OFFICE OF APPELLATE COURTS

# STATE OF MINNESOTA IN SUPREME COURT CX-89-1863

NOV 1 2 2008

FILED

PROMULGATION OF AMENDMENTS
TO THE MINNESOTA GENERAL RULES OF PRACTICE
FOR THE DISTRICT COURTS RELATING TO
THE EXPEDITED CHILD SUPPORT PROCESS

ORDER

In its report filed June 13, 2008, the Supreme Court Advisory Committee on the General Rules of Practice recommended amendments to the General Rules of Practice for the District Courts, Title IV. B., Expedited Child Support Process. This Court established a deadline of August 29, 2008, for submitting comments on the proposal. The Supreme Court has reviewed the proposals and the submitted comments, and is fully advised in the premises.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

- 1. The attached amendments to the General Rules of Practice for the District Courts be, and the same hereby are, prescribed and promulgated to be effective on June 1, 2009.
- 2. The attached amendments shall apply to all actions pending on the effective date and to those filed thereafter.
- 3. The inclusion of Advisory Committee comments is made for convenience and does not reflect court approval of the comments made therein.

DATED: November \2\_2008

BY THE COURT:

Eric J. Magnuson

Chief Justice

#### **Amendments to the General Rules of Practice for the District Courts:**

[Note to publishers: Deletions are indicated by a line drawn through the text; additions are underlined.]

#### **RULE 352. DEFINITIONS**

#### **Rule 352.01. Definitions**

For purposes of these rules, the following terms have the following meanings:

- (a) "Answer" means a written document responding to the allegations of a complaint or motion.
  - (b) <u>"Child support"</u> means basic support; child care support; and medical support. Medical support includes the obligation to carry health care coverage, costs for health care coverage, and unreimbursed / uninsured medical expenses.
  - (bc) "Child support magistrate" means an individual appointed by the chief judge of the judicial district to preside over matters in the expedited process. "Child support magistrate" also means any family court referee or district court judge presiding over matters in the expedited process.
  - (ed) "County agency" means the local public authority responsible for child support enforcement.
- (de) "County attorney" means the attorney who represents the county agency, whether that person is employed by the office of the county attorney or under contract with the office of the county attorney.
- (e<u>f</u>) "Initiating party" means a person or county agency starting the proceeding in the expedited process by serving and filing a complaint or motion.

- **(fg)** "IV-D case" means any proceeding where a party has either (1)
  25 assigned to the State rights to child support because of the receipt of public
  26 assistance as defined in Minn. Stat. § 256.741, subd. 1(b) (2006), or (2) applied
  27 for child support services under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. §
  28 654(4) (19942006). "IV-D case" does not include proceedings where income
  29 withholding is the only service applied for or received under Minn. Stat. §
  30 518.6111 (2000) 518A.53 (2006).
  - (gh) "Noninitiating party" means a person or county agency responding to a complaint or motion, including any person who assigned to the State rights to child support because of the receipt of public assistance or applied-for child support services.
  - (hi) "Parentage" means the establishment of the existence or non-existence of the parent-child relationship.
  - (ij) "Parenting time" means the time a parent spends with a child regardless of the custodial designation regarding the child. "Parenting time" previously was known as "visitation."
  - (jk) "Party" means any person or county agency with a legal right to participate in the proceedings.
  - (kl) "Response" means a written answer to the complaint or motion, a "request for hearing" form, or, in a parentage matter, a "request for blood or genetic testing" form.
  - (lm) "Support" means child support, as defined in this rule; child care support; medical support, including medical and dental insurance, and unreimbursed medical and dental expenses; expenses for confinement and pregnancy; arrearages; reimbursement; past support; related costs and fees; and interest and penalties. "Support" also means the enforcement of spousal maintenance when combined with child basic support, child care support, or medical support-

53	Advisory Committee Comment—2008 Amendment
54	Rule 352.01 is amended to reflect the recodification, effective on January
55	1, 2007, of portions of the relevant statutes, that became part of Minn. Stat. ch.
56 57	518A. Rule 352.01(b) provides a new definition for "child support," replacing the definition of "support" formerly set forth in Rule 352.01(l).
	the definition of support formerly set forth in Rule 332.01(1).
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61	RULE 354. COMPUTATION OF TIME
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64	Rule 354.03. "Business Day" Defined
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66	A "business day" means any day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal
67	holiday. As used in these rules, "legal holiday" means New Year's Day, Martin
<b>C</b> 9	Luther King's Birthday, Washington's and Lincoln's Birthday (Presidents' Day),
68	
69	Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day,
70	Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and any other
71	day designated as a holiday by the President or Congress of the United States, by
70	the State, or by a county.
72	the State, or by a county.
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74	Advisory Committee Comment—2008 Amendment
75	In 2006 the Minnesota Supreme Court addressed the ambiguity in the
76	rules and the ambiguity between the rules and statutes over how Columbus Day
77	should be treated. Columbus Day is only optionally a state holiday (by statute
78	the different branches can elect to treat it as a holiday) but is uniformly a
79	federal and U.S. Mail holiday. Because the rules generally allow service by
80 81	mail, the Court in <i>Commandeur LLC v. Howard Hartry, Inc.</i> , 724 N.W.2d 508 (Minn. 2006), ruled that where the last day of a time period occurred on
82	Columbus Day, service by mail permitted by the rules was timely if mailed on
83	the following day on which mail service was available. The amendment to
84	Rule 354.03 makes it clear that Columbus Day is a "legal holiday" for all
85	purposes in these rules, even if that is not necessarily so by the statutory
86	definition. Minn. Stat. § 645.44, subd. 5 (2008).
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90	RULE 355. METHODS OF SERVICE
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93	Rule 355.02. Types of Service
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95	Subdivision 1. Personal Service.
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97	(b) By Whom Served. Unless otherwise ordered by the child support
98	magistrate, personal service shall be made only by the sheriff or by any other
99	person who is at least 18 years of age who is not a party to the proceeding.
100	Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 518.5513 (2000) 518A.46, subd. 2(c)(4) (2006), an
101	employee of the county agency may serve documents on parties.
102	***
103	Subd. 2. Service by United States Mail. Service by United States mail
104	means mailing a copy of the document by first-class mail, postage prepaid,
105	addressed to the person to be served at the person's last known address. Service
106	by mail shall be made only by the sheriff or by any other person who is at least 18
107	years of age who is not a party to the proceeding. Pursuant to Minn. Stat. §
108	518.5513 (2000) 518A.46, subd. 2(c)(4) (2006), an employee of the county agency
109	may serve documents on the parties.
110	* * *
111	
112	Advisory Committee Comment—2008 Amendment
113	Rule 355.02, subds. 1 & 2, are amended to reflect the recodification,
114 115	effective on January 1, 2007, of portions of the relevant statutes, that became part of Minn. Stat. ch. 518A.
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120	* * *
121	Rule 361.02. Exchange of Documents
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123	Subdivision 1. Documents Required to be Provided Upon Request. If a
124	complaint or motion has been served and filed in the expedited process, a party
125	may request any of the documents listed below. The request must be in writing
126	and served upon the appropriate party. The request may be served along with the
127	pleadings. A party shall provide the following documents to the requesting party
128	no later than ten (10) days from the date of service of the written request.
129	(a) Verification of income, health/dental insurance costs and availability
130	of dependent health care coverage, child care costs, and expenses.
131	(b) Copies of last three months of pay stubs.
132	(c) A copy of last two years' State and Federal income tax returns with
133	all schedules and attachments, including Schedule Cs, W-2s and/or 1099s.
134	(d) Written verification of any voluntary payments made for support of
135	a joint child.
136	(e) Written verification of any other court-ordered child support
137	obligations for a nonjoint child.
138	(f) Written verification of any court-ordered spousal maintenance
139	obligation.
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142	RULE 363. DEFAULT
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**RULE 361. DISCOVERY** 

#### Rule 363.04. Order Not Accepted

The child support magistrate may reject an order filed pursuant to Rule 363.02 if the child support magistrate finds the order contrary to law, or unreasonable and unfair. If the child support magistrate rejects the order, the child support magistrate shall prepare a notice of deficiency, stating the reason(s) why the order cannot be signed. The notice of deficiency shall inform the initiating party of the following options:

- to file and serve any missing documents;
- (b) to file a revised order;
- 155 (c) to file a revised order and attach any missing or additional 156 documents;
- 157 (d) to appear at a hearing, notice of which shall be issued by the court
  158 administrator to all parties;
  - (e) to appear at any previously scheduled hearing; or
  - (f) to withdraw the matter without prejudice.

The court administrator shall mail the notice of deficiency to the initiating party. The initiating party shall either correct the deficiency or set the case on for a hearing and serve notice of the date, time, and location of the hearing upon all parties pursuant to Rule 364. If the initiating party submits a revised order that raises new issues beyond the scope of the complaint or motion, amended pleadings shall be served and filed on all parties and filed pursuant to Rule 370.06 or Rule 372.06 within 10 days from the date the notice of deficiency was mailed. If the noninitiating party chooses to respond to the amended pleadings, the response must be served and filed within 10 days from service of the amended pleadings. If the initiating party fails to schedule a hearing or comply with the notice of deficiency within forty-five (45) days of the date the notice was mailed, the child support magistrate shall dismiss the matter without prejudice.

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#### 175 <u>Advisory Committee Comment—2008 Amendment</u>

Rule 363.04 is amended to create specific time limits for setting a case on for hearing following receipt of a notice of deficiency in an order proposed by an initiating agency or to serve amended pleadings. The amendment also establishes a specific time limit for responding to an amended pleading that may be served.

### RULE 368. REMOVAL OF A PARTICULAR CHILD SUPPORT MAGISTRATE

#### Rule 368.01. Automatic Right to Remove Precluded

No party has an automatic right to remove a child support magistrate, family court referee, or district court judge presiding over matters in the expedited process, including motions to correct clerical mistakes under Rule 375 and motions for review under Rule 376.

#### Rule 368.02. Removal for Cause

Subdivision 1. Procedure. Any party may serve upon the other parties and file with the court a request to remove the child support magistrate assigned to hear the matter. If the assigned child support magistrate denies the request to remove, upon written request the chief judge of the judicial district shall determine whether cause exists to remove the assigned child support magistrate. If the chief judge of the judicial district is the subject of the request to remove, the assistant chief judge shall determine whether cause exists to remove the child support magistrate. A request to remove shall be filed with the court and served upon the

parties To effect removal, a party shall serve upon the other parties and file with the court a request to remove the child support magistrate for cause within ten (10) days of service of notice of the name of the magistrate assigned to hear the matter or within ten (10) days of discovery of prejudice. If assignment of a child support magistrate is made less than ten (10) days before the hearing, the request to remove shall be made as soon as practicable after notice of assignment is given.

**Subd. 2. Grounds to Remove.** Removal of a child support magistrate requires an affirmative showing of prejudice. A showing that the child support magistrate might be excluded for bias from acting as a juror in the matter constitutes an affirmative showing of prejudice.

Subd. 3. Review of Denial of Removal. If the child support magistrate denies the request to remove, upon written request filed with the Court Administrator in that district, a district judge assigned to or chambered in the district shall determine whether cause exists. If that judge is the child support magistrate, the request for removal for cause shall be heard by a different judge in that district.

#### Advisory Committee Comment—2008 Amendment

Rule 368.02, subd. 1, is amended to clarify the procedure for removal of an assigned child support magistrate from hearing a matter. Subdivision 3 is a new provision, designed to provide a more streamlined mechanism for review of a magistrate's decision not to order removal. The review of that decision is to be heard by a district judge who either had chambers in the county where the expedited child support case is pending or to a judge assigned to that county. This procedure obviates submission of the matter to the Chief Judge, recognizing that the Chief Judge may be far removed from the county where the case is pending.

## AND EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNTY AGENCY

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239	Subd. 3. County Attorney Direction Not Required. Without direction
240	from the county attorney, employees of the county agency may perform the duties
241	listed under Minn. Stat. § 518.5513, subd. 2(c) (2000) 518A.46, subd. 2(c) (2006).
242	In addition, employees of the county agency may testify at hearings at the request
243	of a party or the child support magistrate.
244	***
245	Advisory Committee Comment—2008 Amendment
246	Rule 369.02, subd. 3, is amended to update the statutory references to
247	reflect the recodification, effective on January 1, 2007, of portions of the
248	relevant statutes, that became part of Minn. Stat. ch. 518A.
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250	II. PROCEEDINGS
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252	RULE 370. ESTABLISHMENT OF SUPPORT PROCEEDINGS
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254	***
255	Rule 370.02. Content of Summons, Complaint, Supporting Affidavit, and
256	Request for Hearing Form
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258	***
2.56	Subd 2 Content of Suppositing Affidenit A suppositing officialities
259	<b>Subd. 3. Content of Supporting Affidavit.</b> A supporting affidavit is
260	required when the summons does not contain a hearing date. The supporting
261	affidavit shall:
262	(a) state detailed facts supporting the request for relief;

Rule 369.02. Role of Employees of County Agency

263	(b) provide all information required by Minn. Stat. § <del>518.5513, subd</del>
264	3(a) (2000) 518A.46, subd. 3(a) (2006), if known; and
265	(c) be signed and sworn to under oath.
266	* * *
267	
268	Advisory Committee Comment—2008 Amendment
269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276	Rule 370.02, subd. 3, is amended to update the statutory reference to reflect the recodification, effective on January 1, 2007, of portions of the relevant statutes, that became part of Minn. Stat. ch. 518A. Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 518.5513, subd. 3(a) 518A.46, subd. 3(b), for all cases involving establishment or modification of support, the pleadings are to contain specific information. At times, it may be necessary to attach additional supporting documents. Each county should establish its own local policy regarding the attachment of supporting documents.
278	Rule 370.03. Service of Summons and Complaint
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281	Subd. 2. How Served. The summons and complaint, and if required the
282	supporting affidavit and request for hearing form, shall be served upon the parties
283	by personal service, or alternative personal service, pursuant to Rule 355.02,
284	unless personal service has been waived in writing. Where the county agency is
285	the initiating party, the party a non-parent who is receiving assistance from the
286	county or who has applied for child support services from the county may be
287	served by any means permitted under Rule 355.02.
288	Rule 370.04. Filing Requirements
289	
290	***
291	Subd. 2. Responding Party. If a noninitiating party responds with a
292	written answer pursuant to Rule 370.05, the following shall be filed with the court
293	no later than five (5) days before any scheduled hearing or, if no hearing is

294	scheduled, w	ithin fourteen (14) twenty (20) days from the date the last party was
295	served:	
296	(a)	the original written answer; and
297	(b)	a financial affidavit pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 518A.28 (2006); and
298	<u>(c)</u>	_proof of service upon each party pursuant to Rule 355.04.
299	***	
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301		RULE 371. PARENTAGE ACTIONS
302		
303	***	
304	Rule 371.02.	Content of Summons, Complaint, and Supporting Affidavit
305		
306	* * *	
307	Subd.	<b>3. Content of Supporting Affidavit.</b> A supporting affidavit shall:
308	(a)	state detailed facts supporting the request for relief, including the
309	facts establish	hing parentage;
310	(b)	provide all information required by Minn. Stat § 518.5513, subd
311	<del>3(a)</del> <u>518A.46</u>	5, subd. 3(a) (2006), if known; and
312	(c)	be signed and sworn to under oath.
313		
314		Advisory Committee Comment—2008 Amendment
315 316 317 318 319 320		Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 518.5513, subd. 3(a) 518A.46, subd. 3(a) (2006), for all cases involving establishment or modification of support, the pleadings are to contain specific information. At times, it may be necessary to attach additional supporting documents. Each county should establish its own local policy regarding the attachment of supporting documents.
321	***	

### Rule 371.04. Filing Requirements

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324	Subdivision 1. Initiating Party. No later than five (5) days before any		
325	scheduled hearing or, if no hearing is scheduled, within fourteen (14) days from		
326	the date the l	ast party was served, the initiating party shall file the following with	
327	the court:		
328	(a)	the original summons;	
329	(b)	the original complaint;	
330	(c)	the original supporting affidavit, if served; and	
331	(d)	proof of service upon each party pursuant to Rule 355.04.	
332	Subd.	2. Responding Party. If a noninitiating party responds with a	
333	written respo	onse pursuant to Rule 371.05, the following, if served, shall be filed	
334	with the cour	rt no later than five (5) days before any scheduled hearing:	
335	(a)	the original written answer along with a financial affidavit pursuant	
336	to Minn. Stat	<u>e. § 518A.28 (2006)</u> ; or	
337	(b)	a request for blood or genetic testing; and	
338	(c)	proof of service upon each party pursuant to Rule 355.04.	
339	***		
340	Rule 371.05	Response	
341			
342	Subdi	vision 1. Response Options. In addition to appearing at the hearing	
343	as required u	nder Rule 371.10, subd. 1, a noninitiating party may do one or more	
344	of the following:		
345	(a)	contact the initiating party to discuss settlement; or	
346	(b)	within fourteen (14) twenty (20) days of service of the summons and	
347	complaint, se	erve upon all parties one or more of the written responses pursuant to	
348	subdivision 2	2.	
349	***		

351	<b>RULE 372. MOTIONS TO MODIFY,</b>
352	MOTIONS TO SET SUPPORT,
353	AND OTHER MATTERS
354	
355	Rule 372.01. Commencement
356	
357	***
358	Subd. 2. Other Motions. Except as otherwise provided in these rules, all
359	proceedings shall be commenced in the expedited process by service of a notice of
360	motion, motion, and supporting affidavit. Service shall be made at least fourteen
361	(14) days prior to the scheduled hearing.
362	Rule 372.02. Content of Notice of Motion, Motion, Supporting Affidavit, and
363	Request for Hearing Form
364	***
365	Subd. 3. Content of Supporting Affidavit. A supporting affidavit shall:
366	(a) state detailed facts supporting the request for relief;
367	(b) for motions to modify support and motions to set support, provide all
368	information required by Minn. Stat. § 518.5513, subd. 3(a) 518A.46, subd. 3(a)
369	(2006), if known; and
370	(c) be signed and sworn to under oath.
371	* * *
372	
373	Advisory Committee Comment—2008 Amendment
374	Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 518.5513, subd. 3(a) 518A.46, subd. 3(a)
375 376	(2006), for all cases involving establishment or modification of support, the pleadings are to contain specific information. At times, it may be necessary to
377	attach additional supporting documents. Each county should establish its own
378 379	local policy regarding the attachment of supporting documents.
380	***

#### Rule 372.05. Response

Subd. 1. Hearing Date Included in the Notice of Motions to Modify and Motions to Set Support. Inclusion of a hearing date does not preclude a noninitiating party from serving and filing a responsive motion or counter motion. A noninitiating party may serve upon all parties a responsive motion or counter motion along with a supporting affidavit at least fourteen (14) days prior to the hearing. The service and filing of a responsive motion or counter motion does not preclude the hearing from going forward and the child support magistrate may issue an order based upon the information in the file or evidence presented at the hearing if a noninitiating party fails to appear at the hearing.

- Subd. 2. Hearing Date Not Included in the Notice of Motions to

  Modify and Motions to Set Support. If the notice of motion does not contain a hearing date, within fourteen (14) days from service of the motion, a noninitiating party shall either:
- (a) request a hearing by returning the request for hearing form to the initiating party; or
- (b) within fourteen (14) days of service of the notice of motion and motion, serve upon all other parties a responsive motion or counter motion.

The initiating party shall schedule a hearing upon receipt of a request for hearing form, a responsive motion, or counter motion. Failure of the noninitiating party to request a hearing, to serve a responsive motion, or to appear at a scheduled hearing shall not preclude the matter from going forward, and the child support magistrate may issue an order based upon the information in the file or the evidence presented at the hearing.

<u>Subd. 3. Other Motions</u>. Except as otherwise provided in these rules, all responsive motions shall be served upon all parties at least five (5) days prior to

the hearing.	A responsive motion raising new issues shall be served upon all
parties at lea	ast ten (10) days prior to the hearing.
	Advisory Committee Comment—2008 Amendment
	Rule 372.05, subd. 2, is amended to apply the 14-day deadline for responding to a motion to either of the permitted responses; to request a hearing or to file a responsive motion or counter-motion. Rule 372.05, subd. 3 is added to clarify the deadlines for submitting responsive motions.
* * *	
	III. REVIEW AND APPEAL
* * *	
	RULE 377. PROCEDURE ON A MOTION TO
	CORRECT CLERICAL MISTAKES, MOTION
	FOR REVIEW, OR COMBINED MOTION
***	
D 1. 255 00	
Rule 377.09	9. Basis of Decision and Order
Subd	livision 1. Timing. Within forty five (45) thirty (30) days of the close
of the record	d, the child support magistrate or district court judge shall file with the
court an ord	er deciding the motion. In the event a notice to remove is granted
pursuant to	Rule 368, the forty five (45) thirty (30) days begins on the date the

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later:

substitute child support magistrate or district court judge is assigned. The record

shall be deemed closed upon occurrence of one of the following, whichever occurs

	(1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1)
437	(b) filing of a transcript pursuant to Rule 366;
438	(c) withdrawal or cancellation of a request for transcript pursuant to
439	Rule 366; or
440	(d) submission of new evidence under subdivision 4.
441	If none of the above events occur, the record on a motion for review or
442	combined motion shall be deemed closed forty-six (46) days after service of the
443	notice of filing as required by Rule 365.04, despite the requirements of Rule
444	354.04. For a motion to correct clerical mistakes and none of the above events
445	occur, the record shall be deemed closed 15 days after service of the motion to
446	correct clerical mistakes.
447	Subd. 2. Decision.
448	***
449	(b) Motion for Review. The child support magistrate or district court
450	judge shall make an independent review of any findings or other provisions of the
451	underlying decision and order for which specific changes are requested in the
452	motion. The child support magistrate or district court judge shall may affirm the
453	order without making additional findings. unless If the court determines that the
454	findings and order are not supported by the record or the decision is contrary to
455	law. Tthe child support magistrate or district court judge may issue an order:
456	(1) denying in whole or in part the motion for review;
457	(2) approving, modifying, or vacating in whole or in part, the decision
458	and order of the child support magistrate; or
459	(3) scheduling the matter for hearing and directing the court
460	administrator to serve notice of the date, time, and location of the hearing upon the
461	parties.
462	***
463	
464	Advisory Committee Comment—2008 Amendment

filing of a response pursuant to Rule 377.04;

(a)

465 Rule 377.09, subd. 2(b) is amended to correct language of the existing 466 Rule that could be interpreted to have a mandatory meaning not intended by the 467 Drafters. The revised rule allows the child support magistrate to affirm an 468 order without findings, but does not require that. The rule is intended to adopt 469 expressly a de novo standard of review. The reviewing court need not make 470 findings if the decision is to affirm. De novo review is consistent with the 471 reported decisions construing the former rule. See, e.g. Kilpatrick v. Kilpatrick, 472 673 N.W.2d 528, 530 n.2 (Minn. Ct. App. 2004); Davis v. Davis, 631 N.W.2d 822, 825 (Minn. Ct. App. 2001); Blonigen v. Blonigen, 621 N.W. 2d 276, 280 473 474 (Minn. Ct. App. 2001), review denied (Minn. Mar. 13, 2001). 475 476 IV. FORMS 477 478 **RULE 379. FORMS** 479 480 \*\*\* 481 Rule 379.05. Exception from Rules Governing Civil Actions 482 483 Subdivision 1. Informational Statement. The Informational Statement 484 required by Minn. Gen. R. Prac. 304.02 is not required to be filed in cases brought 485 in the expedited process. 486 Subd. 2. Prehearing Statement. The Prehearing Statement required by 487 Minn. Gen. R. Prac. 305.01 is not required to be filed in cases brought in the 488 expedited process. 489