidentiality of information that is otherwise public under this rule, the party may move to seal the information pursuant to Rule 14(c).

The confidentiality of information in a trial court record is determined by applicable statute, rule, or administrative order.

### **RULE 13. COSTS AND INTEREST ON JUDGMENTS IN CIVIL CASES**

**(a) To Whom Costs Are Allowed.** Costs shall be taxed against the unsuccessful party to a civil appeal unless the Law Court otherwise directs. If an appeal in a civil case is dismissed, costs shall be taxed against the appellant unless otherwise agreed by the parties or ordered by the Court. When a judgment is affirmed in part, costs shall be allowed only as ordered by the Law Court.

**(b) Costs in the Law Court.** Costs in the Law Court shall be allowed as follows:

**(1) Briefs.** The actual cost of printing or otherwise reproducing briefs, but not more than \$5.00 per page, for not more than a total of 70 pages for an initial brief and 20 pages for a reply brief.

**(2) The Appendix.** The actual cost of printing or otherwise reproducing the appendix, but not more than \$5.00 per page, for not more than a total of 300 pages (150 sheets of paper, printed on both sides).

**(3) Any Transcripts.** The cost of transcripts made by a reporter may be taxed at the rate actually paid to the reporter, but not exceeding the rate established by order of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court.

**(4) Travel.** Travel and attendance as in the trial court.

**(5) Other Costs.** Other items of costs may be allowed as determined by the provisions of M.R. Civ. P. 54(d)-(g), when such items are required to prosecute or defend the appeal.

**(c) Filing Bill of Costs.** A party that desires such costs to be taxed shall state them in a verified bill of costs, which the party shall file with the Clerk of the Law Court, with proof of service, within 14 days after the issuance of the mandate.

**(d) Clerk to Certify Costs.** On request of the prevailing party the Clerk of the Law Court shall certify in detail to the trial court the amount of costs taxed in the Law Court.

**(e) Interest on Judgments.** When a judgment for money in a civil case is affirmed, whatever interest is allowed by law shall be payable as provided by law. When a judgment is modified or reversed with a direction that a judgment for money be entered in the trial court, the opinion shall contain instructions with respect to allowance of interest if the prevailing party's claim to interest has been brought to the attention of the Law Court by brief or oral argument.

**(f) Sanctions.** If, after a separately filed motion or a notice from the court and a reasonable opportunity to respond, the Law Court determines that an appeal, motion for reconsideration, argument, or other proceeding before it is frivolous, contumacious, or instituted primarily for the purpose of delay, it may award to the opposing parties or their counsel treble costs and reasonable expenses, including attorney fees, caused by such action.

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 13 is subject to editing for clarification and additional separation and internal numbering in the restyling process. Rule 13(b)(1) is amended to limit recoverable costs for briefs to 70 pages for an initial brief and 20 pages for a reply brief. The current Rule 13(b) limits recoverable costs for briefs to a total of 75 pages.

## **[Advisory Notes to Rule 13 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

### **Advisory Note – October 2012**

The amendment [to Rule 13(c)] makes the reference to “a reporter” consistent with the definition in Rule 16(4).

### **Advisory Note – November 2011**

This amendment changes the process for imposition of sanctions, reflecting the evolution of modern practice to allow notice and opportunity to be heard before sanctions are imposed. Thus, Rule 13(f) now provides that a party to the appeal may file a separate motion requesting sanctions, or the court may issue a notice or an order to show cause indicating that the court may consider sanctions, and the party or attorney at whom the motion or notice has been directed will be afforded a reasonable opportunity to respond. The Rule does not specify the method of response, which will be left to the discretion of the Court. When a party requests sanctions, the request for sanctions must be presented by a separate motion. As the Advisory Committee to the changes in the Federal Rules noted regarding 1994 amendments to Fed. R. App. P. 38:

A separately filed motion requesting sanctions constitutes notice. A statement inserted in a party's brief that the party moves for sanctions is not sufficient notice. Requests in briefs for sanctions have become so commonplace that it is unrealistic to expect careful responses to such requests without any indication that the court is actually contemplating such measures. Only a motion, the purpose of which is to request sanctions, is sufficient. If there is no such motion filed, notice must come from the court. The form of notice from the court and of the opportunity for comment purposely are left to the court's discretion.

The Rule is also amended to clarify that it may be applied to conduct occurring at oral argument and to any contumacious conduct.

## Advisory Notes – September 10, 2001

The amendment to subdivision (f) changes the heading to more correctly identify the subject of M.R. App. P. 13(f).

## Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001

Rule 13, which governs award of costs and interest on judgment in civil cases, is identical to present M.R. Civ. P. 76, except that provision for \$2.50 for a second attorney is eliminated.

### **RULE 14. MANDATE; RECONSIDERATION OF DECISIONS; AND SUSPENSION OF THE RULES IN THE LAW COURT**

**(a) Issuance of Mandate.** The mandate of the Law Court, with an opinion or decision resolving any appeal, shall be issued by the Clerk of the Law Court by transmitting an attested copy thereof to the trial court. Copies of the mandate shall be emailed to those parties to the appeal who have provided a proper email address. No paper copy of the mandate will be provided to the parties to the appeal who are represented by counsel. The opinion or decision of the Law Court sent to the parties on the day the opinion or decision is published, with the mandate appearing at the end, shall constitute notice of the mandate, and no further notice shall be provided.

**(1) Criminal Appeals.** The mandate of the Law Court in a criminal appeal shall issue the day that the decision resolving the appeal is published or the first business day thereafter.

**(2) Civil Appeals.** The mandate of the Law Court in a civil appeal involving a child protective matter, a parental rights matter, a guardianship, an adoption, a contempt, or a temporary or permanent injunction shall issue the day that the decision resolving the appeal is published or the first business day thereafter. The mandate of the Law Court in any other civil appeal shall issue 14 days after the date of decision of the Law Court, unless the time is shortened or enlarged by order of the Law Court.

**(3) (A) Stay of the Mandate.** A motion for a stay of the mandate, or for a stay of the effect of a mandate already issued, must be filed with the Clerk of the Law Court within 14 days after the date of the decision. The timely filing

of a motion for reconsideration in a civil appeal, prior to issuance of the mandate, will stay the mandate until disposition of the motion unless otherwise ordered by the Law Court. The issuance of the mandate may be stayed or the effect of a mandate already issued may be stayed on motion for good cause shown, accompanied by an affidavit of the moving party or the moving party's attorney setting forth all relevant facts.

**(B) Law Court Action.** After receipt of a motion for stay of the mandate, the Law Court may act on the motion sua sponte or seek comments from other parties to the appeal. After appropriate consideration, the Law Court may grant or deny the motion, and if the motion is granted in whole or in part, attach such terms and conditions to granting that stay as it deems just.

**(C) Appeals to the United States Supreme Court.** When the issuance of the mandate has been stayed pending a petition to the Supreme Court of the United States for a writ of certiorari, the receipt by the Clerk of the Law Court of an order granting the petition shall be effective to continue the stay until final disposition of the matter by the Supreme Court of the United States.

**(b) Motions for Reconsideration of Decisions.**

**(1) (A)** A motion for reconsideration of any decision of the Law Court, together with the fee specified in the Court Fees Schedule, shall be filed with the Clerk of the Law Court within 14 days after the date of that decision. The motion shall state with particularity the points of law or fact that the moving party asserts the Court has overlooked or misapprehended and shall contain such argument in support of the motion as the moving party desires to present. The motion and any supporting papers shall conform to Rule 1D(d).

**(B)** No response to a motion for reconsideration shall be filed unless requested by the Law Court. The motion is not subject to oral argument except by specific order of the Court.

**(2)** A motion for reconsideration will not be granted unless ordered by a Justice who concurred in the decision and who acts with the concurrence of a majority of the Justices who participated in the original decision and remain available and qualified to act on the motion.

**(3)** If a motion for reconsideration is granted, the Law Court may make a final disposition of the cause without re-argument, may restore it to the calendar for reconsideration, or may make such other orders as are appropriate. Frivolous or repetitive motions for reconsideration may result in the imposition of appropriate sanctions.

**(c) Suspension of Rules.** In the interest of expediting decision upon any matter, or for other good cause shown, the Law Court may modify or suspend any of the requirements or provisions of these Rules, except those addressing filing requirements and time limits in Rules 2A, 2B, 2C, 10(a)(5), and 14(b), on application of a party or on its own motion, and may order proceedings in accordance with its direction.

#### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

Rule 14(a) is amended to clarify that it applies to decisions of the Law Court, in accordance with the new definitions of “decisions” and “orders” of the Law Court in Rule 1B(f) and (g).

Rule 14(b) is similarly amended to clarify that it governs motions for reconsideration of decisions of the Law Court, and the title of Rule 14 is also amended accordingly. Motions for reconsideration of orders of the Law Court are governed by new Rule 10(a)(5). Rule 14(b)(1)(A) is also amended to eliminate the requirement of filing an original and 7 copies of motions for reconsideration of decisions. Consistent with other motions, motions for reconsideration of decisions must conform to Rule 1D(d).

Rule 14(c) is amended to include in the list of time limits that the Law Court may not modify or suspend the 14-day time limit set forth in new Rule 10(a)(5) for motions for reconsideration of dispositive orders.

#### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 14 is amended to add internal separations and numbering consistent with the restyling practice. Consistent with what appears to be current practice, the form for motions for reconsideration must follow the form for other motions filed with the Law Court, as specified in Rule 10(d). The previous Rule had referenced former Rule 9(f), which addressed the form for briefs, including covers.

The mandate rule is also clarified to specify that the mandate in civil cases involving child protective matters, parental rights matters, guardianship, contempt, or temporary or permanent injunctions shall issue promptly after decision. As presently, the mandate in other civil appeals would issue 14 days after decision. The rules are also clarified to indicate that a stay of the mandate or the effect of the mandate may be sought for any further appeals or reconsideration, so that such appeals or reconsideration are not barred if requested within 14 days after the date of the Law Court decision at issue. The copy of the decision provided to the parties constitutes the notice of issuance of the mandate that appears at the end of the Law Court decision. No further notice is provided.

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**[Advisory Notes to Rule 14 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

**Advisory Notes - July 2008**

The amendment to M.R. App. P. 14(b)(1) adds a reference to the already existing requirement of the Court Fees Schedule that a motion for reconsideration be accompanied by a filing fee. The reference is intended to avoid confusion that has resulted in filing motions for reconsideration because the fee payment requirement was not stated in the Rule.

The amendment also clarifies the third sentence by removing the confusing reference to “opinion” and adding the word “asserts” so that the sentence is clearer.

**Advisory Notes - January 1, 2001**

Rule 14(a)(1) relating to issuance of the mandate in criminal cases does not have a comparable provision in the criminal rules. The results of issuance of a mandate are addressed inferentially in M.R. Crim. P. 38(b), but there is no specific direction to issue the mandate promptly after decision at any point in the rules. Thus, Rule 14(a)(1) is a new provision. However, it does reflect current practice where, in criminal cases, the mandate issues promptly after decision.

Rule 14(a)(2) applies to civil cases and is nearly identical to the language in present M.R. Civ. P. 76A(a).

Rule 14(b) governs practice regarding motions for reconsideration. It is based on M.R. Civ. P. 76A(b). There is no comparable provision in the criminal rules. However, subdivision (b) applies to both criminal and civil cases. As a matter of practice, motions for reconsideration are frequently filed in criminal cases. However, they are not presently subject to any particular time limit. Under the new rules, motions for reconsideration in criminal cases would be subject to the same 14-day time limit as currently applied in civil cases.

Rule 14(c) relating to suspension of the rules is nearly identical to M.R. Civ. P. 75A(c). There is no comparable provision in the criminal rules. However, it appears appropriate to apply these provisions to both criminal and civil cases as such application appears to reflect current practice.

### **RULES 15 - 18. [RESERVED]**

[Former Rules 15 and 16 moved to become Rules 1A and 1B.]

## **II. SPECIAL APPEAL PROCEEDINGS**

### **RULE 19. DISCRETIONARY CRIMINAL APPEALS**

**(a) (1) Appeals Covered.** This Rule covers those criminal appeals that are subject to preliminary review and full consideration as a matter of discretion by the Law Court, other than the appeals from sentences of a year or more that are addressed by M.R. App. P. 20.

**(2) Specifically Included Appeals.** The appeals covered by this Rule include:

**(A)** An appeal from a ruling on a motion to correct or reduce a sentence, pursuant to M.R.U. Crim. P. 35(a) or (c), when the appeal is taken by the defendant;

**(B)** An appeal by a person whose probation is revoked, or whose conditions of probation are modified pursuant to 17-A M.R.S. § 1202(2), or whose request for modification is denied pursuant to 17-A M.R.S. § 1202(2);



(C) An appeal by a person whose supervised release is revoked, when the appeal is authorized pursuant to 17-A M.R.S. § 1233;

(D) An appeal by a person determined to have inexcusably failed to comply with a court-imposed deferred disposition requirement and thereafter sentenced, when the appeal is authorized pursuant to 17-A M.R.S. § 1348-C;

(E) An appeal by a person whose administrative release is revoked, when the appeal is authorized pursuant to 17-A M.R.S. § 1349-F;

(F) An appeal from a final judgment in a post-conviction review proceeding pursuant to 15 M.R.S. § 2131(1), when the appeal is taken by the petitioner;

(G) An appeal from a final judgment in an extradition proceeding pursuant to 15 M.R.S. § 210-B(1), when the appeal is taken by the petitioner;

(H) An appeal from an order on a motion to order DNA analysis, pursuant to 15 M.R.S. § 2138(6), when the appeal is taken by the convicted person or by the State;

(I) An appeal from an order on a post-judgment motion seeking a court determination of factual innocence and correction of court records and related criminal justice records or a subsequent vacating of that determination and record correction, pursuant to 15 M.R.S. § 2184(1), when the appeal is taken by the person who filed a motion or on whose behalf the motion was filed; and

(J) An appeal from a final judgment entered under 15 M.R.S. § 2264(5) or (7), pursuant to 15 M.R.S. § 2267(1), when the appeal is taken by a person who filed a motion seeking a court order sealing the person's criminal history record information relating to a qualifying criminal judgment.

**(b) Rules Applicable.** The discretionary appeals covered by this Rule shall proceed in accordance with the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure, subject to the modifications stated in this Rule or as otherwise required by statute.

**(c) Memorandum Required on Appeal.** Within 21 days after the date on which the transcript is filed in the Law Court, or, if no transcript is ordered, within 21 days after filing a notice of appeal, the party filing the appeal shall file with the Clerk of the Law Court 8 copies of a memorandum, with a copy of the decision or order being appealed from attached, giving specific and substantive reasons why the issue or issues identified for prosecution of the appeal warrant the issuance of a certificate of probable cause authorizing consideration of the appeal on the merits by the Law Court. The memorandum shall not exceed 20 pages and shall otherwise conform to the requirements of Rule 7A(g) relating to the form of briefs. On motion and for good cause shown, the Law Court may allow additional time to file a memorandum.

No reply memorandum shall be filed by a party who did not file the appeal.

Until the Law Court rules on the request for a certificate of probable cause, no further briefing pursuant to Rule 7 or 7A shall be submitted and no appendix pursuant to Rule 8 shall be prepared.

**(d) (1) Duty of Reporter to Prepare and File Transcript of Proceeding Subject to Appeal.** Unless the Law Court otherwise directs, within 56 days after the date of the filing of the notice of appeal and transcript order form, the reporter shall prepare and file a transcript of the hearing that is the subject of the appeal, if a hearing on the matter was held and recorded. The transcript shall be filed in accordance with Rule 6(c). Unless the Law Court orders otherwise, or a certificate of probable cause issues, no other transcript of any related proceeding shall be prepared pending ruling on the request for a certificate of probable cause. The hearings for which a transcript shall be prepared pursuant to this subdivision are:

**(A)** For an appeal from a ruling on a motion for correction or reduction of sentence, the hearing, if any, on the motion for correction or reduction of sentence.

**(B)** For an appeal from a ruling on a motion for revocation or modification of probation, the hearing on the motion for revocation or modification of probation.

**(C)** For an appeal from a ruling on a motion for revocation of supervised release, the hearing on the motion for revocation of supervised release.

**(D)** For an appeal from a ruling of inexcusable failure to comply with a court-imposed deferred disposition requirement, the hearing on the motion for termination of the period of deferment or the hearing at the conclusion of the period of deferment.

**(E)** For an appeal from a ruling on a motion for revocation of administrative release, the hearing on the motion for revocation of administrative release.

**(F)** For an appeal from a final judgment in a post-conviction review proceeding, the hearing on the motion for post-conviction relief, if any.

**(G)** For an appeal from a final judgment in an extradition proceeding, no transcript as specified by Rule 19(d)(2).

**(H)** For an appeal from a ruling on a motion to order DNA analysis, the hearing on the motion to order DNA analysis.

**(I) (i)** For an appeal from an order on a post-judgment motion seeking a court determination of factual innocence and correction of the court records and related criminal justice agency records, the hearing on the post-judgment motion.

**(ii)** For an appeal from an order vacating the earlier order certifying a determination of factual innocence and modifying any record correction earlier made, the hearing relating to the alleged fraud or misrepresentation.

**(J)** For an appeal from a final judgment on a motion for special restrictions on dissemination and use of criminal history record information, the hearing on the motion.

**(2) Generally No Duty to Prepare and File Transcript of Extradition Hearings.**

**(A)** No transcript shall be prepared of any hearing on a petition contesting extradition. In lieu of a transcript of hearing, the justice or judge

who heard the petition for extradition shall, within 14 days after the filing of the notice of appeal, prepare and forward to the Clerk of the Law Court written findings of fact upon which the determination of the petition contesting extradition was based.

**(B)** Upon a finding that special circumstances exist, which findings shall be in writing and shall detail the substance of such special circumstances and the necessity for the ordering of a transcript, the trial court, in lieu of preparing findings of fact, may order that a transcript of all or part of the proceedings be prepared and transmitted to the Law Court. The preparation and transmission of such a transcript shall be expedited.

**(3) Compensation for Hearing Transcript.** Compensation for the hearing transcript shall be as provided in Rule 5(b)(1)(B).

**(e) Denial of a Certificate of Probable Cause.** If the Law Court denies a certificate of probable cause, the Clerk of the Law Court shall forthwith send to each party a written notice of that denial.

**(f) Granting of a Certificate of Probable Cause.** If the Law Court issues a certificate of probable cause authorizing consideration of the appeal on the merits, the Clerk of the Law Court shall forthwith notify the parties and the trial court from which the appeal was taken. For purposes of timing and the applicability of the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure, the docketing in the Law Court of an order granting a certificate of probable cause shall be treated in the same manner as the filing of a notice of appeal pursuant to Rule 2A(b)(1). If an appeal is pending pursuant to Rule 2A involving the same criminal judgment, the Rule 19 appeal shall be treated as part of the Rule 2A appeal.

**(g) Additional Transcript Orders.**

**(A)** Within 7 days after the docketing by the Clerk of the Law Court of the order granting the certificate of probable cause, the appellant shall file with the reporter and the Clerk of the Law Court and shall serve on the appellee a transcript order for any other transcripts or portions thereof, not already prepared, that the appellant deems necessary for prosecution of the appeal. Within 7 days after receipt of the appellant's transcript order, the appellee may order additional transcripts or portions thereof in accordance with Rule 5(b)(1)(A).

**(B)** Costs of the transcript shall be paid in accordance with Rule 5(b)(1)(B).

**(C)** If a non-indigent appellant fails to make appropriate arrangements with the reporter for payment of the transcript within 7 days as provided by Rule 5(b)(1)(B), the Clerk of the Law Court shall be notified in accordance with Rule 5(b)(1)(B), and the appeal shall proceed without any additional transcript.

**(h) Clerk's Record.** After docketing of the order granting the certificate of probable cause and notification to the clerk, any further clerk's record shall be filed with the Law Court in the same manner as provided by Rule 6.

**(i) Notice of Schedule for Filing Briefs and the Appendix.** Upon filing of the record, including any additional transcripts, the Clerk of the Law Court shall notify the parties of the schedule for filing briefs in accordance with Rule 7. The appeal shall then proceed as other appeals under the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure.

#### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

Rule 19(c) is amended to require attachment to the memorandum of a copy of the decision or order appealed from.

#### **Advisory Note – September 2022**

Rule 19(a)(2)(J) originally provided for the discretionary appeals permitted by 15 M.R.S. § 2258(1), which was adopted by P.L. 2015, ch. 354, § 1, and which provided a temporary mechanism for a person who had been convicted of a qualifying crime to request special restrictions on dissemination and use of criminal history record information relating to the crime. That legislation repealed itself effective October 1, 2019.

On May 1, 2022, P.L. 2021, ch. 674 adopted 15 M.R.S. §§ 2261-2269 to provide a permanent mechanism for a person who has been convicted of a qualifying crime to move to seal criminal history record information relating to the conviction. As with the previous legislation, the new legislation permits a discretionary appeal by a convicted person aggrieved by an order on a motion

to seal the records. The amendment to Rule 19(a)(2)(J) replaces the statutory citations and changes the description of the order appealed from to match the terminology used in the new legislation.

### **Advisory Note - June 2019**

Rule 19(a)(2)(B) is amended to clarify that appeals from orders denying probation modification orders—like orders modifying probation conditions—are subject to Rule 19. The reference to 17-A M.R.S. § 1207(1) is deleted as unnecessary.

### **Advisory Note - July 2017**

The amendment corrects an error in subdivision lettering and numbering from Rule 19(d) onward in the restyled Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure, as adopted by Rule Amendment Order 2017 Me. Rules 07.

### **Restyling Notes - June 2017**

Rule 19 was revised, effective July 29, 2016. It is further amended as follows.

Rule 19(a) is separated into two subdivisions. Rule 19(a)(2)(B)—formerly Rule 19(a)(2)—is amended to cover appeals of probation modification orders.

Rule 19(c) is amended to recognize that sometimes the State may be an appellant; accordingly, the prohibition on filing reply memoranda is extended to any other party to the trial court action.

Rule 19(d)(1) is amended to modify the 56-day transcript filing deadline as in Rule 6(c)(1).

Rule 19(d)(2)(A) is amended to allow a judge 14 days from the filing of the notice of appeal to file written findings.

Finally, as part of this restyling, the Rule is amended to add subparagraphs to Rule 19(d)(2) and Rule 19(g).

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**[Advisory Notes to Rule 19 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

**Advisory Note – July 2016**

Rule 19 is amended in the following respects.

(1) Rule 19(a) is amended to add numbers for each separate appeal addressed and have those numbers correspond to the existing amended numbers in Rule 19(d)(1). The numbering and organization in Rule 19(d) is altered to (1) add a reference to extradition appeals, (2) add letters to the similarly numbered record choices for factual innocence appeals, and (3) add a reference for the record of criminal history record appeals.

(2) Rule 19(a) is amended to change the words “criminal appeals, which are subject to preliminary review” to “those criminal appeals that are subject to preliminary review.”

(3) Rule 19(a) is amended to correct the statutory reference addressing an appeal by a person whose probation is revoked to reflect new 17-A M.R.S. § 1207(1), enacted by P.L. 2015, ch. 431, § 41 (effective July 29, 2016).

(4) In Rule 19(a), the words “by the Superior Court, but not by the District Court,” are omitted. The Superior Court is no longer hearing appeals from the District Court. The Supreme Judicial Court has taken over that function in the form of a discretionary appeal. See M.R.U. Crim. P. 36.

(5) In Rule 19(a), the citation to former “M.R. Crim. P. 35(a) or (c)” is replaced by a cite to “M.R.U. Crim. P. 35(a) or (c).”

(6) In Rule 19(a)(iv) and (d)(1)(iv), the term “deferment” is changed to “deferred disposition.”

(7) In Rule 19(a), the statutory reference to “15 M.R.S. § 210-A” is corrected to reflect current 15 M.R.S. § 210-B(1).

(8) In Rule 19(a), the provision regarding appeal from an order on a motion to order DNA analysis is reworded for clarity. The words “when the appeal is taken either by the convicted person or the State” are replaced with, “when the appeal is taken by the convicted person or by the State.”

(9) Rule 19(a) and 19(d)(1) are amended to account for a new discretionary appeal to the Law Court, which now exists pursuant to 15 M.R.S. § 2258(1), enacted by P.L. 2015, ch. 354, §1 (effective October 15, 2015, but with a sunset of October 1, 2019). That statute creates a discretionary appeal procedure from a judgment in a proceeding where a person seeks a court determination that he or she has satisfied the statutory prerequisites specified in 15 M.R.S. § 2252 that allow restrictions on the dissemination and use of criminal history record information relating to a criminal conviction, *see* 15 M.R.S. §§ 2254(5), 2255, or from a subsequent judgment that the person has been convicted of a new crime and is therefore no longer eligible for such restrictions, *see* 15 M.R.S. §§ 2254(7), 2255.

(10) Rule 19(d)(1) is amended to omit the words “by the Superior Court” because of the institution of the Unified Criminal Docket statewide.

(11) Rule 19(d)(2) is amended to change references to the judge of the District Court to the “justice or judge” and the “trial court” because of the institution of the Unified Criminal Docket statewide.

(12) Rule 19(f) is amended to correct a typographical error.

### **Advisory Note – August 2015**

Because of the adoption of the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure, effective throughout the State of Maine as of July 1, 2015, all references and citations to the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure have been replaced with references and citations to the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure.

### **Advisory Note – November 2011**

Rules 19(a) and (d)(1) are amended to reflect statutory changes made to 15 M.R.S. §§ 2138(6) and (11) in the First Regular Session of the 125<sup>th</sup> Maine State Legislature, P.L. 2011, ch. 230, §§ 1, 2 (effective Sept. 28, 2011). Title 15 M.R.S. § 2138(6) as amended provides to the state a discretionary appeal from



a court order granting a motion to order DNA analysis. Previously the state could not appeal from such an order. Title 15 M.R.S. § 2138(11) as amended provides to an aggrieved person an appeal as of right from a court decision denying a new trial. Previously the person's appeal was discretionary.

### **Advisory Note – July 1, 2010**

The amendment to Rule 19(c) changes the filing date for the memorandum in support of the appellant's request for a certificate of probable cause in criminal discretionary appeals. Many appellants move to enlarge the time for their memoranda in order to be able to review the transcript before filing the memoranda. The Court does not review the memorandum until after the transcript is filed. The amendment changes the time for the filing of the memorandum to allow the appellant to receive and review the transcript before filing the memorandum. In cases when no transcript is ordered, the memorandum remains due 21 days after the notice of appeal is filed. The amendment also provides for 8 copies of the memorandum to be filed, so that one copy may be retained by the Clerk's Office and the remaining seven distributed to the Court.

### **Advisory Note – February 2010**

M.R. App. P. 19(a) and (d)(1). The amendments add to Rule 19 two new discretionary appeals found in 15 M.R.S. § 2184(1) enacted in the 2009 First Regular Session of the 124th Maine State Legislature (P.L. 2009, ch. 308, § 1, effective September 12, 2009) as part of a new statutory post-judgment relief mechanism for persons whose identity has been stolen and falsely used by another person in, as relevant here, a criminal proceeding. The first of the discretionary appeals provides for a conditional appeal by a person whose post-judgment motion seeking a court determination of factual innocence and correction of court records and related criminal justice records has been denied following the hearing required pursuant to 15 M.R.S. § 2183(5). The second of the discretionary appeals provides for a conditional appeal by that person in the event the court subsequently vacates its earlier order granting the person's motion (or on whose behalf such motion was filed) based upon a finding of fraud or misrepresentation pursuant to 15 M.R.S. § 2183(7).

The amendment also changes the references to M.R.S.A. in the amended sections to references to M.R.S., as M.R.S. is now the primary Maine statutory reference used by the courts.

### **Advisory Notes – August 2004**

This amendment to M.R. App. P. 19(a) and (d)(1) adds a discretionary appeal unintentionally omitted when discretionary appeals were consolidated into Rule 19 in 2002, and adds two new discretionary appeals enacted by the 121st Maine Legislature during the Second Special Session (P.L. 2004, ch. 711, § A–19). The three added discretionary appeals are:

Appeal from Superior Court rulings revoking supervised release. This is not a new discretionary appeal, having been enacted as part of supervised release for sex offenders, 17-A M.R.S.A. ch. 50 [§§ 1231-1233], by P.L. 1999, ch. 788, § 7. District Court supervised release revocation orders may only be appealed to the Superior Court pursuant to 17-A M.R.S.A. § 1233. Rules 36 and 36A of the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure are being amended concurrently with this rule to specifically include a section 1233 appeal to the Superior Court.

Appeal from District Court or Superior Court findings of inexcusable failure to comply with court-imposed deferment requirements. This new discretionary appeal was enacted as part of the new sentencing alternative of deferred disposition, 17-A M.R.S.A. ch. 54-F [§§ 1348 to 1348-C], by P.L. 2004, ch. 711, § A-19.

Appeal from Superior Court rulings revoking administrative release. This new discretionary appeal was enacted as part of the new sentencing alternative of administrative release, 17-A M.R.S.A. ch. 54-G [§§ 1349 to 1349–F], by P.L. 2004, ch. 711, § A-19. District Court administrative release revocation orders may only be appealed to the Superior Court pursuant to 17-A M.R.S.A. § 1349-F. Rules 36 and 36A of the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure are being amended concurrently with this rule to specifically include a section 1349-F appeal to the Superior Court.

### **Advisory Notes – October 15, 2001**

Rule 19 of the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure is adopted to consolidate the rules governing discretionary appeals to the Law Court from

various orders in criminal cases, which previously were governed by a number of provisions in the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure. The only exception among discretionary appeals is sentence appeals, which, because of their significantly different nature, are addressed in new Rule 20 of the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure. The discretionary appeals consolidated into Rule 19 include:

— Appeal from orders on motions to correct or reduce a sentence in the Superior Court pursuant to M.R. Crim. P. 35(a) or (c), where the appeal is taken by the defendant. The rule is limited to appeals of Superior Court orders, as appeals of District Court rulings pursuant to M.R. Crim. P. 35 must be taken to the Superior Court pursuant to M.R. Crim. P. 36. Also, the rule only addresses M.R. Crim. P. 35 appeals by defendants, as the State has an appeal as of right from any adverse ruling pursuant to M.R. Crim. P. 35. *See* 15 M.R.S.A. § 2115–A(2-A) & (2-B). M.R. Crim. P. 35 appeals to the Law Court were formerly addressed by M.R. Crim. P. 37C, 37D, and 37E.

— Appeal from Superior Court orders revoking probation. District Court probation revocation orders may only be appealed to the Superior Court pursuant to M.R. Crim. P. 36. Probation revocation appeals were formerly addressed by M.R. Crim. P. 37F, 37G and 37H.

— Appeal from final judgment in post-conviction relief matters where the appeal is taken by the petitioner. As with appeals from orders for correction or reduction of sentence under M.R. Crim. P. 35, the State has a right of appeal, which is non-discretionary, from an adverse order in a post-conviction review proceeding. These provisions replace M.R. Crim. P. 76, 77, and 78 which have governed appeals of post-conviction review orders by petitioners.

— Appeal from final judgments in extradition proceedings, again where the appeal is taken by the person subject to the extradition order. The State has an appeal as of right in such matters. The rules governing extradition proceedings replace M.R. Crim. P. 88, 89, and 90 which have governed appeals in extradition proceedings.

— Appeal from orders on motions to order DNA analysis or orders on motions for new trials based on DNA analysis. These matters are new discretionary appeals enacted as part of legislation governing use of DNA analysis relating to completed cases, 15 M.R.S.A. §§ 2136-2138, which was

adopted by P.L. 2001, ch. 469, § 1. Amendments to the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure addressing the consideration and testing process where requests for DNA testing are made are being adopted concurrently with this rule. *See* M.R. Crim. P. 95-99. Because this is a new area of discretionary appeals, no present provisions of the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure are being replaced for these DNA related discretionary appeals.

Rule 19(b) indicates that, except where explicitly addressed in Rule 19, practice for discretionary appeals is in accordance with the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure. Thus, for example, notices of appeal challenging orders must be filed within 21 days after entry of the challenged order, M.R. App. P. 2(b)(2)(A), except for extradition cases in which case the notice of appeal must be filed within 10 days after entry of the challenged order. M.R. App. P. 2(b)(2)(B).

Rule 19(c) requires that, for discretionary appeals, the party filing the appeal must file with the Clerk of the Law Court 7 copies of a memorandum giving specific and substantive reasons why the issues identified for appeal warrant the issuance of a certificate of probable cause authorizing consideration of the appeal on the merits by the Law Court. The 7 copies of the memorandum must be filed with the Clerk of the Law Court within 21 days after filing of the notice of appeal. The memorandum is limited to 20 pages in length and must conform to the requirements of M.R. App. P. 9(f) relating to the form of briefs. On motion and a showing of good cause, the Law Court may allow additional time to file a memorandum.

As with present practice, no responding memorandum is to be filed by the State. Except for the memorandum filed by the defendant or the petitioning party, no further briefing and no appendix is required until the Law Court rules on the request for a certificate of probable cause.

Rule 19(d) addresses what transcripts may be prepared to support discretionary appeals. Subdivision (d) provides that, unless the Law Court otherwise orders, the court reporter must prepare and file a transcript of the hearing that is the subject of the discretionary appeal within 56 days of receipt of a copy of the notice of appeal and transcript order form. Obviously, such a transcript must be prepared only if a hearing on the matter at issue was held and recorded. No other transcripts are to be prepared until after a ruling on the request for a certificate of probable cause. The hearings for which a

transcript is to be prepared unless the Law Court orders otherwise are explicitly listed in the rule in subparagraphs (i) through (v) of paragraph (d)(1).

As indicated in paragraph (d)(2), no transcript is to be prepared of any extradition hearing. This is specified because of the accelerated consideration that such appeals receive. In lieu of a transcript, the judge of the District Court that heard the extradition proceeding must, within 10 days of filing the notice of appeal, prepare and forward to the Clerk of the Law Court written findings of fact upon which the determination of the petition contesting extradition was based. The District Court Judge may, in lieu of preparing findings of fact, order that a transcript of all or part of the proceedings be prepared and transmitted to the Law Court. However, such an order may only be entered if the District Court finds that special circumstances exist and details in writing the special circumstances that justify the ordering of a transcript.

Compensation for all transcripts prepared pursuant to subdivision (d) shall be as provided in M.R. App. P. 5(b)(1).

Rule 19(e) provides that, if the Law Court denies a certificate of probable cause, the Clerk of the Law Court is to send each party a written notice of the denial.

Rule 19(f) provides that if the Law Court issues a certificate of probable cause authorizing consideration of the appeal on the merits, the Clerk is to notify both the parties to the appeal and the trial court from which the appeal was taken. For purposes of timing of the applicability of the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure to Rule 19 appeals, the docketing in the Law Court of the order granting a certificate of probable cause is to be treated in the same manner as the filing of a notice of appeal pursuant to M.R. App. P. 2(b)2. However, if an appeal under M.R. App. P. 2 involving the same criminal judgment is already pending, the Rule 19 appeal is to be consolidated with and treated as part of the already pending M.R. App. P. 2 appeal.

Rule 19(g) governs the procedure for ordering additional transcripts beyond the transcript already prepared pursuant to Rule 19(d). In some cases, transcripts of other portions of the proceedings, which are needed for the appeal may already exist as part of the file. In such cases, those transcripts may be forwarded and copied as necessary to comply with the requirements of the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure. If new transcripts must be ordered, then,

within 7 days after docketing by the Clerk of the Law Court of the order granting the certificate of probable cause, the appellant must file with the reporter and the Clerk of the Law Court and serve on the appellee a transcript order for any additional transcripts that the appellant deems necessary for prosecution of the appeal. After receipt of the appellant's transcript order, the appellee—usually the State—may order additional transcripts. The orders and costs regarding the transcript are to be addressed in the same manner as provided in M.R. App. P. 5(b)(1). Non-indigent appellants must make appropriate payment arrangements with the reporters regarding the transcript or the order may be canceled and the appeal will proceed without a transcript.

Rule 19(h) provides that the Clerk's record, after docketing of the order granting the certificate of probable cause, is to be filed with the Law Court in the same manner as provided in M.R. App. P. 6.

Rule 19(i) specifies that the briefing schedule is set upon filing of the record and any ordered transcripts in the same manner as under M.R. App. P. 7. From that point forward, the appeal proceeds in the same manner as any other appeal under the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure.

## **RULE 20. APPEAL OF SENTENCE**

**(a) (1) Application for Leave to Appeal.** An appeal to the Law Court by a defendant for review of sentence shall be as provided in 15 M.R.S. §§ 2151-2157 and these Rules. Any defendant qualified under 15 M.R.S. § 2151 to seek sentence review may apply to the Law Court by filing an application to allow an appeal of sentence with the clerk of the court in which sentence was imposed.

**(2)** The application for review of sentence shall conform to the Judicial Branch form for sentence appeals. The defendant or the defendant's attorney shall sign the application. The clerk of the court in which sentence was imposed shall mail a date-stamped copy of the application to the court reporter. The clerk shall note in the criminal docket the giving of such notification, with the date thereof.

**(3)** When a court imposes a sentence for which a defendant, pursuant to 15 M.R.S. § 2151, is qualified to seek sentence review, the defendant shall be advised of the right to seek sentence review. If an unrepresented defendant

requests, the court shall cause an application for review of sentence to be prepared and filed on behalf of the defendant forthwith.

**(b) Time for Filing an Application for Leave to Appeal.** The time within which to file an application to allow an appeal of sentence shall be as provided in Rule 2B(b)(1). The appellant may, without leave of the Law Court, amend that application no later than 14 days after the filing in the Law Court of the sentencing hearing transcript.

**(c) Docketing the Application in the Law Court.** Upon receipt of the application to allow an appeal of sentence, the clerk of the court in which sentence was imposed shall forthwith transmit to the Law Court the following: a copy of the application with the date of the filing; a copy of the docket entries, the charging instrument, and the order of judgment and commitment; a copy of the M.R.U. Crim. P. 32 pre-sentence report, if any; and a copy of any other material, including documentary exhibits, offered to or considered by the sentencing court in connection with the sentencing proceeding. The case shall be marked "Sentence Appeal," on the docket.

The court in which sentence was imposed shall take no further action pending disposition by the Law Court of the application for review of sentence and, if the application is granted, shall take no further action pending ruling on the sentence appeal except as provided in Rule 3(b), but with the further limitation, as reflected in 15 M.R.S. § 2157, that the court may not stay execution of sentence or set bail.

**(d) Duty of Reporter to Prepare and File Sentencing Transcript.** Unless the Law Court otherwise directs, within 42 days after the date of filing of the application to allow appeal of sentence, with notice provided by the date-stamped copy of the application from the clerk of the court in which sentence was imposed, the court reporter shall file the transcript of the sentencing hearing with the Clerk of the Law Court.

If the court reporter anticipates that the transcript cannot be prepared within the 42-day limit, the court reporter shall file an application for an extension as provided in Rule 6(c)(2).

**(e) Correction or Modification of Record.** The court in which sentence was imposed, the Sentence Review Panel of the Supreme Judicial

Court, and the Law Court may correct or supplement the record as provided in Rule 5(e), except that the Panel and Law Court may, without motion or suggestion, direct that a supplemental record be transmitted by the clerk of the court in which sentence was imposed.

**(f) Denial of Application for Leave to Appeal.** If the Sentence Review Panel of the Supreme Judicial Court denies the application to allow an appeal of sentence, the Clerk of the Law Court shall forthwith send to the clerk of the court in which sentence was imposed and to each counsel of record a written notice of that denial. As provided in 15 M.R.S. § 2152, a denial of the application is final and subject to no further review.

**(g) Docketing Sentence Appeal in Law Court.** If the Sentence Review Panel of the Supreme Judicial Court grants the application to allow an appeal of sentence, the Clerk of the Law Court shall forthwith send to each party and to the clerk of the court in which sentence was imposed a copy of the order granting the application, together with a written notice of the Law Court docket number and the date within which any further record on appeal must be filed.

**(h) Appeal Processing.** The order granting the application to allow an appeal of sentence shall have the same effect for appeal process scheduling as a notice of appeal pursuant to Rule 2A(b)(1). A sentence appeal in the Law Court after an application for leave to appeal is granted shall proceed in accordance with the general appeal provisions of Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure, except that any party desiring transcripts of the proceeding not already in the file shall file a transcript order form within 7 days after notice that leave to appeal has been granted. If an appeal is pending pursuant to Rule 2A involving the same criminal judgment, the sentence appeal shall be considered as part of that appeal.

**(i) Relief.** If the Law Court, pursuant to 15 M.R.S. § 2156, remands the case to the court in which sentence was imposed for further proceedings and resentencing or solely for resentencing, any justice or judge of that court may act thereon, unless the Law Court otherwise directs.



## **Advisory Committee Note –November 2024**

Rule 20(b) is amended to allow an appellant to amend the appellant’s application, without leave of the Court, within 14 days after the filing of the sentencing hearing transcript.

## **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 20 was not subject to revision, except for changing the calculation of the 42-day deadline for filing a reporter’s transcript to conform to the change in in Rule 6(c)(1), and minor editing and citation correction, in the restyling process.

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## **[Advisory Notes to Rule 20 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

### **Advisory Note – August 2015**

Because of the adoption of the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure, effective throughout the State of Maine as of July 1, 2015, all references and citations to the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure have been replaced with references and citations to the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure.

All references to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated in the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure are updated to refer to the Maine Revised Statutes.

### **Advisory Notes – October 15, 2001**

The discretionary sentence review process governs appeal of sentences of one-year or more where the defendant claims that the sentence is excessive or inappropriate. *State v. Ricker*, 2001 ME 76, ¶ 18, 770 A.2d 1021, 1026-27. A sentence of any length may be appealed as a matter of right where the defendant claims that the sentence is illegal, imposed in an illegal manner or beyond the jurisdiction of the court, where the illegality appears plainly in the

record. *Id.*, *State v. White*, 2001 ME 65, ¶ 3, 769 A.2d 827, 828; *State v. Cunningham*, 1998 ME 167, ¶ 5, 715 A.2d 156, 157.

Rule 20 of the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure governs discretionary appeals of sentences of one-year or more addressed in 15 M.R.S.A. §§ 2151-2157. Rule 20 replaces M.R. Crim. P. 40, 40A, 40B and 40C. Persons who may seek sentence reviews pursuant to Rule 20 are persons who have been sentenced to a sentence of one-year or more, where the sentence is not mandatory and not a sentence by agreement in accordance with M.R. Crim. P. 11A.

The application for appeal of sentence must be filed within 21 days of entry of the sentencing order. M.R. App. P. 20(b).

Practitioners should note that sentence appeals are distinct from appeals from convictions. If an individual is convicted and that individual wishes to appeal both the conviction and the sentence then: (1) to appeal the conviction, a notice of appeal must be filed in accordance with M.R. App. P. 2(b)(2)(A); and (2) to appeal the sentence, the application to allow an appeal of sentence must be filed under M.R. App. P. 20. A discretionary sentence appeal is not automatically considered as part of an appeal of a conviction. The Law Court must still engage in its discretionary choice as to whether an allow of a sentence appeal.

If the application to allow an appeal of sentence is granted by the Sentence Review Panel and an appeal of the conviction is also pending, the sentence appeal will be consolidated with the conviction appeal for consideration. If there is no conviction appeal pending, the merits of the sentencing appeal will be considered independently by the Law Court. If an application to allow an appeal of sentence is denied by the Law Court, the sentence appeal shall not proceed, and the denial of the application is final and subject to no further review. 15 M.R.S.A. § 2152, M.R. App. P. 20(f).

The application for review of sentence must conform to the Judicial Branch form for sentence appeals. M.R. App. P. 20(a)(2). It must be signed by the defendant or the defendant's attorney. The application must be filed with the clerk of the court in which the sentence is imposed. The clerk will then mail a date stamped copy of the application to the court reporter.

When a court imposes a sentence for which a defendant is qualified to seek sentence review, the defendant must be advised of the right to seek a sentence review. M.R. App. P. 20(a)(3). If a defendant is not represented by counsel, and requests the Court to do so, the Court must cause an application for review of sentence to be prepared and filed on behalf of the defendant.

Rule 20(c) covers docketing of the sentence appeal in the trial court and the Law Court. The rule also specifies the materials that the clerk of the trial court is to forward to the Law Court in cases where a sentence appeal is filed. As provided in 15 M.R.S.A. § 2157, a sentence may not be stayed, and bail may not be set pending a sentence review. Thus, setting of bail or a stay of execution of sentence is only appropriate in circumstances where an appeal of the conviction is filed and a stay of sentence or bail request is considered pursuant to M.R. Crim. P. 38 in connection with the appeal of the conviction, not the sentence appeal.

Rule 20(d) provides that preparation of the sentencing transcript is to receive expedited consideration, with the court reporter required to prepare the transcript within 42 days from receipt of the application for sentence review. This differs from the 56 days which reporters are usually given to prepare appeal transcripts. *See* M.R. App. P. 6(c). Reporters may request extensions of time in appropriate circumstances.

Rule 20(e) addresses correction or modification of the record. It basically incorporates the provisions of M.R. App. P. 5(e), except that it allows either the Sentence Review Panel or the Law Court, on its own, to request the filing of a supplemental record if the Court determines that there are additional portions of the record that may aid its review of the sentence.

Rule 20(f) addresses denial of the application for leave to appeal sentence, noting it is final and not subject to further review. 15 M.R.S.A. § 2152.

Rule 20(g) specifies that, where the Sentence Review Panel grants an application to allow appeal of sentence, the Clerk of the Law Court must promptly send to the clerk of the trial court in which the sentence was imposed a copy of the order granting the application. A copy of the order would also be sent to each party together with a written notice of the Law Court docket number and the date within which any further record on appeal must be filed.

After the application for leave to appeal is granted, the order granting leave is treated like a notice of appeal. Rule 20(h) specifies that the appeal shall proceed in the same manner as any other appeal under the Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure, except that any party desiring transcripts of the proceeding which are not already in the file must file an additional transcript order within 7 days of the notice that leave to appeal has been granted. If an appeal of the conviction is already pending under M.R. App. P. 2, the sentence appeal would be consolidated with that appeal under the same Law Court docket number.

Rule 20(i) provides that where the Law Court grants a sentence appeal and remands a case for further proceedings and resentencing, any justice or judge of the court to which the matter is remanded may act on the remanded matter unless the Law Court otherwise directs.

## **RULE 21. CRIMINAL APPEALS BY THE STATE**

**(a) Procedure.** Appeals by the State in criminal cases when authorized by statute shall be subject to the same procedure as that for other appeals, except as provided by this Rule.

**(b) Appeals by the State Requiring Approval of Attorney General.** As to any State-initiated appeal requiring approval of the Attorney General of Maine, the notice of appeal shall be accompanied by the written approval of the Attorney General, which shall become part of the record. The written approval may be filed at a later date, provided that the attorney for the State filing the notice of appeal states in the notice that the Attorney General has orally stated that the approval will be granted.

**(c) Dismissal of Appeal.** The Law Court shall, on motion, order the dismissal of an appeal brought pursuant to this Rule if it finds that such appeal has not been diligently prosecuted.

**(d) Counsel Fees on Appeal by the State.** When an appeal is taken by the State, the Law Court shall allow the defendant reasonable counsel fees and costs for defense of the appeal.

**(e) Tolling of Appeal Period.** If the State files a motion for findings of fact and conclusions of law pursuant to M.R.U. Crim. P. 41A(d), the appeal

period shall be tolled during the pendency of the motion. If the motion is granted, the appeal period shall begin to run once either (1) written findings and conclusions are entered or (2) a notation reflecting that no findings and conclusions have been made is entered on the criminal docket.

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 21 was not subject to substantive editing in the restyling process. Rule 21(b) regarding the written approval of the Attorney General for appeals was edited to create a separate sentence referencing the subsequent filing of a written approval.

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### **[Advisory Notes to Rule 21 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

#### **Advisory Note – August 2015**

Because of the adoption of the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure, effective throughout the State of Maine as of July 1, 2015, all references and citations to the Maine Rules of Criminal Procedure have been replaced with references and citations to the Maine Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure.

#### **Advisory Note – October 15, 2001**

M.R. App. P. 21(b) is being amended to recognize that M.R. Crim. P. 76, presently referenced in M.R. App. P. 21(b) is being abrogated by these rules. The amendment does not change the present practice that State appeals of post-conviction review orders need not be approved by the Attorney General. Such appeals may still proceed on initiative of a District Attorney's office, without approval of the Attorney General. The amendment of the rule recognizes that Rule 21 governs State initiated appeals which do require approval of the Attorney General.

## **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 21 is nearly identical, except for some technical word changes, to M.R. Crim. P. 37B. It is amended to recognize that Attorney General approval is not needed for State appeals from post-conviction judgments.

### **RULE 22. REVIEW OF RULINGS AND ORDERS OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**(a) (1)** Review of rulings and orders of the Public Utilities Commission, including applications for relief pending final determination, shall be governed by these Rules.

**(2)** Whenever a statute or rule regulating the taking of an appeal from a judgment of the trial court in civil actions uses the term “the court,” “the clerk,” or a similar term, they shall for the purpose of a proceeding governed by this Rule be read, respectively, as “the commission,” “the secretary of the commission,” or other appropriate terms.

**(b)** On an appeal from the Public Utilities Commission to the Law Court, the appellant shall pay the filing fee by check, payable to the Clerk of the Law Court, to the secretary of the commission when filing the notice of appeal, and the secretary of the commission shall transmit that check representing the filing fee to the Clerk of the Law Court along with the certified copy of the notice of appeal pursuant to Rule 3(a).

## **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 22 is subject to minor editing for internal numbering in the restyling process. It includes no substantive changes. The new Rule 6(d) regarding electronic or digital record filing practice will apply to many Rule 22 appeals to the Law Court.

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**[Advisory Notes to Rule 22 of former Maine Rules of Appellate  
Procedure]**

## **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 22 relating to review of rulings by the Public Utilities Commission is identical to M.R. Civ. P. 73(h).

**RULE 23. REVIEW OF DECISIONS OF THE  
WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD AND APPELLATE DIVISION**

**(a) When and How Taken.**

**(1)** A party in interest may seek review by the Law Court of a decision of the Workers' Compensation Board or its Appellate Division by filing with the Clerk of the Law Court a copy of the decision within 20 days after receipt of notice of the filing of the decision by the Appellate Division or the Board. The party petitioning for appeal shall file with the copy of the decision a notice of appeal indicating the points intended to be addressed on appeal.

**(2)** The petitioning party shall also pay to the Clerk of the Law Court the required filing fee.

**(3)** Within the original 20 days after receipt of notice of the decision or within 14 days after the date of the first filing of a notice of appeal with the Clerk of the Law Court, any other party in interest may file a notice of appeal indicating any additional point that the other party may wish to address in an appeal.

**(4)** When more than one party files a notice of appeal, the party who files the first notice of appeal shall be deemed to be the petitioner for purposes of application of this Rule.

**(b) Petition for Appellate Review and Response.**

**(1) Form of Petition.**

**(A)** Within 20 days of the filing of the decision or the last filed, timely notice of appeal, the petitioner shall file electronically with the Clerk of the Law Court a petition for appellate review, which shall state the procedural and factual history of the case, the error alleged to have been committed, and the manner in which the petition meets the criteria for granting appellate review stated in Rule 23(b)(2). The petitioner must send to the Clerk of the Law Court

10 paper copies of the petition using a method that will ensure that the Clerk receives the copies within 3 days after the electronic filing.

**(B)** The petition for appellate review and any response shall be typed in at least 14-point font with double spacing between each line of type except for block quotations. The petition and any response filed by any other party shall be in a single document not exceeding 12 pages.

**(2) Review Criteria.** The Law Court may grant a petition for appellate review when:

**(A)** The case clearly raises an important question of law that should be addressed because (i) the question of law is one that is likely to recur unless resolved, or (ii) there is a need to consider establishing, implementing, or changing an interpretation of law; or

**(B)** The decision on appeal contains a substantial error on a question of law resulting in substantial prejudice to one or more of the parties to the Board or the Appellate Division proceeding; or

**(C)** The decision on an appeal is affected by a substantial and prejudicial violation of the statutory or due process procedural rights of one or more of the parties to the Board proceeding.

**(3) No Appeal of Fact-Finding.** As provided by statute, there shall be no appeal upon findings of fact.

**(4) Petition Attachments.** There shall be appended to the petition for appellate review, a copy of the decision of the Appellate Division or Workers' Compensation Board, and copies of any other relevant decisions of the Board, the Appellate Division, or the former Workers' Compensation Commission that are necessary to evaluate the issues raised in the petition. Failure to attach to a petition for appellate review a copy of the challenged decision of the Appellate Division or the Workers' Compensation Board may result in a summary dismissal of that petition.

**(5) Response.** Within 14 days any other party in interest may electronically file with the Clerk of the Law Court a response to the petition for appellate review. The response may not exceed 12 pages. The party filing the



response must send to the Clerk of the Law Court 10 paper copies of the response using a method that will ensure that the Clerk receives the copies within 3 days after the electronic filing.

**(6) Service of Copies.** At the time of filing of a petition for appellate review or the response thereto, the party filing the petition or response shall also file one copy with the General Counsel of the Workers' Compensation Board and serve one copy on each of the other parties in interest.

**(c) Granting or Denying the Petition for Appellate Review.** The petition for appellate review shall be granted or denied as provided in 39-A M.R.S. § 322(3). If the petition is granted, the order granting the petition shall be treated as the notice of appeal, the first petitioner shall be treated as the appellant, and the appeal shall proceed in accordance with these Rules as applicable to an appeal in a civil action; except that:

**(1)** In cases when the legal error is apparent on the face of the decision of the Appellate Division or the Board, the Law Court may summarily modify or vacate the decision and remand to the Appellate Division or the Board for further proceedings.

**(2)** When the appeal is from a decision of the Appellate Division of the Workers' Compensation Board issued pursuant to 39-A M.R.S. § 321-B:

**(A)** The appellant shall prepare the record on appeal and file the record with the Clerk of the Law Court within 35 days after the date the petition is granted;

**(B)** The appellant shall file the appendix to the briefs, and both of the parties shall file their briefs, within 14 days after the filing of the record on appeal with the Clerk of the Law Court;

**(C)** Either party may file a reply brief within 14 days after service of the brief of the other party;

**(D)** The record on appeal shall consist of the Appellate Division's docket sheet, the hearing officer's docket sheet, all pleadings, transcripts of all proceedings, all exhibits, all evidence of which the hearing officer or the

Appellate Division has taken judicial notice, a copy of the decision of the Appellate Division, and a copy of the decision and findings of the hearing officer.

**(3)** When the appeal is from a decision of the Workers' Compensation Board issued pursuant to 39-A M.R.S. § 320:

**(A)** The Executive Director of the Workers' Compensation Board shall file the record on appeal with the Clerk of the Law Court within 14 days after the date the petition is granted;

**(B)** The appellant shall file the appendix to the briefs and both of the parties shall file their briefs within 14 days after the petition is granted;

**(C)** Either party may file a reply brief within 14 days after service of the brief of the other party;

**(D)** The record on appeal shall consist of the hearing officer's docket sheet, all pleadings, transcripts of all proceedings, all exhibits, all evidence of which the hearing officer has taken judicial notice, and copies of the decision and findings of the hearing officer and the decision of the Board.

**(4)** If after granting a petition for appellate review and after consideration of the briefs and any oral argument, the Law Court is of the opinion that the criteria stated in paragraph (b)(2) have not been met and that the petition was improvidently granted, the Law Court may dismiss the appeal.

### **Advisory Committee Note – November 2024**

Rule 23(b) is amended to require that the petitioner and respondent file the petition for appellate review and the response electronically by the due date and file 10 copies of the petition or response within three (business) days after that.

### **Advisory Note – September 2022**

In May 2018, Rule 23(b)(1)(B) was changed to increase the page limit for petitions for appellate review and responses to petitions from 10 pages to 12 pages. The amendment, however, created an inconsistency with Rule 23(b)(5),

which continues to limit responses to 10 pages. This amendment increases the page limit in Rule 23(b)(5) to match the limit in Rule 23(b)(1)(B).

### **Advisory Note – May 2018**

The restyled Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure changed the font size required by Rule 23(b)(1)(B) from 12-point to 14-point for petitions for appellate review. The change to a 12-page limit allows petitions for appellate review to have approximately the same amount of text as was allowed prior to the change in the font size requirement.

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 23 is subject to editing for clarification and additional internal separation and numbering in the restyling process. It includes no substantive changes. The 20-day period for filing appeals in Rule 23 is set by statute, 39-A M.R.S. § 322(1). Therefore, it is not changed to a time period measured in weekly increments, as is the practice with time limits in the Rules not controlled by statute. The transition provision adopted when the Appellate Division was created in 2012 is eliminated.

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## **[Advisory Notes to Rule 23 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

### **Advisory Note – August 2012**

Effective September 1, 2012, the Workers' Compensation Act has been amended by P.L. 2011, ch. 647, §§ 19-21. The amendment creates an Appellate Division within the Workers' Compensation Board and requires that parties seeking to challenge a decision of a single Workers' Compensation Board Hearing Officer bring the appeal first to the Appellate Division. There is no longer the capacity to bring a direct, discretionary appeal to the Law Court from a decision of a single hearing officer. Appeals to the Law Court from the Appellate Division or the Workers' Compensation Board would continue to be brought as discretionary appeals according to the same discretionary review process as has existed in the recent past. The amendments to Rule 23 accommodate these statutory changes. It should also be noted that the last

sentence in subdivision (a) of the present rule was duplicated in subdivision (b)(6). Accordingly, the sentence in subdivision (a) is eliminated.

The transition provision recognizes that there may be some appeals from hearing officer decisions published before September 1. The process that applied before adoption of these amendments would apply to appeals of such decisions. It would be anticipated that when a hearing officer issues a decision before September 1, but decides a motion to reconsider, a motion to amend, or a request for further findings after September 1, the new practice of appeal to the Appellate Division would govern appeals of such hearing officer rulings.

### **Advisory Notes – July 2003**

These amendments to M.R. App. P. 23 are designed to more clearly define the criteria and practices the Law Court will apply in its consideration of petitions for appellate review of Workers' Compensation Board decisions. Authority for this rulemaking is provided by 4 M.R.S.A. § 8 and 39-A M.R.S.A. § 322(2). Section 322 gives only very general direction as to the nature of appeals that may be considered on petition, those being appeals that raise an "error or errors of law," § 322(1). The statute also directs that: "there may be no appeal upon findings of fact." § 322(3).

In spite of this statutory direction, many petitions for appellate review primarily seek review of fact-finding and many others seek to raise legal issues that are largely governed by precedent or statutory language. To save time and resources for parties contemplating appeals and the Court, these amendments more clearly identify the criteria for petitions for appellate review that may merit serious consideration of the case in the Court's discretionary decision to grant or deny appellate review on the merits. The amendments also clarify other practices that will be applied in considering appeals under M.R. App. P. 23.

The amendment to subdivision (a) specifies the appeal filing time limits directly in the Rule instead of referencing to the statute. The 20 days from notice limit for filing the notice of appeal and decision is taken from 39-A M.R.S.A. § 322(1). The time limit is based on receipt of notice rather than docketing due to the less formal docketing practices of administrative agencies. Under current practice, a letter often accompanies the initial filing of the decision to be appealed. The rule change requires a notice of appeal, indicating

the anticipated points on appeal, similar to the civil notice of appeal addressed in M.R. App. 2(a)(2) and 5(b)(2)(A). As presently, a copy of the decision sought to be appealed must be filed with the notice of appeal.

The amendments to subdivision (a) also create an explicit procedure for cross-appeals to recognize current practice where cross-appeals regularly occur. A party intending to petition for a cross-appeal must file a notice of appeal indicating intended points on a cross-appeal within the later of the initial filing period or 14 days after the date of the filing of the first notice of appeal. Where there is more than one notice of appeal filed, the party first filing a notice of appeal is deemed to be the petitioner.

A petition for appellate review is a memorandum addressing why the Law Court should consider the merits of an appeal.

Under subdivision (b)(1), the petitions for appellate review filed by any party must be filed within 20 days after the later of the first notice of appeal or any subsequent and timely notice of appeal. This change may have the effect of extending, by up to 14 days, the statutory time for filing petitions for review. However, such an adjustment is necessary to accommodate responsible cross-appeal practice and may be adopted by the court pursuant to 4 M.R.S.A. § 8. Where possible, a party's petition in support of their appeal and response to any opposing appeal should be contained in a single 10-page document. The amendment to subdivision (b)(1) also adopts a minimum 12-point type size limit, similar to that applied to briefs, by M.R. App. P. 9(f).

By the amendments, subdivision (b) is divided into six numbered paragraphs.

Paragraph 1 discussed above, governs the basic form, content and timing for petitions for appellate review and indicates that such petitions should address the criteria stated in paragraph 2.

Paragraph 2 states the review criteria, which the Law Court will consider important if a petition is to be granted. Thus, a petition for appellate review may be granted under (A) when the case clearly raises an important question of law that should be addressed because (i) the question of law is one that is likely to recur unless resolved, or (ii) there is a need to consider establishing, implementing or changing an interpretation of law. The emphasis in (A) is on

important questions of interpretation of law or changes in interpretation of law that will have general significance in Workers' Compensation Law practice. The legal issue must be cleanly raised; meaning that procedural problems or fact-finding should not prevent reaching the legal issue directly.

Under (B) an appeal may be allowed when the decision on appeal indicates a significant error in application of a statute or precedent when the law as applied by the Board or a hearing officer is compared with the overall objectives and goals of the Workers' Compensation Law. Substantial prejudice to a party to the Board proceeding must also be demonstrated.

Subparagraph (C) looks to the procedures in a particular case. An appeal may be allowed under (C) if there has been a substantial and prejudicial violation of the statutory or due process rights of one or more of the parties. A showing of actual prejudice would be critical to support consideration of any appeal based on a claimed procedural violation.

Paragraph 3, which reflects the terms of the current rule, emphasizes that, pursuant to § 322(3), the Court may not consider appeals contesting findings of fact.

The amendment to paragraph (b)(4) emphasizes present requirements that copies of the challenged decision and other relevant decisions must be attached to the petition for appellate review. Despite these requirements, there has been a significant problem with petitions being filed without requisite decisions attached. This requirement may be enforced more vigorously in the future, resulting in summary dismissal of petitions that do not have the challenged decisions attached. Attached decisions must include the particular decision from which the appeal is sought and any earlier decisions, which effect eligibility, benefit calculation, res judicata, or timeliness issues in the decision to be appealed.

The new subdivision (c)(1) reflects current practice that where an error is clear, upon facial review of a petition for appellate review and any other materials including the Board Decision, the Law Court may, on some occasions, summarily modify or vacate and remand, saving the parties the time and expense of a complete appeal process.

Except for being renumbered, subdivisions (c)(2) and (c)(3) are unchanged from subdivisions (c)(1) and (c)(2) in the current rule.

The new subdivision (c)(4) states that the Law Court may later dismiss an appeal that was originally allowed if it appears after briefing that the criteria for granting an appeal are no longer served by reaching the merits of the appeal and that the appeal was improvidently allowed. This may occur when (i) closer review of the case indicates procedural, fact-finding or case organization problems that prevent the Court from directly addressing the anticipated legal issue, (ii) subsequent developments in the case or related to the case render the legal issue moot or of lesser consequence than when the appeal was allowed, or (iii) the quality of the parties briefing of the issues indicates insufficient preparation or attention to the important legal matters originally presented in the appeal.

Workers' Compensation Law is a highly specialized area of law. Quality briefing of issues is vital to adequate appellate review. Briefing of the legal issues after a petition for appellate review has been granted should address the procedural and factual history of the case, including any prior decisions or orders in the case that may have significance. The legal argument should consider, where relevant, several sources of authorities, including: (A) statutory language; (B) case law from Maine; (C) Board Rules; (D) legislative history of the statute at issue; (E) judicial opinions and statutes in other jurisdictions addressing the issue, if any; (F) workers' compensation law treatises; and (G) interpretations of similar statutory language by the former Workers' Compensation Commission Appellate Division, when particularly appropriate.

### **Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 23 relating to review of Workers' Compensation decisions is nearly identical to M.R. Civ. P. 73(i). The only significant differences are that the date for the appellant to file the record with the Law Court in paragraph 3(c)(1)(A) is changed from 40 to 35 days and the date for the Executive Director of the Workers' Compensation Board to file the record on appeal with the Clerk of the Law Court in paragraph 3(c)(2)(A) is changed from 10 to 14 days.

## **RULE 24. REPORT OF CASES**

### **(a) Report by Agreement of Important or Doubtful Questions.**

When the trial court is of the opinion that a question of law presented to it is of sufficient importance or doubt to justify a report to the Law Court for determination, it may so report when:

- (1)** all parties appearing agree to the report;
- (2)** there is agreement as to all facts material to the appeal; and
- (3)** the decision thereon would, in at least one alternative, finally dispose of the action.

### **(b) [Reserved]**

**(c) Report of Interlocutory Rulings.** If the trial court is of the opinion that a question of law involved in an interlocutory order or ruling made by it ought to be determined by the Law Court before any further proceedings are taken, it may on motion of the aggrieved party report the case to the Law Court for that purpose and stay all further proceedings except such as are necessary to preserve the rights of the parties without making any decision therein.

**(d) Determination by the Law Court.** Any action reported pursuant to this Rule shall be entered in the Law Court and proceed as any other appeal, with the plaintiff or the party aggrieved by a reported interlocutory ruling being treated as the appellant. In a civil case, the appellant shall pay the fee for filing of a notice of appeal promptly following entry of the order of report.

## **Restyling Notes - June 2017**

In current Rule 24 regarding report of cases, Rule 24(a) and (b) are essentially duplicative. Current Rule 24(a) purports to address important or doubtful questions of law; current Rule 24(b) purports to address issues of law relating to agreed facts. However, both address reports of what were essentially questions of law. In the restyling, current Rule 24(a) is reorganized, without substantive change, and the duplication in current Rule 24(b) is eliminated. Rule 24(c) addresses reports when parties may not be in agreement on the report of the interlocutory ruling. When facts are not in



dispute, the matter can be submitted to the Law Court on report, assuming it otherwise qualifies for consideration. If there are any material facts in dispute, the matter cannot be referred to the Law Court until the factual disputes have been resolved by a final judgment in the trial court.

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**[Advisory Notes to Rule 24 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

**Advisory Notes - September 10, 2001**

These amendments to subdivisions (a) and (b) clarify somewhat archaic language that was carried over from former M.R. Civ. P. 72(a) and (b).

**Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 24 relating to report of cases, tracks very closely M.R. Civ. P. 72 and M.R. Crim. P. 37A. In civil cases, the appeal fee must be paid “promptly” after entry of the order of report.

Subdivision (b), relating to report on agreed facts does not have a comparable provision in M.R. Crim. P. 37A. However, there appears no good reason not to make availability of a report on agreed facts equal for criminal and civil cases.

**RULE 25. CERTIFICATION OF QUESTIONS OF LAW  
BY FEDERAL COURTS TO THE LAW COURT**

**(a) When Certified.** When it shall appear to the Supreme Court of the United States or to any of the Courts of Appeals or District Courts of the United States that there are involved in any proceeding before it one or more questions of law of this State that may be determinative of the cause and that there is no clear controlling precedent in the decisions of the Supreme Judicial Court, such federal court may, upon its own motion or upon request of any interested party, certify such questions of law of this State to the Supreme Judicial Court sitting as the Law Court, for instructions concerning such questions of state law.

**(b) Contents of Certificate.** The certificate provided for herein shall contain the name and docket number of the case, a statement of facts showing the nature of the case and the circumstances out of which the question of law arises, and the question or questions of law to be answered. Subject to other direction by the Supreme Judicial Court, the certificate shall also specify which party shall be treated as the appellant in the proceedings before the Supreme Judicial Court.

**(c) Preparation of Certificate.** The certificate may be prepared by stipulation or as directed by the certifying federal court. When prepared and signed by the presiding judge of the federal court, 12 copies thereof shall be certified to the Supreme Judicial Court by the clerk of the federal court and under its official seal. The Supreme Judicial Court may, in its discretion, require the original or copies of all or any portion of the record before the federal court to be filed with said certificate where, in its opinion, such record may be necessary in answering any certified question of law.

**(d) Costs of Certificate.** The costs of the certificate and filing fee shall be equally divided among the parties unless otherwise ordered by the Supreme Judicial Court.

**(e) Hearing Before the Law Court.** For the purpose of measuring the time for filing briefs and for holding the oral argument, the filing and docketing of the certificate in the Supreme Judicial Court shall be treated the same as the filing and docketing of the record on an appeal from the trial court pursuant to Rule 7. From the filing and docketing of the certificate, the matter shall proceed as any appeal pursuant to these Rules.

**(f) Intervention by the State.** When the constitutionality of an act of the Legislature of this State affecting the public interest is drawn in question upon such certification to which the State of Maine or an officer, agency, or employee thereof is not a party, the Supreme Judicial Court shall notify the Attorney General and shall permit the State of Maine to intervene for presentation of briefs and oral argument on the question of constitutionality.

### **Restyling Notes – June 2017**

Rule 25 is subject to minor editing for clarification in the restyling process. It includes no substantive changes.

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**[Advisory Notes to Rule 25 of former Maine Rules of Appellate Procedure]**

**Advisory Notes – January 1, 2001**

Rule 25 is identical to M.R. Civ. P. 76B. It establishes the structure for certification of questions of law from the Federal Courts to the Law Court. There is no comparable provision in the criminal rules, but there would appear to be no good reason why the authorization for certification of questions pursuant to 4 M.R.S.A. § 57 would not cover criminal cases. One would anticipate that certification of questions in criminal cases would be rare, but such could occur.