

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

*Style Guide*

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**I. SHORT GUIDE TO BLUEBOOK (19TH EDITION)**

**A. Citations in Court Documents**

*1. Cases (Bluebook (“BB”) Rules B4, 10, and 18.3.1, with modifications)*

**Examples:**

*Thompkins v. Lil’ Joe Records, Inc.*, 476 F.3d 1294, 1315 (11th Cir. 2007).

*In re Trusted Media Holdings, L.L.C.*, No. 07-13429, 2008 WL 1816396, \*7 (11th Cir. Apr. 23, 2008).

*Bradley Factor, Inc. v. United States*, 86 F. Supp. 2d 1140, 1146 (M.D. Fla. 2000).

SHORT FORM: *Bradley Factor*, 86 F. Supp. 2d at 1144.

*Biscayne Boulevard Props., Inc. v. Graham*, 65 So. 2d 858, 859 (Fla. 1953).

*Woodard v. Dicks*, 306 B.R. 700, 705-06 (Bankr. M.D. Fla. 2004) (Williamson, J.).

ALTERNATIVE SHORT FORM: 306 B.R. at 707.

**Modification:** To follow common usage among federal courts, parallel cite United States Supreme Court cases as follows, only giving pin cites for the “U.S.” and “S. Ct.” reporters:

*Field v. Mans*, 516 U.S. 59, 67, 116 S. Ct. 437, 442, 133 L. Ed. 2d 351 (1995).

SHORT FORM: *Field*, 516 U.S. at 67, 116 S. Ct. at 442.

**Modification:** To follow common usage in Florida’s federal and state courts, cite to Florida district courts of appeal cases in the following format:

*Nobles v. Citizens Mortgage Corp.*, 479 So. 2d 822, 822 (Fla. 2d DCA 1985).

*2. Bankruptcy Cases (BB Rule 10.2.1(a))*

a. If the opinion was issued in the context of the main bankruptcy case, cite the case name as the last name of the debtor prefaced by “*In re.*” Phrases such as “in the matter of” or “petition of”

are always abbreviated as “*In re*.” Example: *In re Williams*, 339 B.R. 794 (Bankr. M.D. Fla. 2006) (McEwen, J.); *In re Schwalm*, 380 B.R. 630 (Bankr. M.D. Fla. 2008) (May, J.).

b. If the opinion was issued in the context of an adversary proceeding, list the adversary names on either side of a “v.” Phrases such as “on the relation of” or “on behalf of” are abbreviated “ex rel.” Example: *U.S. ex rel. Clausen v. Lab Corp of Am., Inc.*, 290 F.3d 1301 (11th Cir. 2002). When the opinion lists only the adversary parties, omit all procedural phrases except “ex rel.” Example: *Menchise v. Akerman Senterfitt*, 532 F.3d 1146 (11th Cir. 2008).

c. If both the adversary parties’ names and the non-adversary case name are listed at the beginning of an opinion, list both in the citation. Example: *Jensen v. Landolphi (In re Landolphi)*, 377 B.R. 409 (Bankr. M.D. Fla. 2008) (Paskay, J.).

### 3. Statutes (BB Rules B5 and 12)

28 U.S.C. § 157(b) (2008).

11 U.S.C. §§ 544-548 (2008).

Fla. Stat. § 95.11(3) (2007).

### 4. Federal and Local Rules (BB Rules B5.1.3 and 12.9.3, Local Rule 1001-1(e))

Fed. R. Bankr. P. 6003.

Fed. R. Civ. P. 8.

Fed. R. Evid. 410.

S.D. Fla. R. 87.2.

Bankr. M.D. Fla. R. 1001-1(e) should be cited as Local Rule 1001-1(e).

### 5. Books, Treatises, and Reference Materials (Non-Periodical) (BB Rules B8 and 15)

10 *Collier on Bankruptcy* ¶ 6003.02[2] (15th ed. 2008).

*Black’s Law Dictionary* 712 (9th ed. 2009).

*The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (Columbia Law Review Ass’n et al. eds., 19th ed. 2010).

### 6. Articles in Periodicals (BB Rules B9 and 16)

Michael Barbado, *Retailing Chains Caught in a Wave of Bankruptcies*, N.Y. Times, Apr. 15, 2008, at A1.

Eugene R. Wedoff, *Means Testing in the New 707(b)*, 79 Am. Bankr. L.J. 231, 243 (2005).

### 7. Court/Litigation Documents (BB Rule B7, Table BT.1)

Citations to court documents are enclosed in parentheses. The ending period of a citation sentence goes inside the parentheses, but a citation clause within a sentence has no final period and also should not be set off with commas.

**Examples:** (Doc. No. 74; Pl.’s Ex. 13.) (Trial Tr. vol. 2, 21:12-23:4, Oct. 3, 2008.)

**Examples in Text:** The Debtor’s schedules (Doc. No. 1) reveal improperly exempted assets that were the subject of the Trustee’s objection (Doc. No. 15). The Court sustained the objection to the Debtor’s claim of exemption in its order of July 9. (Doc. No. 20.)

8. Legislative Materials (BB Rule 13)

H.R. 3150, 105th Cong. (1998).

H.R. Rep. No. 109-31 (2005), *reprinted in* 2005 U.S.C.C.A.N. 88.

9. Constitutions (BB Rule B6, 11)

U.S. Const. art. 4, § 1.

Fla. Const. art. X, § 4.

10. Short Form Citation and “Id.” (BB Rules B4.2, 4.1)

a. The first time any authority is cited, it must be cited in full. After the first citation, if the reference is clear, a “short form” should be used. The following are all proper short forms of *In re Fundamental Long Term Care, Inc.*, 501 B.R. 770, 775 (Bankr. M.D. Fla. 2013):

*In re Fundamental*, 501 B.R. at 775.

501 B.R. at 775.

*Id.* at 775.

b. The short form “*id.*” is used to refer to the immediately preceding authority, and may *only* be used when the preceding citation contains only *one* source. If no page number is given, “*id.*” refers to the page cited in the immediately preceding authority. “*Id.*” can be used as a short cite for all types of authorities.

11. Introductory Signals (BB Rules 1.2, B3)

Citation sentences should often begin with an introductory signal to indicate the type of support provided by the authority. Examples:

*See*: signals that the cited authority clearly supports, but does not directly state, the proposition

*Contra*: signals that the cited authority directly contradicts a given point

*But see*: signals that the cited authority contradicts the stated proposition implicitly or contains dicta that contradicts the stated proposition

No signal should be used if the authority directly states the proposition, is the source of a quotation, or is referred to in the text.

## 12. Bluebook Tables: Abbreviations in Citations

<i>Category</i>	<i>Table</i>	<i>Related Bluebook Rule</i>
Case Reporters	BB T.1	Federal, p. 215; Florida, p. 237; BB Rule B4.1.2
Case Names	BB T.6	BB Rules B4.1.1, B4.1.1(vi) & 10.2; <i>c.f.</i> 10.2.1(h)
Court Names	BB T.7	Use in case cites, BB Rule 10.4
Geographic Terms	BB T.10	Use in case cites, BB Rules B4.1.1, 10.2.2 & 10.4
Months	BB T.12	Use in case cites, BB Rule 10.5
Periodicals	BB T.13	Use when citing law reviews, BB Rule 16
Subdivisions	BB T.16	Use in all citations, BB Rule 3

## 13. Spacing and Abbreviations (BB Rules 6.1, B4.1.3)

- a. Generally, there are no spaces between unilateral capitals, which are single letter or numerical abbreviations, such as “2d” or “S.” Abbreviations longer than a single letter, such as “Supp.” or “Fla.,” must always be set off by spaces from other abbreviations.
- b. Abbreviations should be followed by a period unless the last letter of the abbreviation is set off by an apostrophe. Examples: Ass’n and Gov’t, but, Ctr. and Dev.
- c. United States may, but need not, be abbreviated as “U.S.” only when used as an adjective. Example: U.S. Trustee or United States Trustee, but, “representing the United States.”

### **B. Text in Court Documents**

#### 1. Capitalization (BB Rules B7.3 and 8)

- a. The word “court” should be capitalized when naming any court in full or when referring to the U.S. Supreme Court. For instance, the “Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals” would be capitalized, but not “the courts of appeals.” Likewise, the “U.S. Trustee” is always capitalized.
- b. The word “court” is also capitalized in a court document when it is referring to the court issuing or receiving that document. For instance, “the Court has considered the evidence in this case,” but, “bankruptcy courts disagree on this issue.”
- c. Likewise, capitalize “plaintiff,” “defendant,” “debtor,” “trustee” or “creditor” when referring to the party in the case that is the subject of the order. For example, “The U.S. Trustee has objected to the Debtor’s claim of exemptions,” but, “The trustee in *Shoopman* objected, although the debtors had chosen to surrender their homes.”
- d. The title of court documents should be capitalized only if 1) the document was filed in the same matter as is the subject of your document and 2) the actual title or a shortened form is used. Do not capitalize generic document names. For instance, “In the Debtor’s Objection to Claim Number 5,” but, “this Court’s orders are ignored to your peril.”

## 2. Citations v. References in Text (BB Rules 1.1, 10.2.1, B2)

a. Types of Cites: A citation may be either a sentence or a clause. A citation sentence occurs on its own after a textual sentence and is followed by a period. A citation clause occurs within a textual sentence and is set off with commas. A statute or case name may also be incorporated into a textual sentence, in which case it is not a citation at all.

**Citation Clause:** “The court in *Dicks*, 306 B.R. at 722, held that . . . .”

b. Abbreviation: In a case name in a citation clause, only abbreviate widely known acronyms, as well as “&,” “Ass’n,” “Bros.,” “Co.,” “Corp.,” “Inc.,” “Ltd.,” and “No.” Fully abbreviate case names in citation sentences by also abbreviating pursuant to BB T.6 and T.10.

c. Non-Citations: If a statute or a case name is being referred to in text, it is not a citation, so abbreviate nothing, and turn most symbols into words. Abbreviations should generally not be used at all in text.

**Citation Sentence:** “The exemption does not apply. Fla. Stat. § 222.25.”

**Statute Referenced in Text:** “This Debtor cannot benefit from the exemption provided under section 222.25 of the Florida Statutes.”

## 3. Numbers (BB Rule 6.2, with modifications)

a. **General Rule:** Spell out numbers zero to ten in text. For numbers larger than ten, use numerals.

**Exception:** Spell out 1) any number that begins a sentence and 2) round numbers (hundred, thousand, million), if done consistently.

**Exception:** Use numerals 1) when referring to a section or subdivision, such as a code section, 2) if referring repeatedly to percentages or dollar amounts, 3) if the number includes a decimal point, and 4) for numbers in a series if any one number is over ten.

b. Use commas to set off sets of three digits in large numbers. For example: 34,567 and 1,478.

c. Never use superscript for ordinal numbers (numbers that indicate position in a series). In text, use “2nd” and “3rd.” In citations only, use “2d” and “3d.”

## 4. Symbols (BB Rules 6.2 & 12.10)

a. The section (§) and paragraph (§§) symbols are used in citations. In text, however, the words must be spelled out unless referring to a section in the United States Code. There should always be a space between the “§” and “§§” symbols and a numeral. Example: 11 U.S.C. § 707(b)(2); 10 *Collier on Bankruptcy* §§ 6003.02[2] (15th ed. 2008).

b. The dollar (\$) and percent (%) symbols should be used whenever numerals are used, and spelled out whenever numbers are spelled out, and should never begin a sentence. There should never be a space between the “\$” or “%” symbols and a numeral. Example: \$500,000 and 11%.

5. Proper Usage of Legal Terms

- a. Motions are either “granted” or “denied.” Applications are either “approved” or “disapproved.” Objections are either “sustained” or “overruled.” Claims are either “allowed” or “disallowed.”
- b. The main bankruptcy case is a “case.” In a case you have “final evidentiary hearings” on “contested matters.” An adversary proceeding is a “proceeding.” In an adversary proceeding, you have “trials.” Final evidentiary hearings may also be referred to as “trials.”
- c. When giving a deadline, using “through” and not “to” a specific date will avoid the possibly unintended consequence of shortening the period by one day.
- d. For clarity, the use of defined terms is recommended.

Example: THIS CASE came on for hearing on May 1, 2008, on the United States Trustee’s Emergency Motion to Appoint a Chapter 11 Trustee (“Motion”). After reviewing the case law and hearing the arguments of the Debtor and the United States Trustee, the Court concludes that the Motion should be denied without prejudice.

## II. FORMAT OF ORDERS

### A. Whole Document (Local Rule 5005-3)

1. Times New Roman, 12-point font
2. 8 ½ by 11 inch paper
3. Three-inch top margin on page one, all other margins are to be one inch
4. Page numbers centered in the footer on every page except the first

### B. Caption

1. The caption of all orders entered in the main bankruptcy case should match the following format, beginning at the first line on the page:

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA  
\_\_\_\_\_ DIVISION  
[www.flmb.uscourts.gov](http://www.flmb.uscourts.gov)

In re: Case No. 8:08-bk-12345-KRM  
Chapter 13

John Doe and Jane Doe,

Debtors.

\_\_\_\_\_ /

2. The caption of an order entered in an adversary proceeding should match the following format:

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA  
\_\_\_\_\_ DIVISION  
[www.flmb.uscourts.gov](http://www.flmb.uscourts.gov)

In re: Case No. 8:08-bk-12345-KRM  
Chapter 11

Unfortunate Company, L.L.C.,

Debtor.

\_\_\_\_\_ /

Unfortunate Company, L.L.C., Adv. No. 8:08-ap-12345

Plaintiff,

v.

Liability, Ltd.,

Defendant.

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### C. The Case/Proceeding Number

1. The case number should conform to the following: Case No. 8:08-bk-00000-MGW
2. An adversary proceeding number: Adv. No. 8:08-ap-00000
3. A miscellaneous proceeding number: Misc. No. 8:08-mp-00000-MGW
4. The first digit signifies the division in which the case was filed:

3 = Jacksonville	6 = Orlando	8 = Tampa	9 = Fort Myers
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5. The next two digits signify the year the case or proceeding was filed
6. The next two lowercase letters signify the type of proceeding or case:

bk = bankruptcy case	ap = adversary proceeding	mp = miscellaneous proceeding
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7. The next five digits are the chronologically assigned case or proceeding number
8. The final three uppercase letters signify the judge to whom the case is assigned:

MGW = Chief Judge Williamson	JAF = Judge Funk	KSJ = Judge Jennemann
PMG = Judge Glenn	CPM = Judge McEwen	FMB = Judge Delano – Fort Myers
CED = Judge Delano - Tampa	CCJ = Judge Jackson	RAC = Judge Colton - Orlando
RCT = Judge Colton - Tampa	ABB = Judge Briskman	

### D. Title of Order (Local Rule 9072-1)

1. The title follows the caption after one hard return, is centered, in all caps, and bold.
2. If the heading runs onto several lines, no line should be longer than the line below it. Only the text of the bottom line of the heading should be underlined.
3. The title of the order should be a full, descriptive title detailing the nature of the motion or application ruled upon.

### E. Body (Local Rule 9072-1)

1. The body of the order should be double-spaced, left-justified, and laid out in unnumbered paragraphs, each beginning with a single indent.
2. The first sentence of the order should begin with “THIS CASE” or “THIS PROCEEDING” in all caps. The sentence should recite the papers and events that resulted in the entry of the order. Orders entered “after a hearing” should include the hearing date. Papers should be identified by title, party and docket number.
3. If the order involves real property, it must contain a full and complete legal description of the real property.

### F. Decretal Paragraphs



1. Before the Court's decree should be the phrase "Accordingly, it is **ORDERED**" and "**ORDERED**" should be in all caps and bolded.
2. The decree generally is presented in either multiple numbered paragraphs or in a single unnumbered paragraph. For short orders in which there are four or fewer decretal paragraphs, the decree may be set out in multiple unnumbered paragraphs, all but the first beginning with "**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED**" in all caps and bolded.
3. Date and signature lines are not to be included.

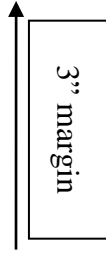
## **G. Service**

Proposed orders shall include one of the following statements located two hard returns after the last paragraph of the order:

When an attorney is to serve the order: "Attorney [Name of submitting attorney] is directed to serve a copy of this order on interested parties who do not receive service by CM/ECF and file a proof of service within three days of entry of the order."

When a trustee is to serve the order: "Trustee [Name of submitting trustee] is directed to serve a copy of this order on interested parties who are non-CM/ECF users and file a proof of service within 3 days of entry of the order."

- H.** With the exception of consent orders, proposed orders should be saved to a PDF format directly from a word processing program such as Word or Word Perfect rather than scanning a printed copy of the document.



UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA  
\_\_\_\_\_ DIVISION  
[www.flmb.uscourts.gov](http://www.flmb.uscourts.gov)

In re: Case No. 8:08-bk-12345-CPM  
Chapter 13  
John Doe and Jane Doe,

Debtor.\*

\_\_\_\_\_ /

**HEADING CENTERED IN ALL CAPS AND BOLDED  
BUT ONLY THE TEXT OF THE BOTTOM LINE IS UNDERLINED**

THIS CASE came on for consideration without a hearing on the Court’s own Motion for Uniformity in the Format of Orders (Doc. No. 1). Paragraphs in the body of this Order begin with a single tab indent and are unnumbered, double-spaced and left-justified. This Order is written in 12-point Times New Roman font. The page is 8 ½ by 11 inches in size with one-inch margins. There is one space between each sentence and one space between each word in a sentence. Accordingly, it is

**ORDERED** that the decree of the Court may be presented in a single unnumbered paragraph.

Attorney John Doe is directed to serve a copy of this order on interested parties who are non-CM/ECF users and file a proof of service within 3 days of entry of the order.

\_\_\_\_\_

\*All references to “Debtor” shall include and refer to both of the debtors in a case filed jointly by two individuals.

[Note: The foregoing footer shall be placed in form orders generated by the Court. It may also be placed in proposed orders submitted by counsel, but only when appropriate.]

3" margin

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT  
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA  
DIVISION  
[www.flmb.uscourts.gov](http://www.flmb.uscourts.gov)

In re: Case No. 8:08-bk-12345-CED  
Unfortunate Company, L.L.C., Chapter 11  
Debtor.  
\_\_\_\_\_ /

Unfortunate Company, L.L.C., Adv. No. 8:08-ap-00678  
Plaintiff,

v.  
Liability, Ltd.,  
Defendant.  
\_\_\_\_\_ /

**HEADING CENTERED IN  
ALL CAPS AND BOLDED BUT ONLY THE  
TEXT OF THE BOTTOM LINE IS UNDERLINED**

THIS PROCEEDING came on for hearing on April 1, 2008, on the Court's own Motion for Uniformity in the Format of Orders (Doc. No. 1). Paragraphs in the body of this Order are unnumbered, double-spaced, and left-justified. The first line of each paragraph has a single tab indent; the margins are set to one inch. The paper is 8 ½ by 11 inches. The font is 12-point Times New Roman. Page numbers are centered in the footer on every page but the first. There is one space between each sentence and one space between each word in a sentence.

Accordingly, it is

**ORDERED:**

1. The decree of the Court may be presented in numbered paragraphs as long as there are two or more numbered paragraphs.
2. The date and signature may never stand alone on their own page.

Trustee Jane Doe is directed to serve a copy of this order on interested parties who are non-CM/ECF users and file a proof of service within 3 days of entry of the order.

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\*All references to "Plaintiff" or "Defendant" shall include and refer to multiple plaintiffs or defendants.

[Note: The foregoing footer shall be placed in form orders generated by the Court. It may also be placed in proposed orders submitted by counsel, but only when appropriate.]