

# **GUIDE TO PRACTICE**

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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA**

**December 27, 2023**

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the United States District Court, Western District of Louisiana. This Guide to Practice is designed for the assistance of practitioners before this Court. It is not a definitive statement of the law and may not be cited as such. Please consult the Federal Rules of Civil and Criminal Procedure and the Local Rules for the full text of rules. If there is a discrepancy with this Guide and the Federal Rules, the Federal Rules are controlling and not this Guide. The Western District is always happy to help attorneys and staff. Please contact the Clerk's Office if you need assistance.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE WESTERN DISTRICT

There are three (3) district courts in the State of Louisiana: Eastern 28 U.S.C. 98(a); Middle 28 U.S.C. 98(b); and Western 28 U.S.C. 98(c). The Western District is the largest court as far as area, consisting of 42 parishes bounded on the east by the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers, on the north by the State of Arkansas, on the west by the State of Texas, and on the south by the Gulf of Mexico. The Western District is divided into 5 administrative divisions: Alexandria, Lake Charles, Lafayette, Monroe, and Shreveport with court held in all five divisional offices.

### Filing Pleadings

The filing system for the Western District of Louisiana is now electronic. It is mandatory that attorneys file pleadings electronically. (LR5.7.01) Rules for electronic filing may be found in the "Administrative Procedures for Filing Documents" a copy of which may be viewed on the court's website at **[www.lawd.uscourts.gov](http://www.lawd.uscourts.gov)**. Filings by pro se litigants or attorneys exempted from electronic filing should be mailed or brought to: **United States District Court, Western District of Louisiana, 300 Fannin Street, Suite 1167, Shreveport, La. 71101-3083**. Pleadings **MAY NOT BE FILED BY FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION** in the Western District of Louisiana.

### Location of the Record

The electronic record may be accessed at **[www.lawd.uscourts.gov](http://www.lawd.uscourts.gov)** through PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records). Registered PACER users may be charged a fee based on the amount and type of information accessed in a calendar quarter. In the following situations, PACER is free: 1) if you are a party in a case and receive a Notice of Electronic or Notice of Docket Activity Court (one free copy) from a court; 2) if you view from the office of the Clerk of Court; 3) if you are an individual or group who was granted an exemption; or 4) if you seek a court opinion which is always free. (For more information on PACER please go to: <https://pacer.uscourts.gov>.)

Case records from 1999 through 2005 have been scanned in and recorded as electronic images and are available for viewing at any office of the Clerk of Court or by accessing PACER through the Court's website. Case records from January 1, 1977 to December 31, 1998 are available on microfilm. A complete set of microfiche case records are present in the Shreveport Office at all times. A microfiche copy of each closed case record filed in a particular division is present in the Clerk's office for that division.

**Indices:** The indices in this Court can be found on microfilm and also electronically. For older cases filed after 1977 and that are not electronic, each division has a microfilm index for the entire district both by party and by case. There is a card index of earlier cases in Shreveport.

**Venue:** Venue is the location where the action is pending. As a matter of law, venue only applies to the district. There is no divisional right of venue. (Exception: 28 U.S.C. § 1441(a) requires that a case be removed to the district and division where it is pending.) Normally, cases are assigned to the division where the action arose or where a preponderance of the parties is located. However, assignment of cases is a matter of administration and is accomplished in accordance with the instructions of the Court.

## State and Federal Court Differences

**FEES:** In state court, a deposit must be made prior to filing a suit and there is a charge for each document filed in the case. In federal court, there is an initial filing fee for the filing of the Complaint. Generally, there is no fee for filing any subsequent pleadings in the court except for a notice of appeal.

**JURIES:** In state court, a deposit must be made to cover the cost of a jury. In federal court, there is no charge when a party requests a jury. However, if the parties fail to timely notify the Court of a settlement and the jurors appear needlessly, one or both of the parties may be assessed jury costs under LR54.1.

**CASE MANAGEMENT:** In state court, the attorney is permitted to control the pace of the litigation. In federal court, once the complaint is filed, the court takes control of the management of the case. Calendaring for scheduling, status, settlement and pretrial conferences and trials is controlled by the Court. Informal or voluntary extensions of time between attorneys are not recognized by the Court, unless ordered or approved by the Court. If the attorneys fail to move the case, the action may be dismissed for failure to prosecute under LR41.3 (e.g. no service of process within 90 days of the filing of the complaint, or failure to join issue by answer or default within 60 days after service of process).

**EXECUTION OF JUDGMENTS:** This is one area where there is very little difference between state and federal court. Under FRCP 69 (a) "The procedures on execution \* \* \* shall be in

accordance with the practice and procedure of the state in which the district court is held..." If the judgment is in favor of the United States, however, special rules apply, and the Federal Debt Collection Procedures Act, 28 U.S.C. 3001, et seq. should be followed.

## **I. GENERAL RULES OF PLEADING**

### **1. Size of Paper (LR10.1)**

Pleadings should be on 8 ½" X 11" letter-size paper.

### **2. Caption (FRCP 10(a) and LR10.1)**

Caption should contain the following: name of the court, division of the court, title of the action, civil action number, judge and magistrate Judge, name of pleading (e.g. "complaint", "answer", etc.) and jury demand (if one is contained in the pleading) under LR38.1. In the original Complaint, the title of the action shall include the names of all parties, but in all other pleadings it is sufficient to state the name of the first plaintiff, et al., and the name of the first defendant, et al.

#### **EXAMPLE OF A CAPTION:**

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**

**WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA**

**SHREVEPORT DIVISION**

**PAUL PLAINTIFF, ET AL.**

**NO. 5:91cv1234**

**VERSUS**

**JUDGE HICKS**

**MIKE DEFENDANT, ET AL.**

**MAG. JUDGE HORNSBY**

### **3. Signatures (FRCP 11, LR5.7.08, 11.1, 11.2)**

- a. The user login and password required for attorneys to submit documents electronically is the attorney's signature for all purposes.
- b. Documents must still contain a signature line. Attorneys may "sign" the signature line using this format: "s/attorney's name."
- c. Attorneys must provide the following information below the signature line:  
  
(1) Name of Attorney (Note: If more than one attorney appears for a single party, there must be a designation of Trial Attorney or TA.)

- (2) Name of Law Firm
- (3) Address
- (4) Telephone and fax number
- (5) Attorney Identification number (Louisiana Bar Number or other)
- (6) Email address

**EXAMPLE OF ADDRESS/SIGNATURE INFORMATION**

\_\_\_s/I.M. Attorney, T.A. \_\_\_\_\_

I. M. Attorney, T.A., Bar #12345  
Smith & Smith  
123 Main Street  
Main City, LA 70000  
imattorney@lawfirm.com  
Phone: (318) 226-1234  
Fax: (318) 226-5678

**4. Service of Process (FRCP 4)**

A summons and a copy of the Complaint must be served upon each defendant under FRCP 4(a) unless defendant signs a waiver of service under FRCP 4(d).

**a. Summons – Issuance under FRCP 4(b)**

Upon filing a new civil action or a document adding a new party (e.g., amended complaint or third party complaint), summons will now be issued electronically by the Clerk’s Office pursuant to Standing Order 1.14 and sent to counsel through the system by the “Notice of Electronic Filing.” Counsel will print the summons and serve along with the complaint according to Federal Rule Civil Procedure 4. Attorneys who wish to have summons issued on demand may do so by filing a “Proposed Summons/Request for Summons” within the ECF System. Note: Cases exempt from this process include: notices of removal, transfers from other United States District Courts and bankruptcy appeals.

**b. Waiver of Service under FRCP 4(d) and 12(a)(1)(B)**

- (1) Waiver of service is equivalent to service of process except –

- (a) There is no waiver of "any objection to the venue or to the jurisdiction of the court over the person of the defendant." (FRCP 4(d)(1))
- (b) Time to answer is 60 days from mailing of the request for waiver. See also FRCP 4(d)(3) and 12 (a)(1)(B).

**c. Obligation to Serve under FRCP 4(c)(1)**

"The plaintiff is responsible for having the summons and complaint served within the time allowed by Rule 4(m) and must furnish the necessary copies to the person who makes service."

**d. Who can serve a summons and complaint under FRCP 4(c)(2)**

Any person who is at least 18 years of age and not a party may serve a summons and complaint.

**e. How process can be served**

- (1) On an Individual by
  - (a) personal delivery; (FRCP 4(e)(2))
  - (b) domiciliary service (i.e. "leaving copies thereof at the individual's dwelling house or usual place of abode with some person of suitable age or discretion then residing therein..."); (FRCP 4(e)(2))
  - (c) delivery to an authorized agent; (FRCP 4(e)(2))
  - (d) under the law of the State of Louisiana. (FRCP 4(e)(1)) (For example under Long Arm Service under La. R.S. 13:3201, et seq.)
- (2) On a corporation, partnership or unincorporated association by
  - (a) delivery to an officer, managing or general agent or to an agent appointed for service of process; (FRCP 4(h)(1))
  - (b) under the law of the State of Louisiana. FRCP 4(e)(1); FRCP 4(h)(1)(Long Arm Service, La. R.S. 13:3201, et seq.)
- (3) On the United States of America by (FRCP 4(l))
  - (a) Delivery to the United States Attorney by

- (1) Personal delivery to the U. S. Attorney, an Assistant U. S. Attorney or an employee of the U. S. Attorney designated for service of process;
- (2) Registered or certified mail addressed to the "civil process clerk" at the U. S. Attorney's office:
  - (a) Registered or certified mail to the United States Attorney General;
  - (b) Registered or certified mail to the head of any agency of the United States that is being sued. Note: If an officer or employee of the United States is being sued in an individual capacity in connection with their service with the government, the United States must be served as set forth above AND the officer or employee must be served individually as provided in Fed.R.Civ.P. 4(e),(f) or (g) [i.e. normal service on an individual]. Fed.R.Civ.P. 4(i)(2).

**f. Proof of service (FRCP 4(l))**

- (1) Form "USM 285" is proof of service by a United States Marshal.
- (2) An affidavit of service is proof of service by anyone other than a United States Marshal.
  - (a) Under 28 U.S.C. §1746 an unsworn declaration under penalty of perjury may be substituted for an affidavit.
  - (b) The proof of service must bear an original signature. A photocopy is not sufficient.
  - (c) If proof of service is made on a copy of the reverse side of a subpoena, the front must also be copied to indicate what was served.
- (3) When Long Arm Service is made, proof of service is an affidavit of mailing along with the return receipt. **La. R.S. 13:3205.**

**g. Serving process in a foreign country (FRCP 4(f))**

- (1) by any internationally agreed means of service reasonably calculated to give notice, such as those means authorized by the Hague Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extrajudicial Documents;
- (2) if there is no internationally agreed means or if an international agreement allows but does not specify other means, by a method that is reasonably calculated to give notice:
  - (a) as prescribed by the foreign country's law for service in that country in an action in its courts of general jurisdiction;
  - (b) as the foreign authority directs in response to a letter rogatory or a letter of request; or
  - (c) unless prohibited by the foreign country's law, by:
    - (i) delivering a copy of the summons and the complaint to the individual personally; or
    - (ii) using any form of mail that the clerk addresses and sends to the individual and that requires a signed receipt; or
  - (d) by other means not prohibited by international agreement, as the court orders.

**h. Time limit for service of process (FRCP 4(m))**

- (1) Service of the summons and complaint must be made upon a defendant within **90 days of the filing of the complaint.**
- (2) Under Local Rule LR 41.3, a defendant may be dismissed "where no service of process has been made within 90 days after filing the complaint." The Order of Dismissal shall allow for reinstatement of the action within thirty (30) days for good cause shown.

**5. Certificate of Service for filings after the original complaint served (FRCP 5)**

For pleadings and motions filed after the original complaint, **a certificate of service is not required when a filing is served by filing it through the court's electronic filing system.** However, when a paper that is required to be served is served by other means, such as if the paper is filed, a certificate of service must be included with it or filed within a reasonable time after service.

**6. Filing of New Suit – Checklist (See FRCP 3, 8 & 10(a))**

- a. Complaint
- b. Civil Cover Sheet (JS 44 Form available at any office of the Clerk of Court and on the court's website at [www.lawd.uscourts.gov](http://www.lawd.uscourts.gov).)
- c. Pay fees. For a civil action, pay current filing fees. (28 U.S.C. § 1914) For an application to proceed for a writ of habeas corpus (including a petition under 28 U.S.C. § 2254), pay \$5.00. (28 U.S.C. § 1914) If unable to pay, proceed *In Forma Pauperis* (i.e. without prepayment of fees) which requires an affidavit in support of the application which can be found in any office of the Clerk of Court. (28 U.S.C. § 1915) NOTE: A seaman may proceed without prepayment of costs. Costs are billed at the conclusion of the case. (28 U.S.C. §1916.)

**II. MOTIONS - FRCP 7, LR7.1**

**1. Motions in General.** A request for a court order must be made by motion which, unless made during a hearing or trial, shall be made in writing, state with particularity the grounds therefore, and state the relief sought.

**2. Form**

**a. Notice** - It is not necessary for the attorney to file a "notice" with the motion. The Clerk will issue a "notice" of the motion immediately upon filing.

**b. Briefs**

A memorandum brief must accompany each motion except for those ex parte motions set forth in LR7.4.1. See also LR7.8.

- (1) A brief may not exceed 25 pages without permission of the Court.
- (2) A reply brief (which is any brief other than an original brief in support of or in opposition to the motion) may not exceed 10 pages. NOTE: The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure do not provide for the filing of a reply brief and acceptance of such brief is discretionary with the judge. Some judges require leave of court to file a reply. Please consult the practices of the individual judges.
- (3) Any brief exceeding 10 pages must have:
  - (a) A table of contents with page references; and

- (b) A table of cases (arranged alphabetically), statutes and other authorities cited, with references to the pages of the brief where they are cited.

**c. Motions Not Requiring a Brief (LR7.4.1)**

- (1) Ex parte motions do not require a brief but "must state the grounds therefore and cite any applicable rule, statute, or other authority justifying the relief sought."
- (2) "Prior to filing any motion under this section, with exception of a motion to withdraw as counsel, the moving party shall attempt to obtain consent for the filing and granting of such motion and a certificate of this attempt shall be included in the motion."

**d. Motions for Leave of Court to File a Pleading/Document. LR7.6**

- (1) Consent of opposing party must be sought prior to seeking leave of Court.
- (2) If the opposing party consents, the motion will be considered ex parte.

**e. Motions for Summary Judgment (LR56.1 & 56.2)**

- (1) Statement of Material Facts Not at Issue - "Every motion for summary judgment shall be accompanied by a separate, short and concise statement of the material facts as to which the moving party contends there is no genuine issue to be tried."
- (2) Statement of Material Fact at Issue - An opposition to a motion for summary judgment "shall include a separate, short and concise statement of the material facts as to which there exists a genuine issue to be tried."
- (3) Admission of Material Facts - "All material facts \* \* \* will be deemed admitted, for the purposes of the motion, unless controverted as required by this rule."

**f. Proposed Orders (To grant relief sought)**

- (1) Every ex parte motion should be accompanied by a proposed order.  
**(LR7.4.1)**

- (2) Every discovery motion should be accompanied by a proposed order.  
**(LR37.1)**
- (3) A proposed order shall be on a page separate from the motion and shall bear a caption. **(LR58.1)**

### **3. Notice and Hearing**

#### **a. Notice of Motion**

Immediately upon the filing of every adversary motion, the Clerk will issue a "Notice" setting forth:

- (1) The nature of the motion and the name of the party filing such motion;
- (2) The briefing schedule for the parties;
- (3) The judge's policy on oral argument;
- (4) The "hearing" date for the motion.

#### **b. Oral Argument (LR78.1)**

- (1) "Oral argument will be allowed only when ordered by the Court. All other motions will be decided by the Court on the basis of the record, including timely filed briefs and any supporting or opposing documents filed therewith."
- (2) Oral argument may be granted by the court on the motion of a party or ex proprio motu.

#### **c. Hearing**

- (1) No hearing on a motion will be held unless specifically ordered by the Court. The "hearing" date in the motion notice is the date upon which the motion is submitted to the judge or magistrate judge.
- (2) If a hearing is held, there can be no oral testimony offered without prior authorization of the Court. LR43.1

## **III. DISCOVERY, FRCP 5, 33, 37, 45; LR26**

**1. Discovery and Disclosure Materials** are not normally filed with the Court. (i.e. discovery requests and responses or any disclosures)

a. Discovery is generally a matter between counsel.

b. Exceptions:

Disclosures under Rule 26(a)(1) or (2) and the following discovery requests must not be filed unless they are used in the proceeding or the court orders filing: depositions, interrogatories, requests for documents or to permit entry upon land and requests for admission. FRCP 5(d)

c. The party making a discovery request is custodian of any discovery materials produced in response to that request. LR26.5

**2. Limit on Interrogatories (FRCP 33(a))**

No more than 25 written interrogatories may be propounded without leave of court.

**3. Requests for Production (See FRCP 45(b)(1) and LR26.5)**

Prior notice of any commanded production of documents and things \* \* \* before trial shall be served on each party....

**4. Format of Discovery Requests (LR26.2)**

a. Each discovery request shall have a space left after it sufficient to permit response to such request.

b. If the space left for response to a request is insufficient, the person responding shall repeat the request prior to making the response.

**5. Motions to Compel Discovery (FRCP 37(a)(2)(A) and LR37.1)**

a. Requirements:

(1) A copy of the discovery request in question along with any response thereto must be attached to any motion to compel.

(2) A certificate that amicable efforts to resolve the discovery dispute have been attempted must be attached to every motion to compel.

(a) Counsel for mover must have arranged a conference either personally or by telephone to settle the dispute.

(b) Mover must set forth the reason why settlement was not reached or the fact that the opposing party refused to confer if such is the case.

(c) Sanctions may be imposed for failure to confer or failure to confer in good faith.

(3) Every discovery motion must be accompanied by a proposed order covering the relief sought, which proposed order must bear a caption and be on a separate page from the motion. LR37.1

b. Motions to compel are noticed in the same manner as all adversary motions with the notice including briefing times, the judge's policy on oral argument, etc.

## **6. Depositions (FRCP 30)**

a. Prisoners - A party must obtain leave of court if the person to be examined is confined in prison.

b. Number of Depositions (without leave of court)

(1) Ten (10) per side

(2) One (1) per witness

c. Method of Recording

(1) The party who notices the deposition must state in the notice the method by which the testimony shall be recorded. Unless the court orders otherwise, it may be recorded by audio, audiovisual, or stenographic means. The party taking the deposition shall bear the cost of the recording. Any party may arrange to transcribe a deposition.

(2) With prior notice to the deponent and other parties, any party may designate another method for recording the testimony in addition to that specified in the original notice. The parties may stipulate or the court may order that a deposition be taken by telephone or other remote means.

d. Time Limit of Deposition

(1) A deposition is limited to one day of seven (7) hours.

(2) The court must allow additional time consistent with FRCP 26(b)(2) if needed for a fair examination of the deponent or if the deponent or

another person or other circumstance impeded or delays the examination.

#### **IV. SUBPOENAS, FRCP 45**

**1. Issuing Court**

A subpoena must issue from the Court where the action is pending.

**2. A Subpoena must issue from:**

- a. The Clerk of Court; or
- b. An attorney authorized to practice in the issuing court.

**3. Form of the Subpoena**

- a. Requirements:
  - (1) State the name of the court from which it issued;
  - (2) State the title of action and its civil action number;
  - (3) Command each person to appear & give testimony or to produce documents;
  - (4) Set out the text of FRCP 45 (d) and (e);
  - (5) Provide the signature of the issuing official (either the Clerk or the attorney).
- b. There is no longer a requirement that the "Seal" of the Court appear on a subpoena.
- c. A command to produce evidence or to permit inspection may be joined with a command to appear at trial or hearing, at a deposition or may be issued separately.
- d. The clerk must issue a subpoena, signed but otherwise in blank, to a party who requests it, who shall complete it before service.

**4. Service of the Subpoena (FRCP 45(b))**

- a. Any person who is not a party and who is at least 18 years of age may serve a subpoena.
- b. Service is made
  - (1) By delivering a copy to the named person, and

- (2) By tendering to that person, the fees for one day's attendance and the mileage allowed by law (if the person's attendance is commanded).
  - (a) A witness shall be paid an attendance fee of \$40 per day for each day's attendance. 28 U.S.C. §1821(b)
  - (b) Mileage allowance is based on the rate noted on the U. S. General Services website at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov).
- c. A subpoena may be served at any place within the United States. FRCP 45(b)(2)
- d. Proof of service of a subpoena (FRCP 45(b)(4))
  - (1) Ordinarily, proof of service of a subpoena does not have to be filed with the Court.
  - (2) Proof of service must be filed whenever there are proceedings to enforce the subpoena or for any other relief connected with such subpoena.

#### **5. Notice of Cancellation of a Subpoena**

- a. It is the duty of the attorney who issues a subpoena to notify the witness of any cancellation of the trial, hearing or deposition.
- b. Failure to notify a witness of cancellation may result in sanctions on the attorney who issued the subpoena.

### **V. DEFAULT JUDGMENT, FRCP 55, LR55.1**

Under FRCP 55, default judgment is a two-step process: (1) First, **"Entry" of Default must be entered after delays for answering have elapsed**; (2) Second, **"Judgment" by Default will be entered but only after a 14-day delay between "entry" and signing of a "judgment"** by default. The procedure in this Court parallels the Louisiana State Court procedure of "preliminary" default and "confirmation" of default.

#### **Default Checklist:**

- 1. Proof of service of process**
- 2. Request for entry of default**
- 3. Entry of Default by Clerk of Court**
  - a. A request for entry of default must be presented to the Clerk in writing.

- b. No request for entry of default will be considered unless there is proof of service of the summons and complaint filed in the record.
- c. Delay for answering. A defendant has 21 days from service of the summons and complaint upon such defendant to file an answer to the complaint, FRCP 12(a) EXCEPT as follows:
  - (1) The United States has 60 days to answer;
  - (2) When service is by the Long Arm Statute, La. R.S. 13:3205, default cannot be entered until a delay of 30 days from the filing of the affidavit of service has elapsed.
  - (3) When a motion is filed, the time for answering is extended until 14 days after notice of the Court's action on the motion (or when a motion for more definite statement is granted, until 14 days after service of the "more definite statement"). FRCP 12(a)
  - (4) When there has been a waiver of service, the time for answering is sixty (60) days from the date of mailing of the request for waiver of service.  
**(FRCP 4(d)(3))**

#### 4. **Judgment by Default**

- a. A judgment of default shall not be entered until 14 calendar days after entry of default. (LR55.1)
- b. An application for a default judgment should be by a "Motion for Default Judgment" and a proposed "Judgment by Default".
- c. **Judgment by the Clerk. (FRCP 55(b)(1))**
  - (1) "When the plaintiff's claim against a defendant is for a sum certain or for a sum which can by computation be made certain" the Clerk can enter a judgment by default. (Note: Default judgments by the Clerk normally include actions such as a suit on a promissory note, a suit on open account, etc.)
  - (2) Proof required for default judgment:
    - (a) "Entry" of default;
    - (b) Affidavit of account by a proper official (not the attorney for plaintiff);

- (c) Affidavit showing the defendant is not an infant or incompetent person; FRCP 55(b)(1)
  - (d) Affidavit showing the defendant is not in the active service of the armed forces;
  - (e) Any other proof required by the nature of the claim (e.g. a promissory note).
- d. **Judgment by the Court. (FRCP 55(b)(2))**
  - (1) Any claim which cannot be submitted to the Clerk should be submitted to a District Judge.
  - (2) Proof Required for a default judgment:
    - (a) "Entry" of default;
    - (b) Documentary proof;
    - (c) Live testimony. **CAVEAT:** If live testimony is required, plaintiff must apply to the Court for an evidentiary hearing and receive permission to present witnesses under LR43.1 A list of witnesses & a brief summary of their expected testimony should be included in any request.
- 3. Setting aside ENTRY of Default or JUDGMENT by Default.
  - (a) "Entry" of default can only be set aside by a motion to the Court "upon good cause shown."
  - (b) "Judgment" by default can only be set aside under FRCP 60(b). No pleadings will be filed on behalf of a defendant against whom default has been entered except a motion to set aside the default under FRCP 55(c).

## **VI. TAXATION OF COSTS**

### **1. In General (FRCP 54, LR54, 28 U.S.C. §1920)**

- a. The "Prevailing party" is awarded costs under FRCP 54(d). A judgment will normally state who is awarded costs. However, in the absence of such language,

the prevailing party will be presumed to have been awarded costs. A prevailing party is allowed a limited range of costs under 28 U.S.C. §1920.

- b. When to File a Bill of Costs (LR54): A party entitled to costs shall, within **30 days** after receiving notice of entry of judgment, serve on the attorney for the adverse party and file with the clerk a “Bill of Costs.”
- c. Documentation included with Bill of Costs:
  - 1. AO Form 133 (found on website at [www.lawd.uscourts.gov](http://www.lawd.uscourts.gov))
  - 2. Memorandum in support, documentation on each item of costs and an explanation as to why each item of costs was necessary and should be allowed. See LR54.3. **The Clerk can disallow any expenses that do not have an explanation or supporting documentation.**
  - 3. Itemize docket fees under 28 U.S.C. §1923.
- d. Objections to a bill of costs. Objections must be filed within **seven** days from the receipt of the application. LR54.4
- e. Clerk’s taxation. After the time for objections has run, the clerk will then tax costs. Costs may be taxed by the clerk on **14 days’ notice**. FRCP 54(d)(1)
- f. Review of Taxation. A party who is dissatisfied may file within **7 days** after taxation of costs, a motion to review the action of the clerk. LR54.5, Fed.R.Civ.P.54(d) A motion to review will be decided by the district judge who is assigned to the case.

## **2. Items Taxable as Costs**

- a. **Fees of the Clerk and the Marshal**
  - 1. Filing fees under 28 U.S.C. §1914.
  - 2. The United States as the prevailing party can recover filing fees under 28 U.S.C. §1914 and docket fees under 28 U.S.C. §1923, even if these costs were never actually pre-paid.
- b. **Fees of the Court Reporter for All or Any Part of the Transcript Necessarily Obtained for Use in the Case**
  - 1. Depositions may be allowed if

- (a) placed into evidence at trial
- (b) used for impeachment and cross-examination purposes
- (c) used in support of a successful motion for summary judgment
- (d) and other uses as determined as necessarily used for the case

2. Videotaped Depositions are allowed if entered into evidence at trial. Other uses of videotaped depositions are allowed only at the discretion of the judge.

c. **Fees for Witnesses**

Witness fees are limited to those days on which trial testimony is given or depositions are used in support. Allowance of witness fees for attendance at trial on days other than on which testimony is given is a matter left to the trial court's discretion, based upon the necessity of the presence of the witness.

1. **Attendance Fees** of \$40.00 per day are allowed for each day the witness testified. See 28 U.S.C. §1821(b). But,

- Real parties in interest are not entitled to fees or allowances as witnesses.
- Expert witnesses are allowed the same fees as other witnesses - attendance fees, mileage and subsistence. Special "expert" witness fees are not allowed.
- Federal employees are not allowed attendance fees but may receive the mileage and subsistence allowance for overnight stays.

2. **Mileage Fees.**

- a. Privately Owned Automobile: Mileage fees to and from the courthouse are allowed for the use of privately owned automobiles at the government rate in effect at the time of the trial. See current rates at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).
- b. Common Carrier: A witness who travels by common carrier (airline) shall be paid for the actual expenses of travel on the basis of the means of transportation reasonably utilized and the distance necessarily traveled to and from such witness's residence by the shortest practical route. Such a witness shall utilize a

common carrier at the most economical rate reasonably available. A receipt or other evidence of actual cost shall be furnished. See 28 U.S.C. §1821(c)(1). NOTE: If counsel does not provide a receipt, costs will automatically be disallowed.

3. **Subsistence Fees:** A subsistence allowance is paid to a witness when an overnight stay is required because the witness lives too far to travel back and forth each day from their residence to the courthouse to attend trial. A subsistence allowance for a witness shall be paid in an amount not to exceed the maximum per diem allowance prescribed by [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov), pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §5702(a), for official travel in the area of attendance by employees of the Federal Government.
  4. **Toll charges or toll roads, bridges, tunnels, and ferries, taxicab fares** between places of lodging and carrier terminals, and parking fees shall be paid in full to witnesses incurring such expenses. See 28 U.S.C. §1821(c)(3).
- d. **Fees for Service of Summons and Subpoena.** The following service fees are allowed:
1. For summons and other initial process
  2. For trial subpoenas for witnesses who testified at trial
  3. For deposition subpoenas for witnesses whose depositions were used at trial
  4. United States Marshal fees pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1921
- e. **Fees for Printing, Photocopying and Exemplification.**
1. Copy costs are allowed of those documents which are placed in evidence at trial or those which were used for a successful motion for summary judgment or other successful motion.
  2. Copies obtained merely for the convenience of a party in preparing for trial are not taxable without pre-trial authorization from the trial court.
  3. Routine copy expenses (exchanged between counsel) are not allowed.

- 4. Expenses for photographs, graphic enlargements, charts, models, demonstrative evidence, and other exhibits are not allowed unless ordered by the court.
- f. **Other Costs.** Other costs that are taxable include the following: Bond premiums; interpreter fees upon order of court; burning of CD's for use in trial; costs on appeal (FRAP 39) for preparation and transmission of record, reporter's transcript, premiums paid for a supersedeas bond or other bond to preserve the rights pending appeal, and the fee for filing the notice of appeal.

### **3. Items Not Usually Taxable:**

- a. Special expert witness fees; Experts are allowed the same costs as any other witness.
- b. Attorney travel expenses to attend depositions
- c. Attorney fees (Not taxable by the clerk in a bill of costs; but may be applied for in a motion filed with court within 14 days of judgment)
- d. Postage
- e. Federal Express or other like charges
- f. Long-distance telephone calls
- g. Fax charges
- h. Routine copies sent to opposing counsel
- i. Investigative or consulting services
- j. Trial evidence assistance from outside company
- k. Legal research

### **4. Appeal of Taxation of Costs:**

- a. **Motion to Review Clerk's Taxation of Costs**-file within 7 days of the clerk's taxation of costs. Fed.R.Civ.P. 54(d)(1) and LR 54.5.
- b. **Court of Appeal (FRAP 39)** - A party can appeal the district judge's decision to the Court of Appeal. The standard for appellate review of a district court's determination of costs is abuse of discretion. Note: Filing of an appeal does not suspend taxation of costs unless a judge has stayed the case pending appeal.

## **5. Miscellaneous Items on Taxation of Costs:**

- a. If post-trial motions are filed, the bill of costs must be filed 30 days after the ruling on the last post trial motion.
- b. A judgment is “entered” on the date that it is recorded in the court’s docket.
- c. The clerk’s office cannot review a motion for costs that also contains a motion or application for attorney’s fees. It is therefore recommended that prevailing parties not combine an application for attorney’s fees in a bill of costs. These should be submitted as two separate documents.
- d. If parties settle costs before costs have been taxed, counsel should notify the clerk’s office that the matter has been settled and shall file a stipulation stating that costs have also been resolved.
- e. Once the matter of costs has been determined, costs should be paid directly to the prevailing party and not the court.
- f. For problems with collection of costs, prevailing parties should consult Louisiana law on procedures to execute judgment.

## **VII. REMOVAL OF CASES FROM STATE COURT, 28 U.S.C. §1441**

**REMOVAL CHECKLIST:** Notice of Removal, Copy of State Court filings, Pay filing fee, Civil Cover Sheet, Notice to other parties and the Clerk of the State Court.

### **1. General Rules for Removal, 28 U.S.C. §1441**

Any civil action brought in a State court may be removed by the defendant or the defendants.

### **2. Notice of Removal Requirements, 28 U.S.C. §1446(a)**

- a. Signed in accordance with FRCP 11;
- b. A short and plain statement of the grounds for removal;
- c. A copy of all process, pleadings, and orders served upon the party removing the action.

### **3. Time for Removal, 28 U.S.C. §1446(b)**

Filed within **30 days** of

- a. Service of summons or initial pleadings in an action, or
- b. "Receipt by the defendant \* \* \* of a copy of an amended pleading, motion, order or other paper from which it may first be ascertained that the case is one which is or has become removable." 28 U.S.C. §1446(b) Note:

**If the case arises under diversity of citizenship jurisdiction, the case must be removed within one year of commencement of the action.**

#### **4. Removal Order**

- a. Upon the filing of a notice of removal, an order will issue from the Court setting forth the requirements for the parties to the removed action.
- b. Removal order contents. 28 U.S.C. §1447
  - (1) Obligations of removing defendant:
    - (a) File a list of all attorneys appearing in the case together with the parties they represent;
    - (b) File copies of all records and proceedings which occurred in the State court prior to removal;
    - (c) File a list of all documents filed in the State court, arranged by date of filing;
    - (d) File a certificate that the entire State court record has been filed in the federal court;
    - (e) Transfer any "registry" funds from the State court to the federal court. This only includes funds held for the benefit of the litigants, not any funds on deposit with the State court to cover the costs of filing documents.
  - (2) Obligations of all parties:
    - a) Re-file any pending and undecided State court exceptions or motions as "Motions" in the federal court; (if not refiled, State Court exceptions or motions will not be decided)

- (b) If any attorney who appeared in the State court action is not admitted to practice before the federal court, within 21 days from removal, the attorney must:
  - (1) File an application to practice before the federal court; or
  - (2) File a motion for admission to practice before the federal court "pro hac vice"; or
  - (3) Secure a substitute attorney qualified to practice before the federal court.

**5. Notice to Other Parties and the State Clerk of Court, 28 U.S.C. §1446 (c) and (d)**

- a. "Promptly after the filing" of a notice of removal, "defendants shall give written notice thereof to all adverse parties and shall file a copy of the notice of removal with the clerk of such State court."
- b. Filing of a copy of the notice of removal with the State clerk "shall effect the removal and the State court shall proceed no further unless and until the case is remanded."

**6. No bond is required for removal of a state court action.**

**7. Remand, 28 U.S.C. §1447(c) and (d)**

- a. A motion to remand for a procedural defect must be filed within **30 days** of filing of the notice of removal.
- b. A motion to remand for lack of subject matter jurisdiction may be filed at any time before final judgment.
- c. Joinder of Parties in a Removed Civil Action. LR7.6 If motion for joinder of parties is filed in a removed civil action and joinder of such parties may serve as grounds for a remand to state court, the motion must -
  - (1) State that granting of the motion to join parties may be grounds for a remand to state court,
  - (2) Set forth sufficient facts for the court to make a determination of whether joinder is appropriate in light of 28 U.S.C. §1447(e).
- d. Remand order

- (1) "May require payment of just costs and any actual expenses, including attorney fees, incurred as a result of the removal."
  - (2) "A certified copy of the order of remand shall be mailed by the clerk to the clerk of the State court."
- e. Appeal under 28 U.S.C. §1447(d)
  - "An order remanding a case to the State court from which it was removed is not reviewable on appeal..."

## **VIII. ADMIRALTY & MARITIME CLAIMS, FRCP 9(h) & SUPPLEMENTAL RULES, LAR 4**

### **(1) Attachment and Garnishment Under Rule B**

"If the defendant shall not be found within the district" therefore preventing in personam jurisdiction, an action ("Quasi In Rem") may be commenced by attachment of assets. It is to be noted that any judgment rendered is enforceable only to the extent of the value of the attached property. See Rule B and LAR 4.1 A.

#### **Checklist for an Attachment and Garnishment Complaint under Rule B:**

1. Complaint must
  - a. Specifically set forth an admiralty and maritime claim for which in personam jurisdiction will lie;
  - b. Be verified by the plaintiff (or the attorney if the client is not found in the District);
  - c. Contain a prayer for attachment of the defendant's goods or chattels or credit (garnishment);
  - d. Be accompanied by a separate affidavit by the plaintiff or the attorney stating that, to the best of his information or belief, the defendant cannot be found in the district. Rule B & LAR 4.1 A
2. Civil Cover Sheet. LR10.1 (Please see section on filing of new suits.)
3. Filing Fee if appropriate. (Please see section on filing of new suits especially as it applies to seaman.)

4. Process. Rule B (1) & LAR 4.1

a. A proposed order for attachment & garnishment; and

b. A proposed warrant of arrest.

If exigent circumstances exist which make review by the court impossible, the attachment can be ordered by the Clerk provided that the court hold a post-attachment hearing wherein the plaintiff must show the exigent circumstances. However, every effort should be made to secure judicial review before resorting to this procedure.

5. Security for costs. LAR 65.1.1

Unless a party is proceeding *in forma pauperis* or is relieved from pre-payment of costs by statute (e.g. a seaman's suit, 28 U.S.C. 1916) or unless otherwise ordered by court, security in the sum of \$250.00 shall be posted (cash or surety). Please note: The United States Marshal for the Western District of Louisiana requires that a separate check payable to the Marshal accompany the request for service as a deposit for costs incurred in seizing and maintaining the vessel. The check shall be in the amount of \$5,000 if a substitute custodian of the vessel will be appointed or \$15,000 if the U. S. Marshal will be required to hire a guard to take custody of the vessel. The unused portion of these funds will be returned upon the vessel's release. However, please bear in mind that the vessel will not be released until all costs of court and the seizure have been paid in full.

6. Responsive Pleadings Rule B (3)

Defendants shall have 30 days after process has been executed within which to file an answer. Garnishees shall file and serve an answer to the complaint and any garnishment interrogatories within 21 days after service or else compulsory process may be awarded against the garnishee.

Note: If the garnishee is in possession of assets of the defendant, he is to hold those assets, or deposit them into the registry of the court, subject to further order of the court.

Default Judgment Rule B (2)

Prior to entry of a judgment by default in an attachment and garnishment case under Rule B, the appropriate delays as set out above in "Responsive Pleadings"

must have elapsed after one of the following methods of notice has been effected:

- (1) that the plaintiff or garnishee has given proper notice of the action to the defendant by mail requiring a return receipt;
- (2) that the complaint, summons and process of attachment or garnishment was served on the defendant under FRCP 4(d) or (l) or
- (3) that the plaintiff or the garnishee has made diligent efforts to give notice to the defendant and has been unable to do so.

Note: See the section on entry of default in this Guide for the procedure for entry of a default and taking of a judgment by default in a civil case.

7. Arrangements for Substitute Custodian & Movement of the Vessel.

NOTE: Although, not required by law, in order to expedite completion of the seizure of the vessel, counsel should prepare a separate motion and order to appoint a substitute custodian and an order for movement of the vessel within the district.

**(2) Arrest of a Vessel Under Rule C**

In order to “enforce any maritime lien” or “whenever a statute of the United States provides for a maritime action in rem” an action (“In Rem”) can be filed to arrest the vessel and also to proceed “in personam against any person who may be liable.”

**Checklist for Arrest of a Vessel under Rule C:**

1. Complaint must: be verified; describe, with reasonable particularity, the property to be arrested; and state that the property is now, or will be, within the district during the pendency of the litigation. Rule C & LAR 4.1

Note: Those wrongfully deprived of a vessel or other maritime property, those seeking to perfect title to a vessel, and those seeking the judicial sale of a vessel & the distribution of the proceeds among the owners of the vessel may avail themselves of the in rem procedures of Rule C and the notice procedures of Rule B (2). Rule D

2. Civil Cover Sheet. LR10.1
3. Filing Fee. (See the section on filing new suits especially in regards to seaman.)

4. Process. Rule C (1) & LAR 4.1

- a. Summons (original & one copy for each defendant to be served);
- b. Proposed order authorizing a warrant for the arrest of the vessel; &
- c. Proposed warrant of arrest.

The court will then review the verified complaint and any supporting papers and, if the requirements set forth in the rules have been met, will sign the proposed order authorizing the issuance of a warrant for arrest of the vessel. If the property is freight or proceeds of property, the Clerk shall issue a summons to the person having control of the property or funds to show cause why such property or funds should not be placed in the registry of the court.

Note: Any person possessing property that is the subject of the action but has not been brought within control of the court (i.e. part of a vessel's gear within the district but not on the vessel when arrested) may, by motion, be ordered to show cause why the property should not be turned over to the U.S. Marshal or placed in the registry of the court. RULE C (5)

If exigent circumstances exist which make review by the court impossible, the attachment can be ordered by the Clerk provided that the court hold a post-attachment hearing wherein the plaintiff must show the exigent circumstances. However, EVERY effort should be made to secure judicial review before resorting to this procedure.

Note: In actions by the United States for forfeitures for federal statutory violations, the clerk, upon filing of the complaint, shall forthwith issue a summons and warrant for the arrest of the vessel or other property without requiring a certification of exigent circumstances. RULE C (3)

5. Security for costs.

- a. LAR 65.1.1 (See also Process Section under "1) Attachment and Garnishment under Rule B.") NOTE: To expedite matters, counsel is advised to contact the U. S. Marshal for specific instructions and required paperwork regarding the actual seizure PRIOR to filing the complaint.

**Notice RULE C (4)**

If the property is not released within ten days after execution of process, "the plaintiff shall promptly... cause public notice of the action and arrest to be given

in a newspaper...designated by order of the court.” Please see LAR64.1 for what the publication should contain. Depending on the division of this court where the action is filed, those newspapers are as follows in accordance with LAR64.5:

|                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Alexandria Division   | The Town Talk              |
| Lafayette Division    | The Daily Advertiser       |
| Lake Charles Division | American Press             |
| Monroe Division       | The News-Star              |
| Shreveport Division   | Shreveport Times/The Times |

Note: When the arrested property is released pursuant to Rule E(5) (by giving of security, by stipulation or by order of the court), no notice other than the execution of the judgment is required. RULE C(4)

In any claim wherein publication is necessary under Rule C(4), the time for filing a statement of interest in or right against the property is extended for 21 days from the date of publication. LAR 64.1

### **Responsive Pleadings RULE C (6)**

The claimant of property that is the subject of an action in rem shall file a claim within 14 days after process has been executed, or within such additional time as may be allowed by the court, and shall serve an answer within 21 days after the filing of the claim.

6. Arrangements for Substitute Custodian & Movement of the Vessel. NOTE: Although, not required by law, in order to expedite completion of the seizure of the vessel, counsel should prepare a separate motion and order to appoint a substitute custodian and an order for movement of the vessel within the district.)

### **3) Miscellaneous Admiralty and Maritime Matters**

#### **Movement of a Seized Vessel. LAR 64.3**

A vessel under seizure may be moved within the district without a separate order -

- a. Whenever the U. S. Marshal deems necessary; or
- b. At the joint written request of the detainee and the owner of a vessel provided that a “hold harmless” agreement is executed in favor of the U. S. Marshal.

Note: To expedite matters, a separate motion and order for movement of the vessel within the district should be filed with the complaint!

#### **Appointment of Consent Guardian.**

The U. S. Marshal is authorized, without special order of the court, to appoint the master or other competent person as substitute custodian of a vessel under seizure provided that all parties have agreed, in writing, to the appointment and have agreed, in writing, to hold the U. S. Marshal harmless from any liability as a result of the appointment. Note: To expedite matters, a separate motion and order to appoint a substitute custodian should be filed with the complaint.

#### **Security for Release of the Vessel**

Supplemental Rule E(5) and LAR 64.2 provide the specifics for securing the release of the seized property by substituting adequate security. Normally, this is done by the filing of a “special bond” as described in Rule E(5)(a). The amount of the bond shall be approved by the Clerk or the court, or by stipulation of the parties. If fixed by the court, the bond shall not be no more than the value of the property or twice the amount of the claim, whichever is less, with interest at 6 per cent per annum.

If the release is by stipulation, the seizing party must also agree, in writing, to hold the U. S. Marshal harmless for any liability resulting from the release of the property. LAR 64.2.

If it appears that additional claims may be filed, a vessel owner may file a “general bond” as provided for in Rule E(5)(b), which should prevent the subsequent seizure of the vessel in this district as long as the bond is in an amount at least twice that of all aggregate claims.

At any time, any party may petition the court for a decrease, increase or alternate form of security. Rule E(6).

#### **4) Limitation of Liability Actions**

The Limitation of Liability Act (46 U.S.C. § § 181- 195 and Supplemental Rule F) allows shipowners to petition U.S. District Courts for a certain degree of protection from losses that may exceed the value of the vessel and its pending freight.

**Who May File?** A limitation action may be brought by a vessel’s owner or demise charterer (i.e. where all control of the vessel is taken from the owner and vested in the

charterer) who does not have privity or knowledge of the events causing the loss. The action is not generally available to voyage or time charterers. 46 U.S.C. § 183.

**When must the action be filed?** A limitation action must be filed “not later than six months after receipt of a claim in writing...” Supplemental Rule F(1). This need not be a formal claim, but is adequate if it informs the owner, whether directly or indirectly, of a claimant’s intention to look to the owner for damages.

**Where should the action be filed?** Rule F (9) If a vessel has been attached or arrested, a limitation of liability action should be filed in the district & division where the vessel has been attached or arrested. If a vessel has not been attached or arrested, but the owner has been sued with respect to a claim relating to the vessel, a limitation of liability action should be filed in the district and division where the action is pending.

If a vessel has not been arrested or attached and no suit has been filed, a limitation of liability action should be filed in the district and division in which the vessel is located.

If a vessel has not been arrested or attached, no suit has been filed and the vessel is not located in the district, a limitation of liability action may be filed in any district.

Note: The action may be transferred to another district pursuant to the regular venue provisions.

**Checklist for a Limitation of Liability action: Rule F (2)**

1. Facts on which right to limitation can be determined;
2. Demand for exoneration from or limitation of liability;
3. Description of the voyage on which the claim(s) arose, including the date and place of its termination;
4. A statement of the known claims or liens against the vessel arising out of that voyage;
5. The value of the vessel and its pending freight at the end of the voyage and
6. An allegation that the claim arose without the privity or knowledge of the Plaintiff in limitation.

Note: Additionally, at the time of filing, Plaintiff shall deposit with the court an amount equal to the value of the owner’s interest in the vessel and the pending freight at the end of the voyage or approved security in that amount with interest at 6% per annum. At the owner’s option, he may turn over the vessel and pending freight to a trustee appointed by the court in lieu of

depositing security. Sums sufficient to cover costs and expenses must also be deposited, however.

**What will the court do?** Upon complete compliance with the above, the court will, upon application by the plaintiff, enjoin the further prosecution of any claims subject to limitation.

The court will also issue a notice to all persons asserting claims subject to limitation admonishing them to file their claims with the Clerk. The deadline for so filing shall be no less than 30 days after issuance of the notice. The plaintiff in limitation shall publish this notice in a newspaper as the court shall direct once a week for four successive weeks prior to the date fixed for filing claims and shall mail a copy of the notice to each known claimant no later than the date of the second publication. Supplemental Rule F(4) Note: Counsel for the plaintiff in limitation should prepare the proposed order of injunction and the notice to be published!

**What the claimants must do?** Rule F (5) Prior to the date fixed for filing claims, each claimant must file and serve their claim which must include:

1. Specific facts in support of the claim;
2. The specific items of the claim; and
3. The date on which the claim accrued.

Note: If the claimant wishes to contest the right to exoneration or limitation, he should also file an answer to the complaint.

Note: If any claimant wishes to contest the adequacy of the security, he may do so, by motion, at any time. Thereafter, the court will cause due appraisal and adjust the security accordingly. Supplemental Rule F(7)

**What happens after the claims are filed?** Rule F (6) Within 30 days after the deadline for filing claims, the plaintiff shall send to each claimant's attorney (or to any pro se claimants) a list consisting of:

1. The name of each claimant;
2. The name and address of each claimant's attorney; and
3. The nature and amount of each claim.

## **IX. APPEALS**

### **APPEALS CHECKLIST:**

1. Notice of Appeal
2. Filing fees (\$505)
3. Transcript

**Appeals:**

1. Appeals from Civil Cases

- a. What judgments are appealable?

- (1) A judgment or order that is "final"
      - (a) A judgment is "final" if it disposes of all claims as to all parties.
      - (b) "When more than one claim for relief is presented in an action \* \*  
\* or when multiple parties are involved, the court may direct the entry of a final judgment as to one or more but fewer than all of the claims or parties only upon an express determination that there is no just reason for delay and upon an express direction for the entry of judgment." FRCP 54(b)
    - (2) Certain interlocutory decisions. Note: Leave to appeal from an interlocutory order must be sought by petition from the Court of Appeals. See FRAP 5 and 28 U.S.C. §1292
      - (a) A decision containing a statement from the district judge that "such order involves a controlling question of law as to which there is a substantial ground for difference of opinion and that an immediate appeal from the order may materially advance the ultimate termination of the litigation." 28 U.S.C. §1292(b)
      - (b) Certain interlocutory orders listed in 28 U.S.C. § 1292 (a), including orders involving injunctions, orders involving receiverships, and decrees involving admiralty cases.
    - (3) Appeal of order of district court granting or denying class action certification. Must be made within 14 days after entry of order. Fed.R.Civ.P.23(f).

- b. When can a case be appealed? FRAP 4

- (1) Generally, a notice of appeal must be filed with the clerk of the district court within **30 days** of the "entry" of the Fed.R.Civ.P. 58 separate judgment, if required, or 150 days of entry of the judgment or order on the docket. (Fed.R.Civ.P. 58)
- (2) In cases involving the United States, the time for appeal is **60 days** from "entry" of judgment in the district court.
- (3) IN PERMISSIVE APPEALS UNDER FRAP 5 a petition for permission to appeal must be filed within **14 days** of entry of judgment with the clerk of the court of appeals.
- (4) Extension of Time to Appeal for Lack of Notice. FRAP 4(a)(6)
  - (a) District Court must find:
    - (1) Party did not receive notice of the entry of the judgment within 21 days of the date of entry of the judgment either from the clerk or from any party (See FRCP 77(d)); and
    - (2) "No party would be prejudiced."
  - (b) Motion must be filed within "180 days of entry of the judgment or order or within 14 days of receipt of such notice, whichever is earlier."
  - (c) The time for appeal may be reopened for "a period of 14 days from the date of entry of the order reopening the time for appeal."
- c. **A notice of appeal must conform to FORM 1, FRAP. Note:** All parties joining in a notice of appeal must be listed in the notice. The designation "et al." is not sufficient to include parties not specifically listed. *Morales, et al. v. Pan American Life Ins. Co.*, 914 F.2d 83 (5th Cir.1990).
- d. **What happens to a notice of appeal filed prior to "Entry" of Judgment?**  
Generally, "a notice of appeal filed after the announcement of a decision or order but before the entry of the judgment or order shall be treated as filed on the date of and after entry." FRAP 4(a)(2)
- e. **How is a notice of appeal affected by the filing of post-trial motions? FRAP 4(a)(4)**

- (1) "If any party makes a timely motion of a type specified immediately below, the time for appeal for all parties runs from the entry of the order disposing of the last such motion outstanding. This provision applies to a timely motion under the Rules of Civil Procedure:
  - (a) for judgment under FRCP 50(b)(i.e. Judgment as a Matter of Law);
  - (b) to amend or make additional findings of fact under FRCP 52(b), whether or not granting the motion would alter the judgment;
  - (c) to alter or amend the judgment under FRCP 59;
  - (d) for attorney's fees under FRCP 54 if a district court under FRCP 58 extends the time for appeal;
  - (e) for a new trial under FRCP 59; or
  - (f) for relief under FRCP 60 if the motion is filed within 28 days after entry of judgment.

Note: A notice of appeal filed prior to the timely filing of one of these motions is ineffective until entry of the order disposing of the motion. If such order is being appealed, the notice of appeal must be amended.

**f. How can you "stay" execution of a judgment?**

**(1) Automatic 14 Day Stay**

Generally, "No execution shall issue upon a judgment nor shall proceedings be taken for its enforcement until the expiration of 14 days after its entry." FRCP 62(a) Note: There are some exceptions for injunctions, receivership actions, patent actions, etc.

**(2) Supersedeas Bonds FRCP 62(d)**

- (a) Filing of a supersedeas bond acts as a stay from execution of a judgment on appeal.
- (b) A supersedeas bond may be filed at any time on or after the time the appeal is taken.
- (c) A supersedeas bond is effective from the time of approval by the court.

- (d) For a money judgment, a supersedeas bond is set at 120% of the judgment. LR62.2 (Unless the Court orders otherwise)

**g. Is it necessary to file a cost bond? FRAP 7**

While a cost bond may be required by the district court, this Court does not require a cost bond UNLESS SPECIFICALLY REQUIRED BY COURT ORDER.

**2. Appeals from Criminal Cases under FRAP 4(b)**

**a. When may a case be appealed?**

- (1) "In a criminal case, a defendant shall file the notice of appeal in the district court within **14 days** after the entry either of the judgment or order appealed from or a notice of appeal by the Government."
- (2) The notice of appeal by the Government "must be filed in the district court within **30 days** after (i) the entry of the judgment or order appealed from or (ii) the filing of a notice of appeal by any defendant."
- (3) "A notice of appeal filed after the announcement of a decision, sentence or order - but before entry of the judgment or order - is treated as filed on the date of and after the entry."
- (4) Time for appeal may be extended until **14 days** following disposition of the following motions: (a) Motion Arresting Judgment; FRCrP 34; (b) Motion For New Trial on grounds other than newly discovered evidence; FRCrP 33; (c) A Motion for New Trial on the grounds of newly discovered evidence filed within 14 days after entry of judgment. d) Motion for Judgment of Acquittal (Fed.R.Cr.P. 29) (e) Motion for Reconsideration.

Note: Both of these motions must be filed within **7 days** after verdict or finding of guilty or after plea of guilty or nolo contendere.

- (5) An extension of up to **30 days** may be granted by the district court for either good cause or excusable neglect.

**3. Rules Applying to All Appeals.**

**a. Fee to file appeal broken down: (\$505 total fee paid to file Appeal)**

- (1) \$50 for general administration fee. (28 U.S.C. §1914, District Court. Miscellaneous Fee Schedule, Section 14)

- (2) \$450 for docketing the case in the Court of Appeals. (28 U.S.C. §1913)
- (3) \$5 paid to Clerk of District Court on filing an appeal. (28 U.S.C. §1917)

Note: These fees should be paid to the Clerk of the district court as one fee. However, "failure of an appellant to" submit the fee with the notice of appeal "does not affect the validity of the appeal, but is ground only for such action as the court of appeals deems appropriate, which may include dismissal of the appeal." FRAP 3

b. Ordering a transcript

- (1) Upon filing a notice of appeal, the clerk of the district court will provide appellant with a form entitled "Transcript Order".
- (2) It is the obligation of appellant to make satisfactory arrangements with the court reporter for providing the transcript.
- (3) When ordering a transcript, appellant should mail copies of the order form as directed on the back of that form. Copies should be mailed to: Appeals Unit, United States Clerk of Court, 300 Fannin Street, Suite 1167, Shreveport, La. 71101-3083. Note: A transcript should be filed by the court reporter within 30 days of completion of the "Transcript Order", unless an extension is granted by the court of appeals.

c. Filing of the record on appeal (FRAP 10)

- (1) "The record on appeal consists of the original papers and exhibits filed in the district court, the transcript of proceedings, if any, and a certified copy of the docket entries prepared by the clerk of the district court."
- (2) When the record on appeal is completed by the clerk of the district court, it is transmitted to the court of appeals. This transmission is normally:
  - (a) Within 15 days of the filing of the transcript, or
  - (b) Within 15 days of the notice of appeal if no transcript is ordered.

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## **X. REGISTRATION OF JUDGMENTS, 28 U.S.C. §1963**

1. Certified Copy of the Judgment of any court of appeals, district court, bankruptcy court or the Court of International Trade.
2. Either
  - a. A certification from the Clerk that the judgment is final either by appeal or by the expiration of the time for appeal (AO Form 451) or
  - b. An order from the Court that entered the judgment that the judgment should be registered in another district (Issuance of this order requires a showing of good cause.)
3. Pay filing fee. (See fee schedule below)

**COMMENTS:**

1. A judgment in an action for the recovery of money or property entered in any United States District Court may be registered in any other United States District Court.
2. A judgment registered in another district shall have the same force and effect as a judgment entered in such district court.
3. A satisfaction of judgment may be registered in a like manner. All that is required is a certified copy of the satisfaction of judgment.

## **XI. SCHEDULE OF FEES**

|               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| New Suits     | \$405 |
| Habeas Corpus | \$5   |
| Miscellaneous | \$52  |

A filing not in a pending action, e.g.:

- Petition to Perpetuate Testimony - FRCP 27(a)
- Trustee Filings under 28 U.S.C. §754
- Letters Rogatory
- Registration of a Judgment, 28 U.S.C. §1963
- Notice of a Deposition (out-of-district)

|                                                                                                               |                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Appeal                                                                                                        | \$605 (\$550 to COA; \$5 District Court; \$50 Administrative Fee)                    |
| Appeal of a Magistrate Ruling                                                                                 | \$41 (Criminal Misdemeanor Case)                                                     |
| Deposit for Garnishment                                                                                       | \$15 (answering interrogatories)                                                     |
| Attorney Admission (online application/payment available)                                                     | \$224 ( Duplicate certificate is \$21)                                               |
| Attorney Admission, <i>Pro Hac Vice</i>                                                                       | \$105                                                                                |
| Certificate of Good Standing                                                                                  | \$21                                                                                 |
| Records Search & Certification (online payment available)                                                     | \$34                                                                                 |
| Exemplification Certificate (online payment available)                                                        | \$24                                                                                 |
| Retrieval of Record from FRC (online payment available)                                                       | \$70 (first box), \$43 (2 <sup>nd</sup> or multiple boxes)                           |
| Certification of a Copy (online payment available)                                                            | \$12                                                                                 |
| Photocopying (online payment available)                                                                       | \$0.50/page                                                                          |
| Smart Scan Service (copies of documents stored at FRC)                                                        | \$10 Judiciary Fee; \$9.90 Flat Rate Pull Charge; \$0.65/page (Maximum of 100 pages) |
| Copy of Microfiche                                                                                            | \$7                                                                                  |
| Reproduction of recordings, proceedings, regardless of medium                                                 | \$34                                                                                 |
| Returned Checks                                                                                               | \$53                                                                                 |
| Witness Fee                                                                                                   | \$40                                                                                 |
| Mileage Allowance (Effective 1/1/23)<br><a href="https://www.gsa.gov">https://www.gsa.gov</a> (current rates) | \$0.655/mile                                                                         |
| WEB PACER Usage - Copies                                                                                      | \$0.10/page                                                                          |

WEB PACER Usage – Audio Files

\$2.40/file

Criminal Debt (Restitution and Fines)(Online payment available) Consult Judgment or Order

**For more about fees, please visit: <http://www.uscourts.gov/FormsAndFees/Fees.aspx>.**