



Michigan Supreme Court

State Court Administrative Office
Michigan Hall of Justice
P.O. Box 30052
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone (517) 373-0128

Chad C. Schmucker
State Court Administrator

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 23, 2011

TO: Chief Judges
cc: Court Administrators/Clerks
Probate Registers
County Clerks
SCAO Regional Administrators

FROM: Chad C. Schmucker

RE: SCAO Administrative Memorandum 2011-02
Acceptance of SCAO-Approved Court Forms

We have received some reports of courts refusing to accept SCAO-approved court forms. It has been difficult to determine specifically where this is occurring and whether it is a court policy, a practice of an individual judge, or simple misunderstanding by a court clerk. This memo is intended to clarify what is already the practice of almost all of the courts across the state.

The procedural rules regarding forms are contained in the Case File Management Standards and in MCR 1.109. Case File Management Standards Component 32 states: "Unless specifically required by statute or court rule, the court may not mandate the use of a specific form, whether SCAO-approved or locally developed." MCR 1.109 provides that the court clerk must reject nonconforming papers unless the judge directs otherwise. That same rule states that SCAO-approved forms are conforming papers. Courts may not impose additional procedures beyond those contained in the court rules.¹ Therefore, all courts must accept court forms approved by the Supreme Court or the state court administrator. To mandate the use of a particular local court form, a court must adopt a local court rule for that purpose. The Supreme Court must approve all local court rules.

If you have questions, contact Amy Garoushi at elgaroushia@courts.mi.gov or 517-373-4864, or Traci Gentilozzi at gentilozzit@courts.mi.gov or 517-373-2217.

¹ Credit Acceptance Corporation v 46th District Court, 481 Mich 883 (2008) affirming In Re: Credit Acceptance Corporation, 273 Mich App 594 (2007). MCR 8.112 requires that a court adopt a local court rule approved by the Supreme Court to authorize any practice that is not specifically authorized by the rules.