

STATE OF VERMONT
VERMONT SUPREME COURT
_____ TERM, 2026

**Order Promulgating Amendments to Rule 7(a)(7) of the
2020 Vermont Rules for Electronic Filing, and
Rule 32(a)(1)(E) of the Vermont Rules of Appellate Procedure**

Pursuant to the Vermont Constitution, Chapter II, § 37, and 12 V.S.A. § 1, it is hereby ordered:

1. That Rule 7(a)(7) of the 2020 Vermont Rules for Electronic Filing be amended as follows (new matter underlined; deleted struck through):

RULE 7. FORMAT OF DOCUMENTS

- (a) **Format Requirements for Electronic Documents.** An electronically filed document must:
- (1) be created, saved as, or converted to, PDF format as specified in (b), unless the court orders that it be filed in a different format;
 - (2) comply with the size limit specified in the efilings instructions;
 - (3) not contain a virus detected by the electronic filing system;
 - (4) be consistent with Rule 5(g) and (h), if applicable;
 - (5) be accompanied by a certification of compliance with the Rules for Public Access to Court Records by the method specified in these rules;
 - (6) not contain any password protection or other security device, and
 - (7) not contain any external embedded live hyperlink ~~or internal bookmark~~.

Reporter's Notes—2026 Amendment

Rule 7(a)(7) is amended in conjunction with a simultaneous amendment to Vermont Rule of Appellate Procedure 32(a)(1)(E) to update the format requirements for electronic documents based on technical changes to the electronic filing system. Paragraph (a)(7) previously precluded electronically filed documents from containing embedded hyperlinks or internal bookmarks because these caused format errors that prevented documents from being properly processed. Due to system changes, it is now permissible to include internal links, which point to other places within the same document. For example, a link in the table of contents to that part of the document. Therefore, the restriction against including these internal links is deleted. The language of the rest of the rule is clarified to indicate that external live links to other documents or

websites are still not permitted. According to the vendor, these links can result in format errors. A document can contain the text of a web address, but the link must not be live.

2. That Rule 32(a)(1)(E) of the Vermont Rules of Appellate Procedure be amended as follows (new matter underlined; deleted struck through):

RULE 32. FORM OF BRIEFS, MOTIONS, AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

(a) Form of Briefs.

(1) *Form of Electronically Filed Briefs.* A brief filed electronically must comply with the following:

- (A) *File Type.* Be in text-searchable PDF in accordance with 2020 V.R.E.F. 7(a) and (b);
- (B) *Margins.* Have margins of not less than one inch;
- (C) *Page Numbers.* Have page numbers in the center of the bottom margin and all pages numbered sequentially so that the electronic page counter and paper numbers are consistent;
- (D) *Font and Spacing.* Be in 13-point proportionally spaced serif font, including footnotes, and use italics or boldface for emphasis, not underlining or all caps. Have 1.2 line spacing, except the following may be single spaced: headings, block quotes, signature block. Be left-aligned, not justified;
- (E) *External Links.* Not contain any external live ~~embedded~~ hyperlinks ~~or internal bookmarks~~.

Reporter's Notes—2026 Amendment

Rule 32(a)(1)(E) is amended in conjunction with simultaneous amendments to 2020 Vermont Rule for Electronic Filing 7(a)(7) to update the format requirements for electronic documents based on technical changes to the electronic filing system. Previously, both the appellate and efilings rules precluded electronically filed documents from containing embedded hyperlinks or internal bookmarks because these caused format errors that prevented documents from being properly processed. Due to system changes, it is now permissible to include internal links, which point to other places within the same document. For example, a link in the table of contents to that part of the document. Therefore, the restriction against including these internal links is deleted. The language of the rest of the rule is clarified to indicate that external live links to other documents or websites are still not permitted. According to

the vendor, these links can result in format errors. A document can contain the text of a web address, but the link must not be live.

3. That these amendments be prescribed and promulgated, effective on _____.
The Reporter’s Notes are advisory.

4. That the Chief Justice is authorized to report these amendments to the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of 12 V.S.A. § 1, as amended.

Dated in Chambers at Montpelier, Vermont, this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Paul L. Reiber, Chief Justice

Harold E. Eaton, Jr., Associate Justice

Nancy J. Waples, Associate Justice

Christina E. Nolan, Associate Justice

Michael P. Drescher, Associate Justice

