Attorney
Filing Guidelines

THE MISSOURI COURT OF APPEALS
WESTERN DISTRICT

1300 Oak Street
Kansas City, MO 64106

Phone: (816)-889-3600
Fax: (816)-889-3668
E-mail: wdcoa@courts.mo.gov

(When making telephone inquiries about a case, please refer to the WD Number)

**These guidelines are prepared for use as a reference tool for attorneys appearing before this Court. It is not to be used as a substitute for the Missouri Court Rules, the Western District Special Rules, or the judicial decisions interpreting those Rules. These rules explain only the general procedures. Should there be a conflict between information within this document and the Missouri Court Rules, the Western District Special Rules, or case law, the Rules and case law are controlling.

ELECTRONIC FILING

Except as otherwise specifically provided, this Court requires most documents to be electronically filed. Rule 84.025(a). One paper copy of all briefs must be submitted within five (5) days of electronic filing. Paper copies need to be securely bound.

The court serves notices, opinions, and other documents on registered users through the electronic filing system. Western District Special Rule 12(E).

REDACTION

Effective July 1, 2023

Documents filed in cases are open and available to the public unless they are set at a higher security level by statute, rule, or court order. Unless otherwise ordered by the

Court, all filers shall redact information that is confidential pursuant to statute, court rule or order, or other law. Rule 84.015(a). Supreme Court Operating Rule 4.24(b) states that the following information shall be confidential:

(1) The full date of birth of any party, full social security number of any party or any child, full motor vehicle operator license number, or any other full state identification number, under section 509.520, RSMo;

(2) The full credit card number, financial institution account number, personal identification number, or password used to secure an account of any party, under section 509.520, RSMo;

(3) The name and address of any individual who is a minor and, if applicable, any next friend of the minor, under section 509.520, RSMo; provided, however, that the term "minor" shall mean any person under 18 years of age, except for:

(A) An emancipated minor as defined in section 302.178, RSMo;

(B) A juvenile who has been certified to stand trial as an adult for juvenile offenses pursuant to section 211.071, RSMo; or

(C) A juvenile who is alleged to have violated a state or municipal ordinance or regulation, as described in section 211.031.1(2)(e), RSMo;

(4) The identity of and all references to the identity of any child involved in a juvenile court proceeding described in subsection 1 of section 211.319, RSMo, except the perpetrator, and all information that may identify or lead to the disclosure of the identity of a reporter of child abuse, as required under section 211.319, RSMo;

(5) Any information that would be likely to publicly reveal the identity or location of a party protected under an order of protection or restraining order, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. section 2265(d)(3);

(6) Any information relative to the identity of an applicant or recipient of IV-D services, under sections 208.120 and 454.440, RSMO;

(7) Any information that could be used to identify or locate a victim of a sexual offense under chapter 566, RSMo, or a victim of domestic assault or stalking, under section 595.226, RSMo; and

(8) The personal information of a court-related officer or judicial officer, under sections 476.1300 to 476.131, RSMo.

> Filers should also exercise caution when filing documents that include medical records, employment history, financial records, proprietary information, or trade secrets.

Missouri Supreme Court Operating Rule 2.02; Rule 84.015(a).

All redactions must be done in a manner that makes it clear that information has been redacted. This may be done by using generic descriptors to refer to redacted information. Rule 84.015(c). When a filer redacts information from a document filed with this Court, the filer must at the same time file either (1) a confidential unredacted version of the filing; or (2) a confidential redacted information filing sheet that sets out the information redacted from the filing with an explanation as to where the information was redacted in the filing or the generic descriptors used in the filing to reference the redacted information. Rule 84.015(a). A sample redacted information filing sheet is attached to these guidelines.

All filers shall affirmatively certify compliance with the redaction requirements in Rule 84.015(e) when a document is filed. Rule 84.015(e). This certification shall be accomplished through an automated process implemented in the electronic filing system. Rule 84.015(e).

The Court cannot answer any questions filers have about what should or should not be redacted from a document.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The electronic filing system does not serve the initial filings on parties. Rule 84.026(a). For any new case filed in the electronic filing system, service of the initially filed documents shall be made pursuant to Rule 43.01. Rule 84.026(a). Initial filings include notices of appeal, filings seeking special orders permitting a late filing of the notice of appeal, applications for transfer, appeals from orders granting or denying class certifications, and filings of original writs. Rule 84.026(a). For filings on an existing case, registered users serve and receive service of filings through the electronic filing system; no additional service or certificate of service is required. Rule 84.026(b). After service of the initial filing, registered users shall serve documents as provided by Rule 43.01 on any party ineligible to use the electronic filing system. Rule 84.026(c)(1). The same rules of service apply to criminal cases. Rule 30.006.

RECORD ON APPEAL

Generally, if the record on appeal consists of only a legal file, it must be filed with this

Court thirty (30) days from the date the filing of the notice of appeal in the trial court. Rule 81.19(a). If the record on appeal consists of both a legal file and transcript, it is due within ninety (90) days from the date of the filing of the notice of appeal in the trial court. Rule 81.19(b).

In all appeals from actions for **termination of parental rights or adoption**, the record on appeal shall be filed with this Court within thirty (30) days of the filing of the notice of appeal. Western District Special Rule 30(A). In all other actions where there is a judgment or order affecting the **custody of a child**, the record on appeal shall be filed with this Court within sixty (60) days of the filing of the notice of appeal. Western District Special Rule 30(A).

LEGAL FILE

Appellant shall prepare the legal file. Rule 81.12(b) and Rule 30.04(b). If the electronic filing system permits creation of a system-generated legal file as provided in Rule 81.12(b)(1) and Court Operating Rule 27.04, that method shall be used. If that method cannot be used, the legal file shall be prepared as provided in Rule 81.12(b)(2).

System-Generated Legal File—Rule 81.12(b)(1):

(a) The legal file shall consist of a legal file index generated by the system and all of the hyperlinked documents referenced in the index. Rule 81.12(b)(1)(A).

(b) Appellant shall designate the trial court documents to be included in the legal file and submit such designations for filing in the manner provided by the system for the generation of the legal file index. Rule 81.12(b)(1)(B).

(c) No paper copy of a system-generated legal file is required.

Non-system Generated Legal File—Rule 81.12(b)(2):

(a) If appellant cannot create a system-generated legal file, the appellant (unless the parties file a written agreement regarding the legal file as provided in Rule 81.15(a)) shall order any documents that are needed for the legal file from the clerk of the trial court within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed. Rule 81.12(b)(2)(B) and Rule 30.04(b).

(b) The legal file shall contain clearly reproduced exact copies of the pleadings and other portions of the trial record previously reduced to written form. Rule 81.12(b)(2)(C) and Rule 30.04(b).

(c) Parties may agree in writing upon an abbreviated or partial record on appeal or upon a statement of the case as provided in Rule 81.13. Rule 81.12(b)(2)(C).

(d) The non-system generated legal file shall be labeled with a cover page numbered as page one. The documents in the legal file shall begin with the docket sheet or case record and then the oldest document shall follow the docket sheet, with the remaining documents arranged in chronological order and ending with the notice of appeal. The page numbers shall be numbered consecutively and shall contain a complete index at the front designating the specific volumes and pages where the documents may be found. If the legal file exceeds one volume, a complete index shall be included at the beginning of each volume. The cover page and index shall conform to the format requirements of Rule 81.18. Rule 81.12(b)(2)(E).

(e) Unless the parties file a written agreement regarding the legal file as provide in Rule 81.15, the clerk of the trial court shall certify copies of the documents ordered for the legal file. The legal file must be certified by the clerk of the trial court to consist of true copies of the portions of the record filed in the trial court. Rule 81.12(b)(2)(F).

TRANSCRIPT

Electronic versions of transcripts must be submitted one page per sheet. The transcript shall be filed in text searchable PDF. Rule 81.12(c).

SUPPLEMENTAL LEGAL FILES

Guidelines for preparing a legal file apply to supplemental legal files.

BRIEFS

Briefs are controlled generally by Rule 84.04, 84.05, and Rule 84.06. The length of the briefs is set forth in Western District Special Rule 41.

APPELLANT'S BRIEF

Appellant's briefs should have all the sections listed in 84.04(a). The brief must also have an appendix with the required documents attached. Rule 84.04(h). The appendix shall be filed as a separate document and have a separate cover page and table of contents. Rule 84.04(h) and Western District Special Rule 38. Failure to comply with the rules may result in your brief being struck.

Generally, the Appellant's brief is due sixty (60) days after the date the Record on Appeal is filed. Rule 84.05(a). However, **in cases involving the termination of parental**

rights, adoptions, guardianships, and other appeals affecting the custody of a child, the Appellant's brief shall be filed within thirty (30) days of the record on appeal. Western District Special Rule 30(B).

RESPONDENT'S BRIEF

Respondent's brief is due thirty (30) days after the date the Appellant's Brief is filed in this Court. Rule 84.05(a) and Western District Special Rule 30. A Respondent is not required to file a brief but, if no brief is filed, Respondent will not be allowed to participate in oral argument unless permitted by the court for good cause shown. Rule 84.12(b).

REPLY BRIEF

Appellant may file a reply brief after the Respondent's brief. It is not required. The Appellant's reply brief is due fifteen (15) days after the Respondent's Brief is filed in this Court. Rule 84.05(a) and Western District Special Rule 30.

ALL BRIEFS

One paper copy of all briefs are due no later than five (5) days after the date of filing. Western District Special Rule 12(B).

All briefs must contain a cover page with the style of the case, WD case number, and name and address of the filing party. The brief must be signed either by original signature or electronic signature (e.g. /s/ John Doe). Rule 84.01(a).

All briefs must contain a certificate of compliance. Rule 84.06(c) and Rule 30.06(a). The certificate must specify the number of words contained in the brief. Rule 84.06(c)(4). The brief must also contain a certification as to how the brief was served on the opposing party. Rule 43.01(c) or Rule 103.08 (see Certificate of Service above).

For specific instructions regarding briefs on cross-appeals, refer to Rule 84.04(i), Rule 84.05(b), and Rule 30.06(c).

All briefs shall be prepared in accordance with Rule 84.06, provided however that the following word limitations set forth in Western District Special Rule 41 shall apply to briefs prepared pursuant to Rule 84.06(a):

> a. Appellant's initial brief and all briefs in a cross appeal, except for the final reply brief, shall not exceed 15,500 words.

b. Respondent's brief shall not exceed 13,950 words.

c. Any reply brief shall not exceed 5115 words.

In calculating the limits set forth in this rule, this court shall not count the words of a brief's table of contents, table of authorities or appendix. Western District Special Rule 41(D).

A party may file a motion requesting the court's permission to file a brief that exceeds the limits set forth in this rule. Such motion shall be filed at least ten (10) days before the due date on which the brief is due. The court may grant such a request only on a showing of good cause. Western District Special Rule 41(C).

EXHIBITS

Rule 81.16 allows original exhibits previously filed in the trial court to be filed with this Court. To the extent trial exhibits are available in an electronic format. A filer may submit trial exhibits in this court through the electronic filing system. Western District Special Rule 12(D). Exhibits submitted electronically shall include a separate cover page which contains the following information:

(1) The number and style of the case;

(2) The name and telephone number of the attorney or party submitting the exhibits;

(3) An index of the exhibits enclosed; and

(4) A statement signed by the submitting party or attorney certifying **the exhibits are in fact the original exhibits, or true or accurate copies thereof, submitted to the court or agency from which the appeal is taken.**

Exhibits that are not submitted electronically should be placed inside of an envelope which has been labeled with the WD number and style or caption of the case; the name and address of the party submitting the exhibits to the Court; an index of the exhibits enclosed; and a statement signed by the party certifying that the envelope in fact contains the documents listed in the index and certifying that the exhibits are in fact the original exhibits, or true and accurate copies thereof, submitted to the court or agency from which the appeal is taken. Western District Special Rule 4 and Supreme Court Rule 81.16.

A separate index of the exhibits must be provided to be filed and placed in the court file. See Western District Special Rules 4 and Rule 12(D) and Supreme Court Rule 81.16.

In both civil and criminal cases, the parties shall submit their exhibits no later than the date on which they file their initial briefs in this Court. See Western District Special Rule 4.

ORAL ARGUMENTS

Cases may be assigned to the oral argument docket or the submitted on briefs docket. If a party wants to be assigned a time to orally argue their case to the court, they must request to be assigned to the oral argument docket. Prior to the filing of respondent's brief, any party may request oral argument by filing a written request to the court. After the respondent's brief is filed, the court will notify the parties that they have 10 days to request oral argument or the case will be submitted on the briefs. Western District Special Rule 44.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

No proposed orders are necessary, nor will they be accepted, when filing a motion.

For more information, parties may way to review the Quick Guide to Appellate Practice available on the Court's website: www.courts.mo.gov.

Revised July 2026

Confidential Redacted Information Filing Sheet

Party Name:	**Case Number:**
Address:	Case Type:
	Style of Case:
Email Address:	☐ The unredacted document is attached to this filing sheet in place of listing the redacted information identifiers below.
Filing Date:	
Document Filed:	

(Date File Stamp)

REDACTED INFORMATION:

Redacted Information Identifier	Redacted Information

Submitted by: _____ Bar ID (required if attorney): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

SJRC (04-23) FI35 1 of 1