



United States District Court
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

LR 72.2 REVIEW OF MAGISTRATE JUDGE RULINGS

(a) Nondispositive Matters. When a pretrial matter not dispositive of a party's claim or defense is referred to and decided by a magistrate judge, a party may seek review of the magistrate judge's order on the matter as follows:

(1) *Objections.* A party may file and serve objections to the order within 14 days after being served with a copy, unless the court sets a different deadline. A party may not assign as error a defect in the order not timely objected to.

(2) *Response.* A party may respond to another party's objections within 14 days after being served with a copy.

(3) *Review by District Judge.*

(A) Except as provided in LR 72.2(a)(3)(B), the district judge must consider timely objections and modify or set aside any part of the order that is clearly erroneous or is contrary to law.

(B) When a motion to amend a pleading is opposed on grounds of futility and a party seeks review of the magistrate judge's determination of the issue of futility, the district court will review the futility determination de novo.

(C) The district judge may also reconsider on his or her own any matter decided by the magistrate judge but not objected to.

(b) Dispositive Motions and Prisoner Petitions. When, without the parties' consent, a pretrial matter dispositive of a party's claim or defense or a prisoner petition challenging the conditions of confinement is assigned to and heard by a magistrate judge, a party may seek review of the magistrate judge's recommended disposition as follows:

(1) *Objections and Transcript.* A party may file and serve specific written objections to a magistrate judge's proposed findings and recommendations within 14 days after being served with a copy of the recommended disposition, unless the court sets a different deadline. Unless the district judge orders otherwise, the objecting party must promptly arrange for transcribing the record, or whatever portions of it the parties agree to or the magistrate judge deems sufficient.

(2) *Response.* A party may respond to another party's objections within 14 days after being served with a copy.

(3) *Review by District Judge.* The district judge must determine de novo any part of the magistrate judge's disposition that has been properly objected to. The district judge may accept, reject, or modify the recommended disposition; receive further evidence; or return the matter to the magistrate judge with instructions. Ordinarily, the district judge does not conduct a new hearing when ruling on a party's objections, but instead relies on the record of proceedings before the magistrate judge.

(c) Format of Objections and Responses.

(1) *Word or Line Limits.*

(A) Except with the court's prior permission, objections or a response to objections filed under LR 72.2 must not exceed 3,500 words if set in a proportional font, or 320 lines of text if set in a monospaced font.

(B) All text — including headings, footnotes, and quotations — counts toward these limits, except for:

- (i) the caption designation required by LR 5.2;
- (ii) the signature-block text; and
- (iii) certificates of compliance.

(C) A party who seeks to exceed these limits must first obtain permission to do so by filing and serving a letter of no more than two pages requesting such permission. A party who opposes such a request may file and serve a letter of no more than two pages in response. This rule authorizes the parties to file those letters by ECF.

(2) *Type Size.*

(A) *Represented Parties.* Objections or a response to objections filed by a represented party must be typewritten. All text, including footnotes, must be set in at least font size 13 (i.e., a 13-point font) as font sizes are designated in the word-processing software used to prepare the objections or response to objections. Text must be double-spaced, with these exceptions: headings and footnotes may be single-spaced, and quotations more than two lines long may be indented and single-spaced. Pages must be 8 ½ by 11 inches in

size, and no text — except for page numbers — may appear outside an area measuring 6 ½ by 9 inches.

(B) **Unrepresented Parties.** Objections or a response to objections filed by an unrepresented party must be either typewritten and double-spaced or, if handwritten, printed legibly.

(3) *Certificate of Compliance.* Objections or a response to objections must be accompanied by a certificate executed by the party's attorney, or by an unrepresented party, affirming that the document complies with the limits in LR 72.2(c)(1) and with the type-size limit of LR 72.2(c)(2). The certificate must further state how many words (if set in a proportional font) or how many lines (if set in a monospaced font) the document contains. The person preparing the certificate may rely on the word-count or line-count function of his or her word-processing software only if he or she certifies that the function was applied specifically to include all text, including headings, footnotes, and quotations. The certificate must include the name and version of the word-processing software that was used to generate the word count or line count.

[Adopted effective February 1, 1991; amended May 17, 2004, amended May 16, 2005; amended September 24, 2009; amended December 1, 2009; amended July 23, 2012; amended May 14, 2013; amended September 29, 2022]

2022 Advisory Committee's Note to LR 72.2

The language of LR 72.2(a)(3) has been amended to standardize the practice in the District with regard to review of a magistrate judge's ruling on a motion to amend a pleading. LR 72.2(a)(3)(B) makes clear that when a motion to amend a pleading is opposed on grounds of futility, which invokes the standard applied to motions to dismiss under Fed. R. Civ. P. 12(b)(6), the district judge will review de novo the magistrate judge's determination as to whether the proposed amendment would be futile. The substance of the remainder of LR 72.2(a)(3) is unchanged.

2013 Advisory Committee's Note to LR 72.2

The language of LR 72.2 has been amended in accordance with the restyling process described in the 2012 Advisory Committee's Preface on Stylistic Amendments. In particular, the language of LR 72.2 has been revised to align more closely with the language of Fed. R. Civ. P. 72, and material that was redundant of 28 U.S.C. § 636 and Fed. R. Civ. P. 73 has been deleted. These deletions are not intended to have any substantive effect. Former subsection (c) was deleted and the rule was renumbered accordingly.

2012 Advisory Committee's Note to LR 72.2

Technical amendments were made to LR 72.2 in light of changes made to LR 7.1. Specifically, all cross-references to LR 7.1 were eliminated, and a new subsection (d) was added to LR 72.2 to clarify that the format and filing requirements in LR 72.2 apply to objections and responses to objections filed under this rule in all cases, whether civil or criminal.

2005 Advisory Committee's Note to LR 72.1 and LR 72.2

This Rule was substantially restructured in 2005 to accommodate various changes made over the years to the Magistrate Judge Act, Title 28 United States Code, Section 636 and to Federal Rules of Civil Procedure 72 and 73.

The Rule contemplates that the duties described in Local Rule 72.1. a. will be automatically exercised by the Magistrate Judge in every case to which he or she is assigned without any further direction or reference by the District Court Judge.

In any individual case, pursuant to Local Rule 72.1 b, the District Judge to whom the case is assigned may also designate a Magistrate Judge to perform any of the other duties described in the Magistrate Judge Act. The Court and the Committee intend that these duties include the full range of duties permitted by the Act, Title 28 United States Code, Section 636, and may include but are not limited to: Serving as a special master; taking a jury verdict in the absence of the District Judge; conducting hearings and submitting to the District Judge assigned to the case proposed findings of fact and recommendations for the disposition of dispositive pretrial motions in civil cases; receiving grand jury returns pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 6(f); issuing writs or other process necessary to obtain the presence of parties or witnesses or evidence needed for Court proceedings; and performing any other additional duties as are not inconsistent with the Constitution and laws of the United States @ Title 28 United States Code, Section 636(b)(3).

1991 Advisory Committee's Note to LR 72.1(b)(2) and LR 72.1(c)(2)

The Advisory Committee does not intend to require or encourage the filing of briefs accompanying objections to decisions by the Magistrate Judges. Ordinarily, the briefs submitted to the Magistrate Judge are sufficient for the district Judge to decide on objections. However, this rule gives the objecting party the option of filing a brief when the objecting party believes that special circumstances justify doing so.

The time period for appeal under LR 72.1(b) runs from the "entry of the Magistrate Judge's order". The time period for objecting under LR 72.1(c) runs from "being served with" a copy of the findings, recommendations, or report of the Magistrate Judge. This difference in language appears in Fed. R. Civ. P. 72(a) and Fed. R. Civ. P. 72(b), so the committee reluctantly preserved this distinction in the local rules.

This rule applies to objections to decision of Magistrate Judges under Fed. R. Civ. P. 72. It does not affect practice in appeals from trials by consent under Fed. R. Civ. P. 73-75. See Fed. R. Civ. P. 75(c), which provides time lines for filing briefs in proceedings on appeal from Magistrate Judges to district Judges under Fed. R. Civ. P. 73(d).