

FINAL REPORT¹

New Pa. R.C.P.D.J. No. 212

DESIGN OF FORMS

On November 25, 2002, effective January 1, 2003, upon the recommendation of the Minor Court Rules Committee,² the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania adopted new Rule 212 of the Rules of Conduct, Office Standards and Civil Procedure for District Justices.³

Proceedings in district justice courts, more so than in other courts, rely heavily on the use of preprinted standard forms. Forms are used for basic pleadings, notices, and virtually all other case-related documents. Most forms used in district justice proceedings are computer generated, produced by the District Justice Automated System (DJS). Traditionally, when individual rules have specified that a form is to be used for a certain document, the rules have made reference to “a form prescribed by the State Court Administrator.” In drafting proposed new rules and amendments to existing rules, the Committee has decided that the use of this language in individual rules is cumbersome and unnecessary.

As an alternative, the Committee recommended an entirely new Pa. R.C.P.D.J. No. 212 to be a general rule regarding the design of forms. In recommending such a rule, the Committee contemplated that references to forms in individual rules could be eliminated, except where the content of a form is to be expressly dictated by the rule.

The new rule, which is modeled after Pa.R.Crim.P. 104, provides that “[t]he Court Administrator of Pennsylvania, in consultation with the Minor Court Rules Committee, shall design and publish forms necessary to implement these rules.”

¹ The Committee’s Final Report should not be confused with the official Committee Notes to the Rules. Also, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania does not adopt the Committee’s Notes or the contents of the Committee’s explanatory Final Reports.

² Recommendation No. 2 Minor Court Rules 2002.

³ Supreme Court of Pennsylvania Order No. 139, Magisterial Docket No. 1, Book No. 2 (November 25, 2002).