



Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila

EN BANC

NOTICE

Sirs/Mesdames:

Please take notice that the Court En Banc issued a Resolution dated August 20, 2024, which reads as follows:

A.M. No. 10-3-7-SC
A.M. No. 11-9-4-SC

**RE: GUIDELINES ON SUBMISSION OF ELECTRONIC COPIES
OF PLEADINGS AND OTHER COURT SUBMISSIONS BEING
FILED BEFORE THE LOWER COURTS PURSUANT TO THE
EFFICIENT USE OF PAPER RULE**

**MOVING TOWARDS DIGITAL COURTS:
COMPONENT ONE: TRANSITION TO ELECTRONIC FILING AND
SERVICE OF PLEADINGS, MOTIONS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS
AS WELL AS DIGITAL SERVICE OF ALL ORDERS IN CIVIL
CASES**

WHEREAS, under Article VIII, Section 5(5) of the 1987 Constitution, the Supreme Court is vested with the power to “[p]romulgate rules concerning the protection and enforcement of constitutional rights, pleading, practice, and procedure in all courts, the admission to the practice of law, the Integrated Bar, and legal assistance to the underprivileged. Such rules shall provide a simplified and inexpensive procedure for the speedy disposition of cases, shall be uniform for all courts of the same grade, and shall not diminish, increase, or modify substantive rights[.]”;

WHEREAS, under Article VIII, Section 6 of the 1987 Constitution, the Supreme Court is vested with administrative supervision over all courts and the personnel thereof;

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WHEREAS, pursuant to this power, the Supreme Court *En Banc*, in A.M. No. 22-04-26-SC, crafted the Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations for 2022–2027, which lays down the reform initiatives necessary toward achieving a technology-driven Judiciary;

WHEREAS, a key activity in the Innovation outcome in the Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations for 2022–2027 is the development of an eCourt System Version 2.0 (eCourt PH 2.0) for the digitalization of adjudication;

WHEREAS, eCourt PH 2.0 comprises the following components:

1. Digital filing and service of all pleadings, motions, and other court documents, as well as the digital service of court orders in civil cases;
2. Installation of the digital case dashboard in all trial courts;
3. Digitization of existing case records and *rollos* in all pending cases;
4. Digital filing and service before the Supreme Court and appellate courts;
5. Digital appeals process; and
6. Digital criminal and special proceedings;

WHEREAS, in an April 11, 2023 Resolution, the Supreme Court *En Banc* resolved to approve the Guidelines on Submission of Electronic Copies of Pleadings and Other Court Submissions Being Filed Before the Lower Courts Pursuant to the Efficient Use of Paper Rule;

WHEREAS, the June 26, 2024 Report of the Office of the Court Administrator showed that the compliance by all courts with electronic filing after these administrative issuances has been less than one hundred percent;

WHEREAS, it is necessary that all courts and constituents are able to comply with the changes necessary for the digital transformation of the Judiciary;

WHEREAS, the Management Committee of the Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations, on August 7, 2024, approved the plan to implement eCourt PH 2.0 in six components, the first component on electronic filing to be fully accomplished within a final transition period of three months; and

WHEREAS, by December 1, 2024, all civil cases pending before first- and second-level courts shall use electronic transmittal as the primary manner of filing pleadings and other court submissions and their accompanying documents, such as annexes and exhibits, if any;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Supreme Court *En Banc* resolves to **ISSUE** the following Resolution:

PART 1 TRANSITION MANDATE

Section 1. *Mandatory submission of electronic copies of filings in civil cases.* — Starting September 1, 2024, no first- or second-level court shall act upon any pleading, motion, or other court document (herein referred to as “pleading or other court submission”) filed, served, or offered in evidence in any civil case governed by the rules of civil procedure, unless the filing, service and offer in evidence is accompanied by an electronic transmittal through e-mail of the same pleading or court submission. The additional accompanying documents of the pleading or other court submission, such as annexes, appendices, or exhibits, shall also be electronically submitted.

However, upon motion of the filing party or counsel, a court may waive the requirement of electronic transmittal of the following submissions: (i) annexes, appendices, exhibits, or other accompanying documents to pleadings or other court submissions not readily amenable to digitization to portable document format (PDF); and (ii) sealed and confidential documents or records. The court shall ensure that all orders waiving the electronic transmittal requirement for particular filings are included in the electronic case record or *rollo*.

Electronic submission through e-mail must be completed within 24 hours from the completion of the primary manner of the document’s filing, service, or offer, in accordance with Rule 13 of the 2019 Amendments to the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure.

Section 2. *Electronic copies of outbound court documents.* — Starting September 1, 2024, all orders and other documents issued by any trial court, served upon the parties in accordance with the modes provided in Rule 13 of the 2019 Amendments to the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure, shall likewise be transmitted to the parties and their respective counsel in PDF copies through e-mail using the court’s official e-mail address. The transmittal e-mail to the parties and their counsel shall indicate the primary manner of service of the order or other court document—such as in open court or by registered mail—by the court to the parties. Failure to file a notice of

appearance pursuant to Section 4(a) of this Resolution before the service of a court-issued order or other document shall be deemed a waiver of receipt of the electronic copy.

Section 3. *Mandatory electronic filing and service.* — By December 1, 2024, the primary and mandatory manner of service of outbound court documents within a certified judicial region shall be through electronic transmittal, except for summons, which shall continue to be governed by Rule 14 of the 2019 Amendments to the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure.

By December 1, 2024, all filing and service of pleadings, motions, and other documents to the parties and their counsels in cases within certified judicial regions shall be done through e-mail of PDF copies. Provided, the filing and service of initiatory pleadings shall continue to be governed by Rule 13 and other pertinent rules under the 2019 Amendments to the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure until their amendment, subject to the requirement of submission of PDF copies pursuant to Section 1, paragraph 3 of this Resolution. Further to Section 1, paragraph 2, the filing and service through e-mail of court submissions not readily amenable to digitization in PDF and sealed and confidential court records may continue to be waived upon motion of the filing party or counsel.

The effectivity of this Section shall be subject to the completion of the conditions on the certification of judicial regions in Section 6 of this Resolution.

Section 4. *E-mail address of record.* —

(a) *Notice.* A notice of appearance shall be filed in all cases pending before the trial courts, containing the valid and professional e-mail addresses of all counsels, their law firms if any, and their parties. The notice must be filed prior to or together with the filing party or counsel's first compliance with Section 1 of this Resolution and shall likewise be served to all parties in the case.

(b) *Valid e-mail address.* An e-mail address is deemed valid when it is in the [local-part]@[domain] syntax and is capable of receiving e-mails from other senders, especially those outside the address's own domain. The e-mail addresses, as filed in the notice of appearance, shall serve as the e-mail addresses of record of the parties, and their individual counsel and law firms.

(c) *Mandatory submission of counsels' e-mail address.* The submission of e-mail addresses of the counsels, and their law firms if any, shall be mandatory. The counsels of record are required to use their professional e-mail accounts as their e-mail addresses of record. To preserve the confidentiality, privacy, and security of communications, the use by

lawyers of personal, nonprofessional e-mail accounts as their e-mail addresses of record is prohibited.

(d) *Optional submission of parties' e-mail address.* The submission of e-mail addresses of the parties shall be optional but highly encouraged.

(e) *Electronic carbon copies.* Transmittal of all submissions, filing or service by e-mail shall include, through electronic carbon copy (CC:), all the e-mail addresses of record of all counsels and their law firms, if any, and optionally, all parties.

(f) *Effect of non-use of e-mail address of record.* All electronic transmittals must be made using any of the e-mail addresses of record of the counsels of record, or that of their law firms, if any, or the e-mail address of record of the filing party. If an electronic transmittal is made with an e-mail address not of record, the entire transmittal shall be deemed as not received until such time that the transmittal is made using a valid e-mail address of record.

(g) *Obligation to monitor e-mail address of record.* Counsel and parties have the obligation to regularly and diligently monitor the inboxes of their e-mail addresses of record, including that of their law firms, if any, with the courts. No court shall accept as an excuse for any purpose that counsel or parties have not checked the inboxes of their e-mail addresses of record. Any lawyer who neglects to check the inbox of their e-mail address of record regularly and diligently or fails to comply with Rule 13, Section 11 of the 2019 Amendments to the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure should there be changes to their e-mail address of record, to the detriment of the cause of their client, shall be subjected to disciplinary action.

Section 5. *Submission to official court e-mail address.* — The PDF copies must be transmitted by the filing party or counsel to the official e-mail address of the court where the case is pending. A directory of the official e-mail addresses of the lower courts maintained by the Supreme Court of the Philippines is available at <https://sc.judiciary.gov.ph/court-locator/>.

Section 6. *Certification of judicial regions for electronic filing.* —

(a) The primary modes of filing, service and offer of evidence shall remain as provided in the current Rules of Court, as amended, until: (i) the revisions to Rule 13 and related provisions of the Rules of Court shall have been promulgated; and (ii) the Court orders that the principal manner of filing in a judicial region or in the entire country shall be through the filing of authenticated PDF copies through e-mail after one or all of the judicial regions are certified by the Office of the Court Administrator (OCA), pursuant to Section 7 of this Resolution, to be capable of electronic filing.

(b) The OCA shall certify all judicial regions no later than November 30, 2024.

Section 7. Requirements for certification. — Certification by the OCA shall be given for the Court's approval only when the Regional Court Manager or, in judicial regions without a Regional Court Manager, all the executive judges within the judicial regions report that:

1. All courts with cases within the coverage of the 2019 Amendments to the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure, within the judicial region, have the necessary infrastructure and equipment to receive electronic transmittals of pleadings or other court submissions;

2. Each court has sufficiently trained personnel for the reception of electronic transmittals, from management of the court's e-mail address for electronic filing, to the processing of electronic copies of documents, until their safekeeping and storage, including the designation of court staff primarily accountable for electronic filings;

3. All judges, in whose courts there are available electronic copies of pleadings and other court submissions, have the capacity and capability to issue decisions, resolutions, judgements, and orders using the case record or *rollo* in electronic format; and

4. Pursuant to Section 12 of this Resolution, a website has been made ready and is available for the storage of and public access to all pleadings and other court submissions filed with the court, as well as court-issued documents.

PART II FORMAT OF ELECTRONIC MAIL AND THEIR ATTACHMENTS

Section 8. Electronic file format. —

(a) The PDF copy of the primary pleading or court submission must be separated from the electronic copies in PDF of any accompanying additional documents, each of which must be contained in their own PDF files.

(b) The PDF copy may be electronically generated from a word-processing or PDF creation program or be scanned images of the original document in paper compiled in a PDF file, or a combination of both methods. However, in all cases, the contents must be completely legible. If the PDF copy is wholly or partially generated from scanned images of the original document in paper, the filing party or counsel shall ensure that the PDF copy is an exact and complete copy of the original document in paper. In case of discrepancies between the images of scanned text and any machine-readable

text generated by optical character recognition, the former shall be controlling. The filing party or counsel shall retain the original document for inspection by the court or other parties when necessary.

(c) The size of each PDF file must be reasonable. The one filing is also responsible for ensuring that the receiving court's official e-mail address service will not reject or block a transmittal e-mail due to the file size of an attachment. Other parties or counsel, as recipients, are responsible for ensuring that they will be able to receive a transmittal e-mail.

(d) If the primary manner of filing is through electronic transmission, the form and substance of the contents of the PDF copy, as first filed, shall be controlling. If the pleading, court submission, or any accompanying document has already been filed personally, by registered mail, or by accredited courier, the PDF copy to be transmitted should be the exact copy of the filed paper copy. If the court determines, on motion or *motu proprio* and after notice and hearing, that there are material discrepancies between the paper copy and the electronic copy, it may impose an appropriate sanction or refer such finding to the proper office for disciplinary action on the lawyer, law firm, or party responsible for the filing.

(e) The PDF file of the primary pleading or court submission shall have the same filename as its designation, in accordance with Rule 7, Section 2 of the 2019 Amendments to the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure. At the option of the one filing, the designation of the pleading or court submission may be shortened for the filename, but must still contain sufficient information to ascertain the nature of the relief sought.

(f) The PDF of each accompanying additional document, if any, shall have the same filename as the document's title, and must further be appended with the designation of the primary pleading or court submission to which they are attached or annexed. Finally, all filenames must be appended with the docket number/s of the case/s for which they are being filed. All information shall be separated with a hyphen (-). Any special characters that cannot be used in a filename by reason of technical limitations may be omitted entirely, or substituted with an underscore (_), at the option of the one filing.

Example:

The PDF file for the Complaint for Unlawful Detainer for Civil Case No. 123456 should have the filename "Complaint for Unlawful Detainer-Civil Case No. 123456.pdf"

The PDF file of Annex A of the Complaint for Unlawful Detainer for Civil Case No. 123456 should have a filename "Annex A-Complaint for Unlawful Detainer-Civil Case No. 123456.pdf"

(g) Electronic copies of pleadings and other court submissions transmitted to the court not in PDF; or as PDF files with password protection

or other encryption, or with embedded executable code or scripts; or in archive files; or as corrupted files, shall be deemed as not filed. Electronic copies of additional accompanying documents transmitted to the court not in PDF; or as PDF files with password protection or other encryption, or with embedded executable code or scripts; or in archive files; or as corrupted files, shall be excluded from the records or *rollo* of the case/s for which they have been submitted, even if the electronic copy in PDF of the primary pleading or court submission has been correctly filed. The filing of PDF copies not in accordance with the format and manner stated in this Resolution shall subject the filing lawyer, law firm, or party to disciplinary action or any appropriate sanction to be imposed by the court.

Section 9. Transmittal e-mail format. —

(a) *Subject.* The subject of the transmittal e-mail shall contain the docket number/s, case title/s and the designation of the primary pleading or court submission being transmitted, which shall indicate its nature.

Subject: [Docket Number/s and Case Title] - [Designation of the Pleading or Court Submission]

Example:

Subject: Civil Case No. 123456, *Maria dela Cruz v. Juan dela Cruz* - Complaint for Unlawful Detainer

(b) *Body.* The body of the e-mail shall follow the prescribed format and must contain sufficient information to enable the court to ascertain the following: (1) the party or parties filing the pleading or other court submission; (2) the nature of the pleading or court submission; (3) the party or parties against whom relief, if any, is sought; and (4) the nature of the relief sought:

- (i) Primary manner of filing (i.e., personal filing, registered mail, accredited courier, or electronic transmittal)
- (ii) Filing date (based on the primary manner of filing)
- (iii) Case data, namely: (1) docket number/s; (2) case title/s; (3) name of the filing party; (4) contact number/s of the filer; (5) other e-mail address of the filer, if any; and (6) a list of the document titles of the attachments to the transmittal e-mail.

Example:

Primary manner of filing: Registered mail

Filing date: 01/01/2023

Docket number: Civil Case No. 123456

Case Title: Maria dela Cruz v. Juan dela Cruz

Name of Filing Party: Maria dela Cruz

Contact Numbers: (02) 888-9900 (landline), 0900-1122334 (mobile)

Other e-mail address/es, if any: [filer's other e-mail address/es]

Title/s of Attachment/s:

1. Complaint for Unlawful Detainer
2. Demand Letter

(c) *Attachments.*

- (i) A transmittal e-mail shall contain only PDF copies pertaining to one case. For the purposes of electronic submission, consolidated cases with more than one docket number shall be considered as one case. All files must be enclosed as individual attachments to the transmittal e-mail.
- (ii) All PDF copies must be transmitted as direct attachments to the transmittal e-mail, and not as external links to cloud storage, file-sharing sites, or similar. PDF copies must not be contained in archive files, such as ZIP (.zip) or RAR (.rar), and must not require additional extraction or conversion into PDF. The failure to file any document not as a direct attachment shall result in the document being deemed not filed.
- (iii) In case the total file size of the documents exceeds the maximum size allowed for attachments by the e-mail service provider being used by the one filing, the filer shall transmit the electronic documents in several batches, but each e-mail must be clearly marked by indicating in the subject the batch number of the e-mail and the total batches of e-mails sent, following the prescribed format in this Resolution. It is the responsibility of the filer to ensure that the receiving court's official e-mail address service will not reject or block a transmittal e-mail due to its size. The time and date of the final transmittal e-mail, as indicated in the sequence, shall be considered as the time and date of filing of the pleading or other court submission.

Example:

Subject: Civil Case No. 123456, *Maria dela Cruz v. Juan dela Cruz* - Complaint for Unlawful Detainer (batch 1 of 3)

Subject: Civil Case No. 123456, *Maria dela Cruz v. Juan dela Cruz* - Complaint for Unlawful Detainer (batch 2 of 3)

Subject: Civil Case No. 123456, *Maria dela Cruz v. Juan dela Cruz* - Complaint for Unlawful Detainer (batch 3 of 3)

(d) *Retention requirement.* In all instances, the filing party or counsel must retain a copy of each transmittal e-mail, in any form prescribed by pertinent rules on evidence, while the case is pending for the inspection of the court or other parties when necessary.

PART III INTERIM TRIAL COURT MANAGEMENT OF ELECTRONIC FILES

Section 10. *Proof of electronic transmittal.* — The receipt of an electronic copy shall be proved by its existence in the case record or *rollo*, without prejudice to the presentation of the proof of filing as provided in the 2019 Amendments to the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure. The clerk of court or branch clerk of court, with the assistance of designated court personnel, shall have the primary responsibility of ensuring that all pleadings and other court submissions electronically transmitted to their court are properly accounted for and included in the case record or *rollo*.

A copy in PDF of the transmittal e-mail clearly showing the sender, and the date and time of receipt of the e-mail by the receiving court, shall be included as the cover sheet of the filing and shall form part of the case record or *rollo*.

Section 11. *Digitization training for court personnel.* — All judges in all trial courts shall ensure adequate training for their personnel in the digitization of existing case records of pending cases.

Section 12. *Public access to court records.* — The OCA and the Offices of the Chief Communications Officer and the Court Spokesperson, with the assistance of the Management Information Systems Office (MISO), shall create the relevant internet web pages so that all electronic case records and *rollo* are available for public access.

Section 13. *Electronic-first resolution.* — During the transition period, or until December 1, 2024, all trial court judges are encouraged not to print their electronic case records or *rollo*, but to act upon their cases using the electronic files in the records or *rollo*. After December 1, 2024, all judges must be able to write primarily, or exclusively, from the electronic case records or *rollo*.

PART IV OTHER PROVISIONS

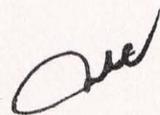
Section 14. *Technical support.* — Each Regional Court Manager, executive judge and judge of single-sala courts shall assign personnel who shall be trained to provide technical assistance and support for the implementation of this Resolution. The OCA, with the assistance of the MISO, shall provide real-time support through tech.support.spji@judiciary.gov.ph.

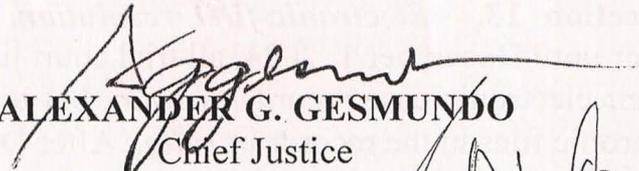
Section 15. *Training.* — The Court's Committee on Computerization and Library, with the OCA, MISO, and the Offices of the Chief Communications Officer and the Court Spokesperson shall provide training materials as well as conduct the relevant forums and training sessions to implement this Resolution. The Philippine Judicial Academy shall create courses that will continually orient and train court personnel on all components of the eCourt PH 2.0.

Section 16. *Procurement priority.* — The procurement offices shall give priority to requests in connection with the fulfillment of eCourt PH 2.0. The OCA, Regional Court Managers, and executive judges shall immediately conduct an inventory of their technical infrastructure, equipment, and skills needed to ensure compliance with mandatory electronic filing and service by December 1, 2024.

Section 17. *Data privacy.* — This Resolution shall be subject to the rules on data privacy and personal information protection, and other data privacy issuances, of this Court.

Section 18. *Repeal of previous issuances.* — All prior Supreme Court issuances inconsistent with this Resolution, including the Guidelines on Submission of Electronic Copies of Pleadings and Other Court Submissions Being Filed Before the Lower Courts Pursuant to the Efficient Use of Paper Rule dated April 11, 2023 are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

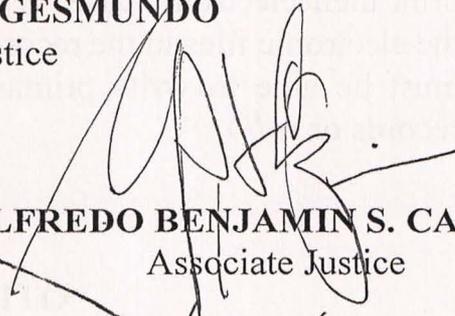




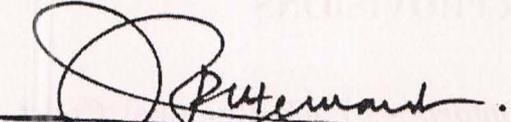
ALEXANDER G. GESMUNDO
Chief Justice



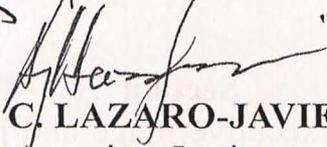
MARYIC M.V.F. LEONEN
Senior Associate Justice



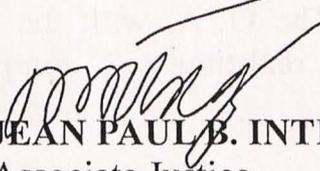
ALFREDO BENJAMIN S. CAGUIOA
Associate Justice



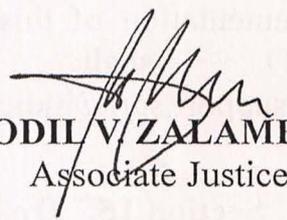
RAMON PAUL L. HERNANDO
Associate Justice



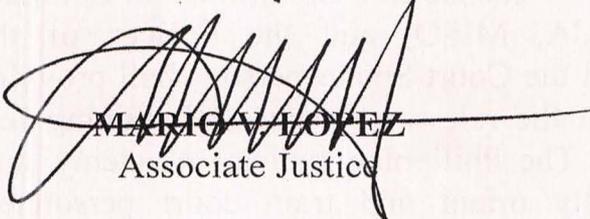
AMY C. LAZARO-JAVIER
Associate Justice



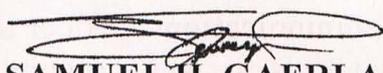
HENRI JEAN PAUL B. INTING
Associate Justice



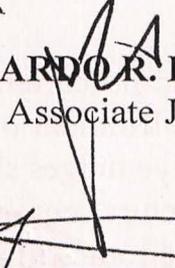
RODIL V. ZALAMEDA
Associate Justice



MARIG V. LOPEZ
Associate Justice



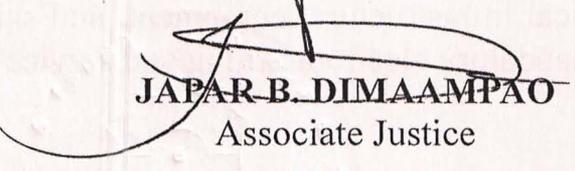
SAMUEL H. GAERLAN
Associate Justice



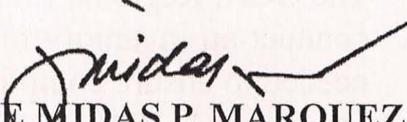
RICARDO R. ROSARIO
Associate Justice



JHOSEP V. LOPEZ
Associate Justice



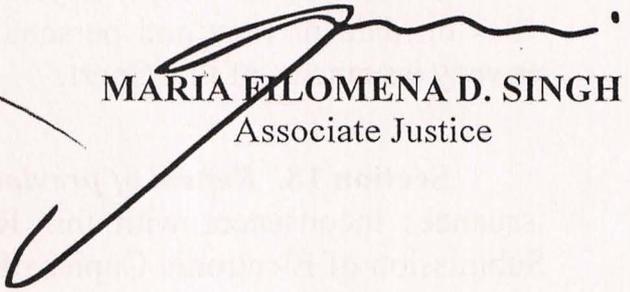
JAPAR B. DIMAAMPAO
Associate Justice



JOSE MIDAS P. MARQUEZ
Associate Justice



ANTONIO T. KHO JR.
Associate Justice



MARIA FILOMENA D. SINGH
Associate Justice