

Comment of the Special Civil Part Subcommittee on Restyling

Restyling the Special Civil Part rules was probably the largest rewriting of the New Jersey court rules in more than 50 years. Since 1969, the Special Civil Part rules have been amended on an issue-by-issue basis. The rules became unwieldy and needed a comprehensive review.

The Special Civil Part Subcommittee on Restyling was asked to restyle the rules. Our directive was to restyle the rules but not to rewrite or reorganize them.

Fortunately, the federal rules underwent a decades long process of restyling which the committee used as a model. We adapted and modified the guidelines from the federal process.

We believed the court rules should make courts run in a businesslike, professional manner. We made constant efforts to ensure we did not make substantive changes to the rules.

Clarity was a constant concern. The newest attorney out of law school ought to be able to read, follow and understand the rules. Rules written for plain language would have been enormously long.

We expect the Special Civil Part rules will continue to change and adapt. Some new changes were already under consideration as we were restyling.

The bar and bench often admire the law for being dynamic. We hope the restyling is an inspiration to continue making improvements.

The restyling subcommittee included Joseph G. Monaghan, J.S.C., Joel Clymer, Esq., Gerard J. Felt, Esq., Tracey Goldstein, Esq., Maria A. Kershaw, Esq., Assistant Civil Division Manager, Vera McCoy, Esq., Suvarna Sampale, Esq., Subcommittee Staff, and others.

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