

**Minor
Court
Rules
Committee**

1996 Membership:

Honorable Dennis R. Joyce, *Chairman*
Honorable Alberta Thompson
Honorable Linda Baumunk
Honorable Kenneth E. Deatelhauser
Honorable Fred A. Pierantoni, II
Honorable Christine Sereni-Massinger
Honorable Peter P. Simoni
Michael F. Krimmel, *ex officio*

Staff:

John, Marsh, Esq., *Liaison, Statewide Automation Project*

Legal Authorization:

Pa. Constitution, Article V, § 10(c)
Supreme Court Order No. 92 (Magisterial Docket No. 1, Book No.
2) April 17, 1990

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(412) 921-5559

History/Background

In 1990, pursuant to Pennsylvania Supreme Court Order No. 92 (Magisterial Docket No. 1, Book No. 2), issued April 17, 1990, the Minor Court Civil Procedural Rules Committee was reestablished as the Minor Court Rules Committee. The committee was charged by the Supreme Court with examining and evaluating the rules and standards regarding district justices' conduct, the rules and standards pertaining to the offices of district justices, and the rules of civil and criminal procedures for district justices. It also recommends to the Court new rules it concludes should be adopted or current rules that should be amended.

The committee is comprised of seven members who serve terms of three years. Members may serve a maximum of three full terms.

1996 Activities

The Minor Court Rules Committee began the year by completing work on new rules for landlord-tenant cases. These proposed rules were published on January 27, 1996, and the committee met on February 16, 1996, to discuss the comments to them. The committee then forwarded the proposal to the Supreme Court for approval and new rules were promulgated on May 28, 1996. This was an extensive change in the rules for the recovery of Possession of Real Property.

Major changes also occurred in the composition of the committee. Carl G. Wass, Esq., who had been committee chairman since March of 1993, completed his term and should be congratulated for many years of service to the committee and to the minor judiciary

system. District Justice Dennis R. Joyce was appointed the new chairman in April of 1996. Five other new members were welcomed to the committee at the same time. They were District Justices Linda M. Baumunk; Kenneth E. Deatelhauser; Fred A. Pierantoni, II; and Christine Sereni-Massinger, as well as Peter A. Simoni, Esq.

Other activities for the committee in 1996 included:

- reviewing and recommending several changes to the landlord-tenant rules
- discussing Rule 207 regarding the practice of law before district justices
- working with the Criminal Procedural Rules Committee to review criminal rules as they affect district justices and the minor courts
- beginning discussions on the use of facsimile stamps in district courts.

Looking Ahead to 1997

The committee will continue to monitor its recommendations to the Supreme Court regarding technical changes to the landlord-tenant rules. It is also proceeding to draft a rule for the use of facsimile stamps and will continue to work with the Civil Procedural Rules Committee and the Criminal Rules Committee on ways to improve the rules affecting district justices and the minor judiciary.

Contact Person

Anyone wishing to contact the Minor Court Rules Committee may call District Justice Dennis R. Joyce at (412) 921-5559 or write to him at District Court 05-2-23; 136 Bradford Avenue; Pittsburgh, PA 15205. 