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## State Court Administrator Policy on Best Practices for Attorneys – How to Avoid Deficiencies

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Effective January 1, 2019, the Maryland Rules authorize the State Court Administrator to publish examples of deficiencies under [Rule 20-203\(d\)](#). To avoid receiving a deficiency notice, follow these **Best Practices**:

- **Consolidated Cases:** Where a judge has issued an order consolidating cases and designates a lead case, all subsequent submissions must be made in the lead case. A submission into a subcase is deficient.
- **Electronic Filing Prohibited:** A submission should not be filed electronically if prohibited. [Rule 20-106\(c\)\(2\)](#).
- **Entry of Appearance for Attorney for Victim/Victim's Representative:** An attorney entering an appearance as attorney for the victim or victim's representative in a case must do so by using form MDJ-009 - Notice of Entry of Appearance by Attorney for Victim or Victim's Representative.
- **Fees:** Pay all required fees. [Rule 20-201\(l\)](#).
- **File Names:** Make sure that the electronic file name for each submission relates to the title of the submission. If a submission relates to another submission, refer to it in the file name. In other words, show that they're related. [Rule 20-201\(j\)](#).
- **Filing Codes:** Use the correct filing code. If you cannot find a code that exactly matches your submission, use the one that most closely matches it.
- **Legibility and Orientation:** The submission must be completely legible and must be scanned with the proper orientation. If it is upside down, sideways, blurry, or contains blank pages, the filing will be deficient and returned.
- **Multiple Submissions:** Multiple submissions (including proposed orders) in a case must be submitted *in the same envelope* as separate PDF files. [Rule 20-201\(e\)](#).
- **Non-Registered User:** The submission was filed by a registered user on behalf of a non-registered user.
- **Party Names:** Identify each party in the exact same way *every time* (spelling, first name, middle name(s), last name(s), initial(s), and other identifiers).
- **Proposed Order:** Submit as a separate document, identify the submission as a proposed order, and indicate the motion or other request for court action that it pertains to. [Rule 20-201\(k\)](#). This requirement does not apply to court forms that contain a form Order at the bottom of the page.
- **Relation to Case:** A submission must relate to the case in which it was filed.
- **Restricted Information:** A submission must not contain restricted information. If a submission is required to contain restricted information, submit a redacted copy. [Rule 20-201\(h\)](#).
- **Signatures and Related Information:**
  - A signature consists of the signer's typewritten name followed by a visual image of the signer's handwritten signature or by the symbol /s/. [Rule 20-101\(t\)](#).
  - A signature under oath, affirmation, or with verification must be hand-signed and scanned per [Rule 20-107\(d\)](#). Subject to Order of the Chief Judge of the COA, the State Court Administrator may be authorized to waive this requirement for the upcoming Landlord/Tenant Bulk Filing Pilot project.
  - The following information, although not part of the signature, must appear below the signature:
    - the filer's address;
    - email address;
    - telephone number; and
    - Client Protection Fund ID number.