

**RULES GOVERNING THE COURTS OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**PART I. RULES OF GENERAL APPLICATION**  
**CHAPTER IV. ADMINISTRATION**  
**RULE 1:32. REPORTS BY COURTS AND PERSONNEL; RECORDS; FORMS AND**  
**PROCESS PRESCRIBED BY ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR**

**Rule 1:32-1. Reports by Judges; Court Clerks; Court Reporters**

**(a) Trial Judges Generally.** On or before Monday of each week, every trial judge, except municipal court judges, shall submit to the Administrative Director of the Courts, on prescribed and supplied forms, a report containing such information as the Administrative Director of the Courts, with the approval of the Chief Justice, prescribes. Each judge shall forward a copy of such weekly report to the Assignment Judges of each county in which the judge was sitting during the week covered by such report except that the judges of the Tax Court shall submit such weekly report to the Administrative Director of the Courts and forward a copy of such weekly report to the Presiding Judge of the Tax Court.

**(b) Judges of Municipal Courts.** Every judge of a municipal court shall, on or before the 10th day of each month, submit to the Administrative Director of the Courts, on prescribed and supplied forms, a report for the preceding month and at other times shall submit such other reports all as the Administrative Director of the Courts, with the approval of the Chief Justice, requests.

**(c) Clerks and Reporters.** The clerks of all courts and all official court reporters and reporter supervisors shall submit to the Administrative Director of the Courts such reports at such times as are requested.

**Note:** Source -- R. 1:30-5, 8:13-10(b). Paragraph (a) amended June 20, 1979 to be effective July 1, 1979; paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) amended July 13, 1994 to be effective September 1, 1994.

**Rule 1:32-2. Books and Records**

**(a) Recordkeeping by Clerk.** The clerks of all courts shall keep such books and records and may microfilm or electronically retain or destroy the same as the Administrative Director of the Courts with the approval of the Chief Justice may prescribe.

**(b) Municipal Court Books and Records.** Judges or presiding judges of the municipal court shall be responsible for the keeping of such prescribed books and records for the municipal courts.

**(c) Retention Schedules and Purging Lists.** Retention schedules identifying the length of time court records must be kept prior to destruction and purging lists identifying documents to be removed from case files before storage or replication shall be adopted by administrative directive. For purpose of this rule, "purging" means the removal and destruction of documents in the case file which have no legal, administrative or historical value.

**(d) Reproduction of Original as Evidence.** In the event of any destruction or other disposition of court records pursuant to this rule, the photographic or electronic

reproduction or image of the original or a certified copy of same shall be receivable in evidence in any court or proceeding and shall have the same force and effect as though the original public record had been there produced and proved.

**Note:** Source -- R. 3:11-7, 4:120-3, 4:120-4, 4:120-8, 4:120-9, 4:120-10, 4:120-11, 4:120-12, 5:5-3, 6:2-8(a)(b), 7:23, 7:24, 8:12-6, 8:13-8(e), 8:13-10(c). Amended July 22, 1983 to be effective September 12, 1983; text amended and designated as paragraphs (a) and (b) and paragraphs (c) and (d) added July 13, 1994 to be effective September 1, 1994; paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) amended June 28, 1996 to be effective September 1, 1996.

## **Rule 1:32-2A. Electronic Court Systems, Electronic Records, Electronic Signatures, Metadata**

**(a) Authorization of Electronic Court Systems.** The Administrative Director of the Courts, with the approval of the Chief Justice, may develop and implement electronic court systems, including applications or systems for the purpose of electronic filing, electronic record keeping, or electronic indexing of data and documents.

**(b) Force and Effect of Data and Documents Submitted or Maintained Electronically.** Data and documents, whether originating in paper or digital form, submitted electronically to the clerks of court or maintained electronically by the clerks of court in a system or application authorized pursuant to this rule shall have the same force and effect as data and documents maintained by the clerks of court in paper form.

**(c) Electronic Signatures.** Where an electronic system or application has been authorized pursuant to this rule, and where the system or application is secured by an authentication method in accordance with the protocols established and approved by the Administrative Director of the Courts, an electronic signature shall have the same force and effect as an original handwritten signature. Once submitted to the clerk of court, an electronically signed document shall not be deleted or altered in any manner without court order for good cause shown.

**(d) Metadata.** Filers are on notice that any document being submitted to the Judiciary for electronic filing may contain metadata, which is embedded information in electronic documents, including possibly personal identifiers, that is generally hidden from view. Filers are required by Rule 1:38-7 to remove all confidential personal identifiers from documents prior to submitting such documents for electronic filing. It is the responsibility of filers to remove any metadata in documents that they do not want to become part of the public record before submitting such documents for electronic filing. To remove metadata from a document after it has been filed, the filer must file a motion to remove the metadata or to replace the document with a version that does not contain the metadata. Metadata in a submitted document not removed by the filer is subject to public disclosure.

**Note:** New rule adopted July 9, 2013 to be effective September 1, 2013; caption amended and new paragraph (d) adopted July 28, 2017 to be effective September 1, 2017.

**Rule 1:32-3. Process; Forms**

The Administrative Director of the Courts may, subject to the approval of the Supreme Court, prescribe forms of process and such other forms for the implementation of these rules as shall be necessary from time to time.

**Note:** Source -- R. 8:3-2(b)(2) (last sentence), 8:10-1(a).