



National Court Reporters Association
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Florida Court Reporters Association
Board of Directors
201 North Magnolia Avenue
Ocala, FL 34475

Re: Recommendation of Opposition to the Proposed Amendments to Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.535

Dear Distinguished Members of the Board of Directors:

As President of the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA), which represents more than 12,000 members, including those in the state of Florida, we are writing to provide the Florida Court Reporters Association (FCRA) our recommendation of opposition to the proposed amendments to Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.535. If adopted, we believe that these amendments will make transcripts more difficult to read and comprehend, will negatively impact the livelihood of the court reporting profession in Florida, and will increase already-existing delays in court proceedings by negatively affecting the ability for the judiciary and litigants to get court reporter coverage.

After reviewing your concerns, it is our stance, that the adoption of these amendments – but for the proposal to delete the outdated 200-page limit for transcript volumes of subdivision (f)(9) – will negatively impact the court reporting community in Florida. Particularly, enforcing new transcript formats that are incompatible with court reporting software will make proofreading more difficult and will put an enormous strain on the ability of court reporters to do their jobs. Furthermore, the new transcript format may likely result in a loss of court reporters in the Florida Judicial System, as court reporters seek to work in states that do not stymie the court reporting profession.

Similarly, we believe that if the proposed amendments are implemented, it would have negative consequences on the livelihood of reporters in the state of Florida. Specifically, the adoption of one-inch margins and prohibition of carry-over indentations will result in court reporters earning less for producing the same transcripts. This will fail to ensure that court reporters, who act as “guardians of the record,” receive just and fair compensation for the invaluable services that they provide to the state’s court system. Additionally, this change will place a significant financial burden on court reporters. As a result of this loss of income, the number of reporters available to work on cases would be substantially reduced, thereby negatively affecting the justice system as it relates to the public.

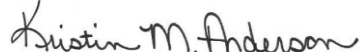
It also must be noted that court reporters in Florida take extraordinary measures to provide accurate and complete transcripts in a timely manner. Court reporters are passionate, hardworking court officials who routinely work on producing transcripts after normal business hours and with no consideration beyond the statutorily set page rate as compensation. They are often required to produce transcripts within set time limits or they will face penalties, including fines. Many court reporters are required to purchase their own materials at great personal expense to create transcripts required by law. Court reporters make these sacrifices because they take their

obligation to the justice system seriously and should be compensated fairly for that role.

Rejection of the proposed amendments to Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.535 will ensure that Florida court reporters retain the financial capability to satisfy their legal obligations in a more expeditious manner, ensuring that the court system in Florida continues to operate smoothly and efficiently. Furthermore, the new transcript format differs from other states' transcript formatting requirements, particularly with respect to the proposed margin and colloquy requirements. As a result, the Florida Judicial System may lose court reporters to other states that do not stymie the court reporting profession. Lastly, the adoption of these amendments will fail to protect a profession that is integral to the state's court system and will detrimentally affect court reporters' ability to provide services in the state.

NCRA strongly opposes the proposed amendments to Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.535. We urge the Florida Court Reporters Association to encourage the Florida Supreme Court to reject all changes, except the proposal to delete the 200-page limit for transcript volumes of subdivision (f)(9). I and the staff of NCRA stand ready to be of assistance. If you have questions, concerns, or a need for clarification, please contact me at *president@ncra.org*.

Very Respectfully,



Kristin M. Anderson, M.A., RPR, FCRR
2023-2024 NCRA President