

# APPELLANT INSTRUCTIONS

## Appeal from Administrative Agency to Superior Court\* (except for Workers' Compensation Board decisions)

Court staff can usually answer questions about court procedures, court rules, court records, and forms. Court staff must remain neutral and impartial. They are not allowed to give legal advice. Court staff cannot:

- advise you how statutes and rules apply to your case
- tell you whether you presented your case properly and with the best evidence and arguments
- tell you which procedures are the best ones to use in your case
- interpret laws for you

If you need help with your case, you should talk to a lawyer.

\*For appeals from decisions of the Workers' Compensation Board, contact the Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission at 3301 Eagle St. #304, Anchorage, AK 99503, or call (907) 269-4980.  
The superior court cannot hear these appeals.

### April 2022 ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

Most of the forms referenced in this booklet are available on the court system's website here: <http://www.courts.alaska.gov/forms/index.htm>

The Appellate Rules cited in this booklet are available on the court system's website here: <https://courts.alaska.gov/rules/docs/app.pdf>

You can also find copies of the book *Alaska Rules of Court* at any local court.

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## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING AN APPEAL FROM AN ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY TO THE SUPERIOR COURT**

Appellate Rules 601-612 govern appeals to the superior court.

AS 44.62 (the Administrative Procedure Act) has more information about administrative appeals. You can also read the statutes, regulations, and case law cited in the agency decision you are appealing. Appeals are complicated, and you may want to talk to a lawyer before you start this process.

### **I. DEFINITIONS**

- A. **ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL.** In an administrative appeal, the superior court reviews the final decision of a state or local government agency, board, or commission. An appeal is **not** a new hearing or a trial. You cannot present any new evidence to the superior court. The only information that the superior court will consider on appeal is:
1. the transcript (or in some cases, electronic recording) of the administrative hearing, including witness testimony;
  2. any exhibits (documents, photographs, videos, or physical items) offered as evidence at the administrative hearing;
  3. the documents and depositions in the agency file; and
  4. legal briefs filed in the appeal.<sup>1</sup>
- B. **APPELLANT.** The appellant is the party who files the appeal.
- C. **APPELLEE.** The appellee is the party who defends against the appeal.

### **II. COPIES TO OTHER PARTIES**

The court rules require each party to give a copy of any document that the party files with the court to all other parties.<sup>2</sup> You can give the documents to the other party by hand-delivering or mailing the documents. You can also email or fax a copy if the other party agreed to this type of service. For every document that you file, you must include a signed statement that you gave a copy to the other parties. This is called "proof of service." The court forms include a certificate of service section. Make sure that you always complete this section before you file the form with the court. If another party is represented by an attorney, you must serve the attorney instead of the party. Agencies are usually represented by an attorney. Contact the agency to find out the name and address of the attorney representing it on appeal, or wait to see the attorney's information when the attorney files an *Entry of Appearance*. For appeals from a state agency, see section III(C)(4) on page 4 about where you must send copies of your notice of appeal.

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<sup>1</sup> See section VI(B)(1) of these instructions for more information on legal briefs.

<sup>2</sup> Appellate Rule 602(j).

### III. TO FILE AN APPEAL

#### A. Who May File.

Any party to an administrative hearing may file an appeal when that party believes that (1) the hearing officer applied the law incorrectly, and/or (2) the hearing officer's decision was not supported by the evidence presented. Appeals from Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission decisions cannot be filed in the superior court.

#### B. When to File.

1. You can only appeal to the superior court after all administrative proceedings have been completed, including any available appeal or review proceedings within (internal to) the agency.
2. You must file a notice of appeal **within 30 days** from the date the order appealed from is mailed or otherwise distributed to you.<sup>3</sup> If you file a timely request for reconsideration with the agency, the time for filing the notice of appeal may be extended for the hearing officer to rule on that request.

If you want to file a notice of appeal after the 30 days, you must ask the court for permission to accept it. You can use *Request and Order* (form [AP-135](#)) for this. Your request must explain why your appeal notice is late. File your request to accept the late notice at the same time you file your notice of appeal.

#### C. How to File.

##### 1. Notice.

File *Notice of Appeal* (form [AP-101](#)) with the superior court. Attach a copy of the agency's decision that you are appealing.<sup>4</sup> Unless otherwise provided for under the law, you must file in the location that would "best serve the convenience of the parties."<sup>5</sup>

##### 2. Filing Fee.

- a. When you file, you will be required to pay a \$250 filing fee. Make your check or money order payable to "Clerk of Court."

-OR-

- b. If you cannot afford to pay the filing fee, file *Request for Exemption from Payment of Fees* (form [TF-920](#)) asking the court to waive it.

**NOTE:** There is no filing fee if you are appealing a decision by the Department of Labor under AS 23.20 (Employment Security Act).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Appellate Rule 602(a)(2). For the 30-day time limit to apply, an agency must clearly indicate that its decision is a final order and that the claimant has 30 days to appeal. *Manning v. Alaska Railroad Corporation*, 853 P.2d 1120, 1124 (Alaska 1993).

<sup>4</sup> Appellate Rule 602(c)(1)(D).

<sup>5</sup> Appellate Rule 602(b)(2).

<sup>6</sup> Administrative Rule 9(b)(4).

3. Bond.

You do **not** need to file a bond for appeals from a denial of a claim for benefits under AS 23.20 (Employment Security Act).<sup>7</sup> In all other appeals from administrative agencies, you must file **one** of the following at the time you file your notice of appeal:

- a \$750 cost bond
- a motion to waive or reduce cost bond

a. \$750 Cost Bond.

The purpose of this bond is to make sure the appellee's appeal costs will be reimbursed by you if you lose your appeal or if the appeal is dismissed. To meet the cost bond requirement, you can either file a surety bond **or** make a cash deposit:

- (1) Surety Bond. This is a document that guarantees payment of money if certain things occur. The person or company that writes the bond is called the surety. The surety guarantees the payment by becoming responsible for it. Such bonds are generally available from insurance companies or third parties qualified to write surety bonds. There will be a fee. The court system does not provide forms for surety bonds.
- (2) Cash Deposit. If you want to make a cash deposit with the court instead of filing a surety bond, complete *Cash Deposit on Appeal* (form [AP-110](#)). Check the first box on the form, fill out the rest of it, acknowledge it before a court clerk or notary public, and give it to the clerk along with your money.

b. Motion to Waive or Reduce Cost Bond.

The cost bond is \$750 unless the superior court fixes a lesser amount.<sup>8</sup> If you think this amount is too high because the expected appeal costs (including attorney fees) for the appellee will be a lot less than \$750, you may file:

- (1) *Motion to Waive or Reduce Cost Bond* (form [AP-120](#)).
- (2) *Order Re Cost Bond* (form [AP-130](#)). Only fill out the top part of the AP-130 (the case caption). The judge will fill out the rest.

If you believe you cannot afford to post a \$750 cost bond, you may file:

- (1) *Motion to Waive or Reduce Cost Bond* (form [AP-120](#)).
- (2) *Order Re Cost Bond* (form [AP-130](#)). Only fill out the top part of the AP-130 (the case caption). The judge will fill out the rest.
- (3) *Financial Statement* (form [CR-206](#)).

The court will notify you of its decision. If the court orders you to post a cost bond, you must file a surety bond or cash deposit in the amount set by the court or your appeal will be dismissed.

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<sup>7</sup> Appellate Rule 602(e)(2).

<sup>8</sup> Appellate Rule 602(e)(1).

c. Return of Bond.

After the appeal is decided, the court will send all parties a notice that the bond will be released unless there is an objection. If you lose your appeal, the appellee may file an objection and request that the bond be applied to appellee's appeal costs. If the appellee doesn't file an objection, the court will return your cash deposit to you.

4. Copies to Agency and Others. You must send a copy of your notice of appeal and all attachments to:
- In **all** types of agency appeals, the head of the agency
  - If you are appealing from a **state** agency decision, the Attorney General of Alaska, P.O. Box 110300, Juneau, AK 99811-0300
  - If the Office of Administrative Hearings heard the case, the Chief Administrative Law Judge

#### IV. PREPARATION OF RECORD

In addition to the documents you file, the court needs the agency's records about the hearing and decision in your case. The record on appeal will include all original papers and exhibits filed with the agency, and a typed transcript of all proceedings before the agency.<sup>9</sup>

The court will notify the agency to prepare the agency file by a certain deadline. The agency must number the pages in its file, make a copy of the file, and send it to the court. Unless you and the agency agree otherwise, or the court orders otherwise, **you** must pay the agency to do this (usually in advance).<sup>10</sup> The agency will notify you when it is ready to accept payment and how much it will be. **Within 30 days** after this notice, you must pay the agency for preparation of the record. If you do not, your appeal may be dismissed.<sup>11</sup>

You must also pay to have a transcript of the agency hearing or hearings typed.<sup>12</sup> You will need to get an electronic recording of the hearings from the agency and hire a transcriber. Contact the agency about this after you file your notice of appeal. You must file the original transcript with the agency **within 40 days** after you file your notice of appeal. If you need more time to get the transcript typed, ask the court for an extension of time. You may use *Request and Order* (form [AP-135](#)) to do this.

#### V. STAY OF ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

The filing of your appeal does not automatically "stay" (stop) any seizure of your property or loss of a license that results from the agency decision, however, you may ask the court for a stay of enforcement of the agency decision. You may use *Request and Order* (form [AP-135](#)) to do this. The court may require an additional bond, called a supersedeas bond, before allowing the stay.

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<sup>9</sup> Exception: In an appeal from a driver's license revocation by the Division of Motor Vehicles, or from a prisoner disciplinary decision of the Department of Corrections, the record will include electronic recordings instead of transcripts. Appellate Rule 604(b)(1).

<sup>10</sup> Appellate Rule 604(b)(1)(B)(iv).

<sup>11</sup> Appellate Rule 606(b).

<sup>12</sup> For exceptions, see footnote 9 above.

If you file a request for a stay at the same time you file your notice of appeal, include a copy of the request in the packet that you send to the head of the agency (and any others required to be served with notice; see section III(C)(4) on the previous page). If you file this request later, you must instead send a copy to the agency's attorney. You can find out who the attorney is by calling the agency.

## VI. WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOUR APPELLATE CASE IS OPENED

### A. Assignment of Judge.

After you have opened your appellate case, the court will notify you of the name of the judge assigned to hear it. You have the right to a "peremptory challenge" (to ask for a different judge) **one time** only, without giving a reason. If you do this, you will be randomly assigned a different superior court judge to hear the appeal. Use *Notice of Change of Judge* (form [TF-935](#)). You must file this notice **within five days** of being notified of the assigned judge.

### B. Briefing Schedule.

A "legal brief" is a document that you write to explain your side of the case to the judge. When the case is ready for briefing, the court will send you and the appellee *Notice Setting Appeal Procedure* (form AP-307). This notice will tell you the time schedule for filing legal briefs and requesting oral argument.

You **must** file a brief within the time limit set by the court's notice. If you do not, your appeal may be dismissed. If you cannot file within the time limit, file *Request and Order* (form [AP-135](#)) asking the court for more time.

Along with your brief, you must prepare an "excerpt of record." Instructions for preparing an excerpt are in paragraph 2 on the next page.

1. **Legal Brief.** The full rules for what your legal brief must include and what format it must be in are in Appellate Rules 605(a), 212(c), and 513.5. These instructions only provide a summary of these rules. Read the full text of the rules to make sure you are complying with all requirements.

The substance of your brief must include the following sections, in the following order:

- a. a table of contents
- b. a table of all legal authorities cited to in your brief (case law, statutes, and regulations) and the text of the primary laws you are relying on
- c. a "jurisdictional statement"<sup>13</sup>
- d. a statement of the issues you want the court to review
- e. a summary of the facts of the case and the agency proceedings
- f. a discussion of the law and its application to the facts (this is where you discuss your appeal arguments in detail)
- g. a short conclusion explaining what you want the court to order

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<sup>13</sup> The includes a statement about the date of the final agency decision, whether the decision is final on all issues, and the legal authority of the superior court to hear the appeal (this authority can be found in the rules and statutes referred to in the beginning of these instructions).

Sections e and f must include citations to the record for each argument or statement you make. See "Citation Guidelines" below for how to do this.

Your brief must be typed or written (using black ink), double-spaced on 8.5" x 11" white paper. Number all of the pages except for the cover, the table of contents, and the table of legal authorities. Only type or write on one side of each page. Your initial brief must be no longer than 50 pages (excluding the cover, table of contents, and table of legal authorities). If the appellee files a brief in response, you have the option (but are not required) to file a reply brief, addressing any new points brought up in the appellee's brief. Your reply brief must be no longer than 20 pages.

*Appellant Brief Cover Sheet* (form [AP-162](#)) may be used as the cover of your brief. It is available as a fillable form online. It is also included as the second-to-last page of these instructions, which you may detach and fill out by hand.

**Citation Guidelines.** In your brief, you must refer to specific pages in the excerpt of record, the transcript, or a deposition that support your arguments or statements about the facts.<sup>14</sup> After each argument or statement of fact, place the referral citation in parenthesis at the end.

- a. To cite to the **excerpt of record**, write "(Exc. \_\_\_)" -- write the appropriate page number of the excerpt on the blank line.
- b. To cite to the **transcript**, write "(Tr. \_\_\_)" -- write the appropriate page number of the transcript on the blank line.
- c. To cite to a **deposition**, write "(Dep. of \_\_\_, page \_\_\_)" -- write the name of the person who gave the deposition on the first blank line, and the page of that deposition on the second blank line.

Examples:

Documents in an Excerpt of Record: (Exc. 26)

Transcript: (Tr. 14)

Deposition: (Dep. of Tom Davis, page 20)

2. **Excerpt of Record.** In addition your brief, you must prepare an excerpt of record. You **must** include copies of the following in your excerpt:

- the complaint, petition, or other document that started the case
- your answer or the answer filed by the other party (if an amended answer was filed, you only need to include the amended answer)
- the decision or order of the hearing officer that you are appealing
- any other orders or rulings the hearing officer made in your case that you want the court to review
- any written opinion, findings, or other statements issued by the hearing officer to explain the reasons for the officer's decision
- any other documents in the agency's file that you cite in your brief, or that you think the court must look at to properly review the case

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<sup>14</sup> For purely legal arguments, you may cite to a statute, a regulation, a constitutional provision, or case law instead.



Do **not** include pages of the transcript of the agency hearings in your excerpt. If you want the court to look at a specific part of the transcript, see the "Citation Guidelines" on the previous page for how to refer to it in your brief.

Do **not** simply use the entire agency file or include extra documents that are not listed above. The court needs to be able to easily locate the relevant parts of the record that support your statements, and not search through a large stack of papers.

Do **not** include anything in your excerpt that was not presented in the original agency proceeding. You cannot present new evidence in the appeal.

To prepare your excerpt:

- a. Look through the agency file that was prepared after you filed your notice of appeal (see section IV of these instructions). The agency gives the file to the court, so if the agency did not provide you a copy, it is also available at the court where you filed your appeal. Make copies of all of the pages that you need need from the file (or pull them out from your own copy). Consult the list on the previous page to make sure you are including just the documents that you need, and are not leaving any required ones out.
  - b. Arrange the documents in chronological order by the date they were signed, with the oldest one on top.
  - c. Put page numbers on the bottom of each page, starting with "1" and numbering each new page, until the last page is numbered. Do not start over the numbering for each document.
  - d. Create a table of contents. List the title of each document, the date it was signed, and the page number (from c above) on which it begins. Put the table of contents on top.
  - e. Prepare a cover page. *Excerpt of Record Cover Sheet* (form [AP-165](#)) may be used. It is available as a fillable form online. It is also included as the last page of these instructions, which you may detach and fill out by hand.
  - f. Staple the excerpt separately from your brief.
3. **Service.** Send a copy of both your brief and your excerpt to the appellee. You must show proof that you did this by filling out and filing a certificate of service. These certificates are already included on the sample cover sheets (forms AP-162 and AP-165).
  4. **File with the Court.** After you have given copies to the appellee, file both your brief and your excerpt of record with the court by the deadline in the notice that the court clerk previously sent to you.
  5. **Reply Brief.** If you choose to file a reply brief, you may also include an additional excerpt of record. Only do this if there are new excerpts that you want to refer to that were not already included in your initial excerpt or in the excerpt that the appellee filed with the appellee's brief.

C. Oral Argument.

“Oral argument” is when you explain your side of the case to the appellate judge and try to persuade the judge why you should get what you are asking for. Oral argument is **not** a new trial or a chance to present more evidence. You cannot call witnesses to testify. You are limited to explaining in more detail the arguments you made in your legal brief. Sometimes, the judge will ask you questions about what you say during oral argument or what you wrote in your brief. Each side gets 15 minutes to speak, unless otherwise ordered.<sup>15</sup>

The deadline to request oral argument is:

- (1) If the appellee files a brief, then within 10 days after the date your **reply** brief is due; **or**
- (2) If the appellee does **not** file a brief, then within 10 days after the due date for the appellee’s brief expired.

If the appellee timely requests oral argument, you may not object to the request.<sup>16</sup> As long as at least one party makes a timely request, the court will automatically schedule oral argument. The request must be in writing, but does not need to explain why oral argument is necessary. You may use *Request and Order* (form [AP-135](#)) to ask for oral argument.

If your request for oral argument is filed after the deadline, you must also include a request for the court to accept your late filing. You may use *Request and Order* (form [AP-135](#)) to both ask for the oral argument to be scheduled, and to explain why the court should accept your late request.

If you file a request for oral argument, you must serve a copy of your request on the appellee. Make sure to fill out the certificate of service showing that you did this.

## VII. DECISION

The superior court will decide the appeal based on the record, the briefs and excerpts submitted, and oral arguments (if held). The court will send you a copy of the decision. The decision may:

- **affirm** (agree with) the hearing officer’s decision,
- **remand** (send the case back for additional action by the agency),
- **reverse** the decision made by the hearing officer, or
- **dismiss** your appeal.

There may also be a combination of these results if there are multiple issues on appeal.

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<sup>15</sup> An exception is if the appellee does not file a legal brief, the appellee waives (gives up) the right to speak at oral argument.

<sup>16</sup> Appellate Rule 605.5.

## VIII. ATTORNEY FEES AND COSTS

In administrative appeals, Appellate Rule 508 determines who may apply for costs and attorney fees at the end of the appeal. Generally, you (the appellant) may apply for costs and attorney fees if the administrative hearing officer's decision is reversed.<sup>17</sup>

Costs. The clerk will send the parties *Notice Re Costs and Attorney Fees on Appeal* (form AP-333) along with a copy of the appeal decision. If you won the appeal, and you want to recover your costs, file a verified<sup>18</sup> and itemized bill of costs **within 10 days** after the date shown in the clerk's certificate of distribution on the appeal decision. If the decision was mailed to you, you have an additional three calendar days to file your bill of costs.

The only costs you may ask for are:

1. the filing fee
2. the cost of preparing the transcripts or electronic recordings and paying the transcriber
3. the cost of copying and mailing briefs and excerpts of record
4. extra costs related to bonds, such as surety fees or bank fees
5. the fee charged by the agency for preparing the agency file for the court

You must serve a copy of your bill of costs on the appellee, who has seven days to file objections. The clerk will then decide what costs to award and send both parties a copy of the decision.

Attorney Fees. File a request for attorney fees **within 10 days** after the date shown in the clerk's certificate of distribution on the appeal decision. You may use *Request and Order* (form [AP-135](#)) to do this. Be sure to attach a detailed invoice showing your actual attorney fees. Non-attorneys cannot request attorney fees for representing themselves. Include an explanation of why you are allowed to recover attorney fees under Appellate Rule 508(e). You must send a copy of the request to the appellee, who has seven days to file objections. The court will send you a copy of the judge's decision on the request.

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<sup>17</sup> If the decision is affirmed or if the appeal is dismissed, then the appellee may ask the court to award costs and attorney fees against you. If the decision is remanded, or if only some parts were reversed or affirmed, then the superior court will have to decide which side, if any, is awarded costs and fees.

<sup>18</sup> "Verified" means your cost bill must include a statement signed by a court clerk or notary public that you have sworn or affirmed that the information in the cost bill is true. See Alaska Statute 09.63.030 for the wording of a verification.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA AT \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Appellant,  
vs.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Appellee. )  
CASE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**BRIEF OF APPELLANT**

Appeal from the \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Agency

Party or Attorney Filing Brief:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Attorney's Bar Number: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that on \_\_\_\_\_  
at \_\_\_\_\_ [date/time], a copy  
of this brief was  
 mailed     personally delivered  
 emailed\*     faxed\*  
to [list names]:

By: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Email and fax may only be used if the other party consented to this method of service.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA AT \_\_\_\_\_

_____	Appellant,	}	CASE NO. _____
vs.			
_____	Appellee.		

**APPELLANT'S EXCERPT OF RECORD**

Appeal from the \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Agency

Party or Attorney Filing Excerpt:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Attorney's Bar Number: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that on \_\_\_\_\_  
at \_\_\_\_\_ [date/time], a copy  
of this excerpt was  
 mailed     personally delivered  
 emailed\*     faxed\*  
to [list names]:

By: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Email and fax may only be used if the other party consented to this method of service.