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Administrative Director Glenn A. Grant
Administrative Office of the Courts
Attn: Rules Comments
P.O. Box 037
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0037



Re: Comment on Proposed Amendments to:
Court Rule 2:6-10 Format of Briefs and Other Papers.

Dear Hon. Grant,

I am writing to comment on the Proposed amendment to Court Rule 2:6-10 regarding the Format of Briefs and Other Papers, and the requirement for future filings to be on one side of the paper as the language that "Copy may be printed on both sides of the paper provided legibility is not impaired" - which has been the practice of the Courts for over 20 years.

I wanted to inform you of the great burden and cost this will put on the individuals incarcerated throughout the State of New Jersey.

Currently, inmates must pay .10 cents per page for copies, not per side, only the page, so when both sides are utilized the inmate only pays .10 cents. The cost for copies is already higher than that of the public rate of .5 cents for O.P.R.A. documents. Should the proposed amendment be enacted, incarcerated persons will be forced to pay double the present cost.

Furthermore, single-side printing will increase the cost of postage due to doubling the amount of pages being used.

I am an inmate paralegal in Northern State Prison; as such, I bare firsthand knowledge of the significant financial impact this will have on inmates, an already vulnerable class of indigent persons. Although the court may often Grant inmates' motions to proceed under indigent status, that provision does not extend to prison copying fees.

Moreover, by eliminating the Court Rule that requires "65 characters including spaces, each of no less than 10 pitch," and proposing an amended Rule, changing brief structure to Times New Roman 14 font, inmates will face further restraints regarding motion and/or brief preparation. Presently, the only available means for an inmate to draft legal documents in his cell is a word processor/typewriter—that is, if he owns one. These word processor/typewriters do not have Times Roman and 14 Font capabilities. It is also worth noting that such machines are only owned by inmates who have been incarcerated for many years; they are now obsolete and practically unavailable for purchase. Access to the prison's Law Library is afforded; however, there are extreme limitations on available time slots.

New Jersey Department of Correction's does not permit inmates to purchase personal any type of computer or laptop, like what facilities in other states approve for inmate possession and usage.

In light of the abovementioned reasons, I submit to this body that the proposed amended rules be denied. In the alternative, should the rule change be approved, I propose that an exception for incarcerated individuals be carved out, where indigent inmates will be provided the opportunity to print their material on both sides of the paper, using 65 characters including spaces, each of no less than 10 pitch, with the 65 page limit.

Incarcerated individuals are already on an uneven playing field; we don't have access to the law and research like prosecutors, and we should not be further penalized by placing broader disadvantages upon us.

Thank you for your immediate attention in this matter.

Very truly yours,


Michael Martin