

## **Rule 76. Definitions**

The following words and phrases when used in [any rule promulgated by the Supreme Court under the authority of Article V, Section 10(c) of the Constitution of 1968, or of any Act of Assembly,] the Rules of Civil Procedure shall have the following meanings, respectively, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise or the particular word or phrase is expressly defined in the chapter in which the particular rule is included:

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"signature," includes

(1) mark when the individual cannot write, the individual's name being written near it, and witnessed by another who writes his or her own name,

(2) when used in reference to documents produced by a court of the Unified Judicial System, a handwritten signature, a copy of a handwritten signature, a computer generated signature or a signature created, transmitted, received, or stored by electronic means, by the signer or by someone with the signer's authorization unless otherwise provided in these rules;

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### **Explanatory Comment**

The Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts is implementing a statewide system of automated court management. That system generates documents which may contain computer generated signatures. Prior to the present amendment, the rule defined the term "signature" to include "a mark when the individual cannot write" and gave no guidance with respect to computer generated signatures.

Rule 76 has been amended to facilitate the filing of documents generated by the courts of the Unified Judicial System by authorizing the signature on such documents to be an original signature, a copy of a signature, a computer generated signature or an electronic signature. The rule incorporates the definition of signature in Rule of Criminal Procedure 103.

By the Civil Procedural  
Rules Committee

R. Stanton Wettick, Jr.  
Chair