

CHAPTER 1930. RULES RELATING TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS MATTERS GENERALLY

- Rule 1930.1. Form of Caption. Confidential Information and Confidential Documents. Certification.
1930.2. No Post-trial Practice. Motions for Reconsideration.
1930.3. Testimony by Electronic Means.
1930.4. Service of Original Process in Domestic Relations Matters.
1930.5. Discovery in Domestic Relations Matters.
1930.6. Paternity Actions. Scope. Venue. Commencement of Action.
1930.7. Status Conference.
1930.8. Self-Represented Party.
1930.9. Family Court Forms.
1931. Family Court Rules.

Rule 1930.1. Form of Caption. Confidential Information and Confidential Documents. Certification.

(a) Form of Caption.

(1) Except as set forth in subdivision (2), the caption in a domestic relations matter shall include the parties' full names. The form of the caption shall be substantially in the following form:

In the Court of Common Pleas of _____ County, Pennsylvania.

Party A's full name,)
)
Plaintiff)
vs.) No. (Docket number)
)
Party B's full name,)
)
Defendant)

(Title of Pleading)

(2) In a custody action, the court may order that the case caption contain the parties' initials rather than the parties' names based on the sensitive nature of the facts in the case record and the child's best interest.

Official Note: See Pa.R.C.P. No. 1915.10(b)(3).

(b) Unless public access is otherwise constrained by applicable authority, any attorney, or any party if unrepresented, who files a document pursuant to these rules with the prothonotary's office shall comply with the requirements of Sections 7.0 and 8.0 of the Case Records Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania (Policy) including a certification of compliance with the Policy and, as necessary, a Confidential Information Form or a Confidential Document Form in accordance with the Policy.

Comment

Applicable authority includes but is not limited to statute, procedural rule, or court order. The Case Records Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania (Policy) can be found on the website of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania at https://www.pacourts.us/public-records. Sections 7.0(D) and 8.0(D) of the Policy provide that the certification shall be in substantially the following form:

I certify that this filing complies with the provisions of the *Case Records Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania* that require filing confidential information and documents differently than non-confidential information and documents.

The Confidential Information Form and the Confidential Document Form can be found at <https://www.pacourts.us/public-records>.

Explanatory Comment—2021

Subdivision (a)(1) requires that the parties' full names are used in a domestic relations case caption unless the court determines it necessary to protect the child's identity by initializing the case caption in a custody action based on sensitive facts in the case and the child's best interest. Generally, a child custody case does not include sensitive information or egregious facts that would cause embarrassment to a child and necessitate exceptional privacy measures; however, in the unusual circumstance that a custody action has egregious facts that may cause an issue for the child, the trial court would have the discretion to initialize the caption in order to maintain the child's privacy interests.

Subdivision (a)(2) provides the exception to the general rule in subdivision (a)(1) for a custody action in which the court deems that the child could be adversely affected by the sensitive nature of the facts in the record. In a custody case in which the trial court determines the child's best interest requires an initialized caption, Pa.R.C.P. No. 1915-10(b)(4) requires that additional privacy safeguards are in the written custody order or opinion entered by the court.

The rule's requirement that a case caption use the parties' full names does not alter a party's or an attorney's responsibilities under the *Case Records Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania* and subdivision (b).

Source

The provisions of this Rule 1930.1 adopted December 2, 1994, effective March 1, 1995, 24 Pa.B. 6293; amended January 5, 2018, effective January 6, 2018, 48 Pa.B. 477; amended June 1, 2018, effective July 1, 2018, 48 Pa.B. 3520; amended October 22, 2020, effective January 1, 2021, 50 Pa.B. 6199; amended December 1, 2021, effective January 1, 2022, 51 Pa.B. 7620. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (403257) to (403258).

Rule 1930.2. No Post-trial Practice. Motions for Reconsideration.

(a) There shall be no motions for post-trial relief in any domestic relations matter, including Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation matters.

Official Note: See Pa.R.C.P., No. 1957.

(b) A party aggrieved by the decision of the court may file a motion for reconsideration in accordance with Pa.R.A.P. 1701(b)(3). If the court does not grant the motion for reconsideration within the time permitted, the time for filing a notice of appeal will run as if the motion for reconsideration had never been presented to the court.

Official Note: Pennsylvania Rule of Appellate Procedure 903 states that the Notice of Appeal shall be filed within 30 days after the entry of the order from which the appeal is taken, except as otherwise set forth in that rule.

(c) The court shall render its reconsidered decision within 120 days of the date the motion for reconsideration is granted, except as set forth in subdivision (e). If the court's decision is not rendered within 120 days, the motion shall be deemed denied.

(d) If the court does not enter a reconsidered decision within 120 days, the time for filing a notice of appeal will begin to run anew from the date of entry of the reconsidered decision or from the 121st day after the motion for reconsideration was granted.

(e) If the court grants the motion for reconsideration and files its order within the 30-day appeal period, the court may issue an order during the applicable 120-day period directing that additional testimony be taken. If the court issues an order for additional testimony, the reconsidered decision need not be rendered within 120 days, and the time for filing a notice of appeal will run from the date the reconsidered decision is rendered.

Source

The provisions of this Rule 1930.2 adopted March 30, 1994, effective July 1, 1994, 24 Pa.B. 1941; amended May 31, 2000, effective July 1, 2000, 30 Pa.B. 3155; amended October 6, 2016, effective January 1, 2017, 46 Pa.B. 6612. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (376559) to (376560).

Rule 1930.3. Testimony by Electronic Means.

With the approval of the court upon good cause shown, a party or witness may be deposed or testify by telephone, audiovisual or other electronic means at a designated location in all domestic relations matters.

Source

The provisions of this Rule 1930.3 adopted December 8, 1994, effective July 1, 1995, 24 Pa.B. 6399; amended May 31, 2000, effective July 1, 2000, 30 Pa.B. 3155. Immediately preceding text appears at serial page (256290).

Rule 1930.4. Service of Original Process in Domestic Relations Matters.**(a) Personal Service.**

(1) *Persons Who May Serve.* A sheriff or competent adult, as defined in Pa.R.Civ.P. 76, may effectuate personal service of original process in domestic relations matters, including Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation matters.

(2) Manner of Service.

(i) A sheriff or competent adult may serve original process:

(A) by handing a copy of the original process to the defendant;

(B) at the defendant's residence by handing a copy of the original process to:

(I) an adult member of the family with whom the defendant resides; but if an adult family member is unavailable, then to an adult in charge of the residence; or

(II) the clerk or manager of the hotel, inn, apartment house, boarding house, or other place of lodging; or

(C) at the defendant's office or usual place of business by handing a copy of the original process to the defendant's agent or the person for the time being in charge; or

(ii) pursuant to special order of court.

(3) *Service in Protection From Abuse and Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation Matters.*

(i) If the sheriff or competent adult cannot complete personal service within 48 hours after a Protection From Abuse or a Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation petition is filed, the court may authorize alternative service by special order as set forth in subdivision (a)(2)(ii).

(ii) Alternative service may include, but is not limited to, service by mail pursuant to subdivision (b) or service by commercial carrier pursuant to subdivision (c).

(b) Service by Mail.

(1) In domestic relations matters, except Protection from Abuse and Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation matters, a party may serve the original process, a notice or order to appear, if required, and other orders or documents, as necessary, by United States Postal Service (USPS) first class regular and certified mail to the defendant's last known address.

(i) The party serving the original process by mail shall:

(A) restrict delivery of the certified mail to the addressee only; and

(B) request a return receipt, which may be an electronic return receipt.

(ii) *Completed Service by Mail.* Service of original process is complete when:

(A) the return receipt bears the defendant's purported signature indicating receipt of the certified mail;

(B) the return receipt acknowledges delivery of the certified mail to the defendant consistent with USPS policy and the first class regular mail is not returned within 15 days of mailing; or

(C) USPS returns the certified mail indicating the defendant refused delivery, but the first class regular mail is not returned within 15 days of mailing.

(iii) *Incomplete Service by Mail.*

(A) Service of original process is incomplete when:

(I) USPS returns the certified mail with a notation indicating that the mail was unclaimed by the defendant; or

(II) is otherwise inconsistent with subdivision (b)(1)(ii).

(B) If service by mail is incomplete, the party attempting service shall utilize another method pursuant to these rules to effectuate service.

(2) *Protection from Abuse and Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation Matters.* A party may serve original process by mail, if authorized by the court under subdivision (a)(2)(ii).

(c) *Service by Commercial Carrier.*

(1) In all domestic relations matters, except Protection from Abuse and Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation matters, a party may serve the original process, a notice or order to appear, if required, and other orders or documents, as necessary, by commercial carrier and USPS first class regular mail to the defendant's last known address.

(i) The party serving the original process by commercial carrier shall:

(A) restrict delivery of the commercial carrier's package to the defendant's address only; and

(B) request that the commercial carrier provide a return receipt, which may be an electronic return receipt, detailing the date of delivery, the delivery address, and to whom the package was delivered.

(ii) *Completed Service by Commercial Carrier.* Service of original process is complete when:

(A) the return receipt bears the defendant's purported signature indicating receipt of the commercial carrier's package;

(B) the return receipt acknowledges delivery of the commercial carrier's package to the defendant's address consistent with the commercial carrier's policy and the first class regular mail is not returned within 15 days; or

(C) the commercial carrier returns the package indicating the defendant refused delivery, but the first class regular mail is not returned within 15 days of mailing.

(iii) *Incomplete Service by Commercial Carrier.*

(A) Service of original process is incomplete when:

(I) the commercial carrier returns the package indicating that the package was unclaimed by the defendant; or

(II) is otherwise inconsistent with subdivision (c)(1)(ii).

(B) If service by commercial carrier is incomplete, the party attempting service shall utilize another service method pursuant to these rules.

(2) *Protection from Abuse and Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation Matters.* A party may serve original process by commercial carrier, if authorized by the court under subdivision (a)(2)(ii).

(d) *Acceptance of Service.* The defendant or the defendant's authorized agent may accept service of original process as set forth in Pa.R.Civ.P. 402(b).

(e) *Time for Service.*

(1) *Service Within the Commonwealth.* Within 30 days of filing the original process, a person or party shall serve the original process on a defendant located within the Commonwealth.

(2) *Service Outside of the Commonwealth.*

(i) Within 90 days of filing the original process, a person or party shall serve the original process on a defendant located outside the Commonwealth as:

(A) authorized by this rule;

(B) provided by the law of the jurisdiction in which defendant will be served;

(C) provided by treaty; or

(D) directed by the foreign authority in response to a letter rogatory or request.

(ii) *Protection from Abuse and Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation Matters.*

(A) A person shall serve original process on a defendant located outside of the Commonwealth by personal service as provided:

(I) in subdivision (a); or

(II) by the law in the jurisdiction where the defendant resides or is located.

(B) If personal service is not completed within 48 hours after the filing of the original process, a person or party may serve a defendant located outside of the Commonwealth by other means authorized by this rule.

(f) *Service of Original Process on an Incarcerated Party.*

(1) A party serving original process on an incarcerated party in a domestic relations action shall include:

(i) a notice of any proceeding; and

(ii) a specific notice of the incarcerated party's right to petition the court to participate in the proceeding.

(2) A party may petition the court to request that the incarcerated party participate in a proceeding when:

(i) the incarcerated party seeks to participate as provided by statute or rule; or

(ii) another party requires the incarcerated party's participation or testimony.

(g) *Reinstatement of Original Process.*

(1) If a person or party cannot complete service within the time required by subdivision (e), the prothonotary shall reinstate the original process upon the party's *praecipe*:

(i) accompanied by the original process; or

(ii) indicating that the original process has been lost or destroyed and accompanied by a substituted original process.

(2) A person or party shall serve the reinstated original process within the time periods set forth in subdivision (e).

- (3) A party may:
- (i) request the prothonotary reinstate the original process at any time or any number of times; or
 - (ii) name a new party defendant in a reinstated original process only if the complaint or petition has not been served on a defendant.
- (h) *Proof of Service.*
- (1) *Original Process Served.*
 - (i) A party or person serving the original process shall complete a proof of service, which shall be by an affidavit if an individual other than a sheriff serves the original process.
 - (ii) The proof of service shall state:
 - (A) the date and time of service;
 - (B) the place of service;
 - (C) the manner in which service was made;
 - (D) the identity of the person served;
 - (E) other facts necessary for the court to determine whether proper service has been made; and
 - (F) the additional documents required in subdivision (h)(3), as necessary.
 - (2) *Personal Service Pursuant to Subdivision (a).* The proof of service shall be filed in the appropriate filing office within ten days of the date of service.
 - (3) *Service by Mail or Commercial Carrier Pursuant to Subdivisions (b) or (c).*
 - (i) *Service Complete under Subdivision (b)(1)(ii)(A) or (c)(1)(ii)(A).*
 - (A) The proof of service shall include the return receipt bearing the defendant's purported signature; and
 - (B) The proof of service shall be filed within ten days of the date the defendant signed the return receipt.
 - (ii) *Service Complete under Subdivision (b)(1)(ii)(B) or (c)(1)(ii)(B).*
 - (A) The proof of service shall include:
 - (I) the return receipt or envelope acknowledging delivery to the defendant's residence consistent with USPS or the commercial carrier's policy; and
 - (II) an affidavit indicating the first class regular mail was not returned within 15 days of mailing.
 - (B) The proof of service shall be filed within ten days of the date:
 - (I) the return receipt acknowledges delivery to the defendant's address consistent with USPS or the commercial carrier's policy; and
 - (II) after the passage of time set forth in subdivisions (b)(1)(ii)(B) or (c)(1)(ii)(B).
 - (iii) *Service Complete under Subdivision (b)(1)(ii)(C) or (c)(1)(ii)(C).*
 - (A) The proof of service shall include:
 - (I) the return receipt or envelope acknowledging the attempted delivery to the defendant's residence and that delivery had been refused; and
 - (II) an affidavit stating the first class regular mail was not returned within 15 days after mailing.
 - (B) The proof of service shall be filed within ten days of the date:

- (I) the return receipt acknowledges the attempted delivery to the defendant's address consistent with USPS or the commercial carrier's policy; and
- (II) after the passage of time set forth in subdivisions (b)(1)(ii)(C) or (c)(1)(ii)(C).
- (4) *Acceptance of Service Pursuant to Subdivision (d).*
- (i) If the defendant or the defendant's authorized agent accepts service of the original process as authorized in subdivision (d), the defendant or the defendant's authorized agent shall sign an Acceptance of Service on the form set forth in Pa.R.Civ.P. 402(b).
- (ii) The Acceptance of Service shall be filed in the appropriate filing office within ten days of accepting service.
- (5) *Original Process Not Served.*
- (i) If a party or person cannot serve the defendant within the time allowed in subdivision (e), the party or person attempting service:
- (A) shall complete a proof of no service promptly; and
- (B) file the proof of no service in the appropriate filing office within ten days of the expiration of time allowed for service in subdivision (e).
- (ii) If a party or a person other than a sheriff attempts service of the original process, the proof of no service shall be by an affidavit stating with particularity the efforts made to effect service.
- (i) *Appearance at Hearing or Conference.* A party appearing for a hearing or conference will be deemed to have been served.

Comment:

Additional alternative procedures for service outside the Commonwealth are set forth in 42 Pa.C.S. §§ 5323 and 5329(2). For Protection from Abuse and Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation matters served outside of the Commonwealth, the party shall attempt personal service first before service can be made by certified and first class regular mail or by other means prescribed in subdivision (e)(2).

Subdivision (f) addresses service of original process on an incarcerated party, and the incarcerated party's right to seek permission to appear and testify. *See Vanaman v. Cowgill*, 526 A.2d 1226 (Pa. Super. 1987) and *Salemo v. Salemo*, 554 A.2d 563 (Pa. Super. 1989).

The Domestic Relations Section is the filing office for child support, spousal support, and alimony *pendente lite* cases. *See Pa.R.Civ.P. 1910.4(a)*.

The timing of an attorney's solicitation of a prospective client in actions governed by the Family Court Rules, *see* Pa.R.Civ.P. 1931(a), and actions pursuant to the Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation Act, *see* 42 Pa.C.S. §§ 62A03—62A20, are restricted until proof of service appears on the docket. *See* Pennsylvania Rule of Professional Conduct 7.3(b)(4).

Source

The provisions of this Rule 1930.4 adopted October 2, 1995, effective January 1, 1996, 25 Pa.B. 4518; amended May 14, 1999, effective July 1, 1999, 29 Pa.B. 2767; amended October 11, 2002, effective immediately, 32 Pa.B. 5263; amended August 8, 2006, effective immediately, 36 Pa.B. 4709; amended March 4, 2014, effective in 30 days on April 3, 2014, 44 Pa.B. 1749; amended March 4, 2015, effective in 30 days on April 3, 2015, 45 Pa.B. 1354; amended October 6, 2016, effective January 1, 2017, 46 Pa.B. 6612; amended September 12, 2018, effective September 28, 2018, 48 Pa.B. 6257; amended June 9, 2022, effective October 1, 2022, 52 Pa.B. 3579. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (393969) to (393972).

1930-6.1

Rule 1930.5. Discovery in Domestic Relations Matters.

(a) There shall be no discovery in a simple support, custody, Protection from Abuse, or Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation proceedings unless authorized by order of court.

(b) Discovery shall be available without leave of court in accordance with Pa.R.C.P. Nos. 4001—4025 in alimony, equitable distribution, counsel fees and expense, and complex support proceedings.

Source

The provisions of this Rule 1930.5 adopted May 5, 1997, effective July 1, 1997, 27 Pa.B. 2532; amended March 9, 1998, effective July 1, 1998, 28 Pa.B. 1391; amended June 5, 2001, effective immediately, 31 Pa.B. 3306; amended October 6, 2016, effective January 1, 2017, 46 Pa.B. 6612. Immediately preceding text appears at serial page (322447).

Rule 1930.6. Paternity Actions. Scope. Venue. Commencement of Action.

(a) This rule shall govern the procedure by which a putative father may initiate a civil action to establish paternity and seek genetic testing. Such an action shall not be permitted if an order already has been entered as to the paternity, custody, or support of the child, or if a support or custody action to which the putative father is a party is pending.

(b) An action may be brought only in the county in which the defendant or the child(ren) reside.

(c) An action shall be commenced by filing a verified complaint to establish paternity and for genetic testing substantially in the form set forth in subdivision (1). The complaint shall have as its first page the Notice of Hearing and Order set forth in subdivision (2).

Official Note: See Pa.R.C.P. No. 1930.1(b). This rule may require attorneys or unrepresented parties to file confidential documents and documents containing confidential information that are subject to the *Case Records Public Access Policy of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania*.

(1) The complaint filed in a civil action to establish paternity shall be substantially in the following form:

(Caption)

COMPLAINT TO ESTABLISH PATERNITY AND FOR GENETIC TESTING

Plaintiff, _____, requests genetic testing to establish paternity pursuant to 23 Pa.C.S. § 4343 and in support of that request states that:

1. Plaintiff is an adult individual who resides at _____.
2. Defendant is an adult individual who resides at _____.
3. Defendant is the natural mother and Plaintiff believes that he may be the natural father of the following child(ren):

1930-6.2

Child's Name

Date of Birth

4. The above-named children reside at the following address with the following individuals:

Address	Person(s) Living with Child	Relationship to Child
---------	-----------------------------	-----------------------

5. Defendant was/was not married at the time the child(ren) was/were conceived or born.

6. Defendant is/is not now married. If married, spouse's name: _____

7. There is/is not a custody, support or other action involving the paternity of the above-named child(ren) now pending in any jurisdiction. Identify any such actions by caption and docket number _____

8. There has/has not been a determination by any court as to the paternity of the child(ren) in any prior support, custody, divorce or any other action. If so, identify the action by caption and docket number _____

9. Plaintiff agrees to pay all costs associated with genetic testing directly to the testing facility in accordance with the procedures established by that facility.

Wherefore, Plaintiff requests that the court order Defendant to submit to genetic testing and to make the child(ren) available for genetic testing.

I verify that the statements made in this complaint are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904 relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Petitioner

(2) The Notice of Hearing and Order required by this rule shall be substantially in the following form:

(Caption)

NOTICE OF HEARING AND ORDER

YOU HAVE BEEN SUED IN COURT. If you wish to defend against the claims set forth in the following papers, you must appear at the hearing scheduled below. If you fail to do so, the case may proceed against you and a final order may be entered against you granting the relief requested by the plaintiff.

Plaintiff and Defendant are directed to appear on the ____ day of _____, 20__ at _____ .m. in courtroom _____ for a hearing on Plaintiff's request for genetic testing. If you fail to appear as ordered, the court may enter an order in your absence requiring you and your child(ren) to submit to genetic tests.

YOU SHOULD TAKE THIS PAPER TO YOUR LAWYER AT ONCE. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A LAWYER, GO TO OR TELEPHONE THE OFFICE SET FORTH BELOW. THIS OFFICE CAN PROVIDE YOU WITH INFORMATION ABOUT HIRING A LAWYER. IF YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO HIRE A LAWYER, THIS OFFICE MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE YOU WITH INFORMATION ABOUT AGENCIES THAT MAY OFFER LEGAL SERVICES TO ELIGIBLE PERSONS AT A REDUCED FEE OR NO FEE.

(name) _____

(address) _____

(telephone number) _____

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

The Court of Common Pleas of _____ County is required by law to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For information about accessible facilities and reasonable accommodations available to disabled individuals having business before the court, please contact our office. All arrangements must be made at least 72 hours prior to any hearing or business before the court. You must attend the scheduled conference or hearing.

(d) *Service.* Service of original process and proof of service in a civil action to establish paternity shall be in accordance with Rule 1930.4.

(e) *Hearing and Order.* At the hearing, the judge will determine whether or not the plaintiff is legally entitled to genetic testing and, if so, will issue an order directing the defendant and the child(ren) to submit to genetic testing, the cost of which shall be borne by the plaintiff.

Source

The provisions of this Rule 1930.6 adopted June 5, 2001, effective immediately, 31 Pa.B. 3306; amended June 24, 2002, effective immediately, 32 Pa.B. 3389; amended March 18, 2004, effective June 16, 2004, 34 Pa.B. 1754; amended January 5, 2018, effective January 6, 2018, 48 Pa.B. 477; amended June 1, 2018, effective July 1, 2018, 48 Pa.B. 3520. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (390149) to (390151).

Rule 1930.7. Status Conference.

At any time in the proceedings, the court, the court's designee or the hearing officer, *sua sponte* or upon application of any party, may hold a status conference, in person or by any other means permitted by these rules, with the parties' counsel, the parties and counsel, or self-represented parties in order to review the case status and expedite the litigation.

Source

The provisions of this Rule 1930.7 adopted August 18, 2006, effective immediately, 36 Pa.B. 5571; amended October 19, 2021, effective January 1, 2022, 51 Pa.B. 6764. Immediately preceding text appears at serial page (393974).

Rule 1930.8. Self-Represented Party.

(a) A party representing himself or herself shall enter a written appearance which shall state an address, which need not be his or her home address, where the party agrees that pleadings and other legal papers may be served, and a telephone number through which the party may be contacted. The entry of appearance may include a facsimile number as provided by Pa.R.C.P. No. 1012.

(b) A self-represented party is under a continuing obligation to provide current contact information to the court, to other self-represented parties, and to attorneys of record.

(c) When a party has an attorney of record, the party may assert his or her self-representation by:

- (1) Filing a written entry of appearance and directing the prothonotary/ court clerk to remove the name of his or her counsel of record with contemporaneous notice to said counsel, or
- (2) Filing an entry of appearance with the withdrawal of appearance signed by his or her attorney of record.
- (d) The self-represented party shall provide a copy of the entry of appearance to all self-represented parties and attorneys of record.
- (e) The assertion of self-representation shall not delay any stage of the proceeding.
- (f) The entry of appearance of a self-represented party shall be substantially in the following form:

[CAPTION]

ENTRY OF APPEARANCE OF SELF-REPRESENTED PARTY

PURSUANT TO Pa.R.C.P. No. 1930.8

I, _____, Plaintiff or Defendant (circle one), represent myself in the within action.

REMOVAL OR WITHDRAWAL OF COUNSEL OF RECORD (If Applicable)

Remove _____, Esq., as my attorney of record.

Withdraw my appearance for the filing party.

_____ Esq. (Print name) ID# _____

_____ Signature DATE: _____

I understand that I am under a continuing obligation to provide current contact information to the court, to other self-represented parties, and to attorneys of record.

All pleadings and legal papers can be served on me at the address listed below, which may or may not be my home address pursuant to Rule 1930.8:

Print Name	
_____	_____
Signature	Telephone number
_____	_____
Address	FAX
_____	_____
City, State, Zip Code	Date

THE PARTY FILING THIS ENTRY OF APPEARANCE MUST PROVIDE NOTICE BY SENDING A COPY TO ALL PARTIES AND ATTORNEYS, INCLUDING THE ATTORNEY REMOVED FROM THE CASE.

Official Note: This form cannot be used when filing for support through the Department of Public Welfare Bureau of Child Support Enforcement’s E-Services program. An entry of appearance form is available on the E-Services site for individuals filing through that program.

Explanatory Comment—2013

Withdrawal of appearance by counsel of record without the entry of appearance by a self-represented party is governed by Pa.R.C.P. No. 1012. Service of original process in domestic relations matters is governed by Pa.R.C.P. No. 1930.4. Service of legal papers other than original process is governed by Pa.R.C.P. No. 440.

Source

The provisions of this Rule 1930.8 adopted June 5, 2013, effective in 30 days on July 5, 2013, 43 Pa.B. 3329; amended March 4, 2015, effective in 30 days on April 3, 2015, 45 Pa.B. 1354. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (372675) to (372676).

Rule 1930.9. Family Court Forms.

Forms adopted by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and included in the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure relating to the practice and procedure of domestic relations matters shall be accepted for filing in all jurisdictions. Some of these forms may be maintained for public access at a website designated by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

Official Note: Pa.R.C.P. No. 205.2 provides: “No pleading or other legal paper that complies with the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure shall be refused for filing by the prothonotary based on a requirement of a local rule of civil procedure or judicial administration. . . .”

Source

The provisions of this Rule 1930.9 adopted June 16, 2014, effective in 30 days on July 16, 2014, 44 Pa.B. 4168.

Rule 1931. Family Court Rules.(a) *Actions Governed by These Rules.*

- (1) *Divorce, Annulment, Dissolution of Marriage.*
 - (i) Equitable Distribution.
 - (ii) Alimony/Alimony Pendente Lite.
 - (iii) Counsel Fees, Costs and Expenses.
- (2) *Child Custody.*
 - (i) Legal Custody.
 - (ii) Physical Custody.
 - (iii) Partial Custody/Visitation.
- (3) *Support.*
 - (i) Child Support.
 - (ii) Spousal Support.
 - (iii) Modification and Enforcement.
- (4) *Paternity.*
- (5) *Protection From Abuse.*

(b) *Commencement of Action.*

(1) *Unified Family Court Docketing.* All actions under these Family Court Rules which involve identical parties shall be entered on the court’s docket under the same primary case number. Additional letters or numbers may be added parenthetically to specify the type of action, judge assigned or other identifying information.

(2) *Custody Agreements.* If, at a support proceeding, it appears that resolution of custody issues will facilitate compliance with the child support order, the conference officer or hearing officer may provide the parties with a form custody complaint and form custody agreement, along with information as to where to file the completed documents, the filing fee, and how to contact the

lawyers referral service. The support conference officer or hearing officer shall not participate in custody negotiations, preparation of the forms, or provide legal advice.

(c) *Consolidation of Family Court Matters.*

(1) *General Rule.* Two or more actions under these Family Court Rules involving the same parties and common questions of law and/or fact shall be consolidated for hearing or trial unless the court determines that it is inappropriate or impractical to do so.

(2) *Trial Continuity.* Trials before a judge or hearings before a hearing officer shall be scheduled to be heard on consecutive days or within a ten-day period. If not completed within the time allotted, the trial or hearing shall be concluded within 90 days of the date of the commencement of the trial or hearing, unless a shorter time frame is required by statute or another procedural rule.

(3) *Prompt Decisions.*

(i) Except as provided in subdivision (c)(3)(ii), in any matter brought under these Family Court Rules, a decision by a conference officer, hearing officer, or judge shall be entered, filed, and served upon counsel for the parties, or any party not represented by counsel, not later than 30 days after the conference, hearing, or trial concludes, unless a shorter time frame is required by statute or another procedural rule.

(ii) The time for entering and filing a decision may be extended if, within 30 days of the conclusion of the conference, hearing, or trial, the court extends the date for such decision by order entered of record showing good cause for the extension. In no event shall an extension delay entry of the decision more than 60 days after the conclusion of the conference, hearing, or trial.

(d) *Continuing Education for Family Court Personnel.*

(1) *Program Development.* Courses of instruction that include, at a minimum, the following topics shall be developed or approved by the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC):

- (i) The substantive law and procedural aspects of the areas of law governed by these Family Court Rules;
- (ii) Domestic violence;
- (iii) Child development;
- (iv) Family dynamics;
- (v) Addictions and treatments;
- (vi) Asset valuation;
- (vii) Community resources.

(2) *Initial Training.* Within one year of assignment to cases governed by these Family Court Rules, each hearing officer, conciliator, mediator, and other

court personnel designated by the president or administrative judge of each judicial district shall successfully complete the coursework developed or approved by the AOPC.

(3) *Continuing Education.* Each hearing officer, conciliator, mediator, and other court personnel designated by the president or administrative judge who is assigned to cases governed by these Family Court Rules shall successfully complete six hours of continuing education developed or approved by the AOPC each calendar year following the calendar year in which the initial training was completed.

(4) *Compliance.* The AOPC shall monitor compliance with the educational requirements of this rule.

Source

The provisions of this Rule 1931 adopted December 17, 2002, effective immediately in the First, Fifth, Twenty-third and Forty-fifth Judicial Districts, 33 Pa.B. 13; amended October 19, 2021, effective January 1, 2022, 51 Pa.B. 6764. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (393976) to (393977).

[Next page is 1940-1.]

1930-12