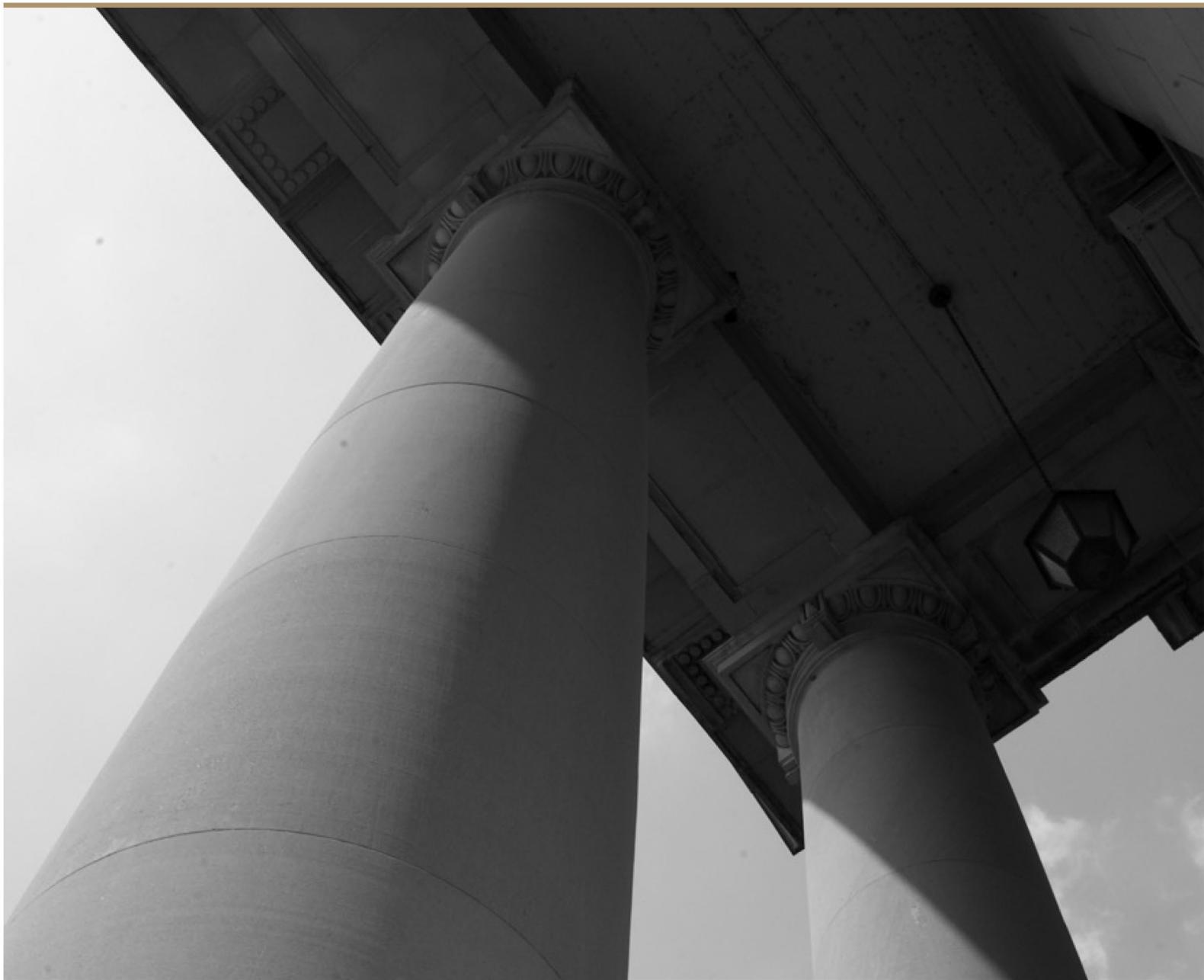




# ECOURTS NAME INDEXING STANDARDS

PREPARED BY  
NC ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS  
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## **About the North Carolina Judicial Branch**

The mission of the North Carolina Judicial Branch is to protect and preserve the rights and liberties of all the people as guaranteed by the Constitutions and laws of the United States and North Carolina by providing a fair, independent and accessible forum for the just, timely and economical resolution of their legal affairs.

## **About the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts**

The mission of the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts is to provide services to help North Carolina’s unified court system operate more efficiently and effectively, taking into account each courthouse’s diverse needs, caseloads, and available resources.



# INTRODUCTION

The eCourts Name Indexing Standards contain name entry guidance for users of File & Serve and Odyssey. The goal of these Standards is to promote uniformity and consistency when indexing or adding party names in File & Serve and Odyssey and predictability for the retrieval of information when conducting person and business searches in the eCourts applications (Portal and Odyssey).

Users must be aware that these Standards are not intended to, nor do they, guarantee how data within Portal and Odyssey will exist nor do the Standards define any applicable standard of care for title searchers or others. The existence of these Standards does not guarantee that users of File & Serve or Odyssey will comply with the Standards. In addition, Portal and Odyssey contain vast amounts of data entered prior to North Carolina’s transition to eCourts and prior to the existence of these Standards or the guidance contained within; reasonable users will anticipate that such “legacy data” may deviate from the Standards. Further, these Standards rely on the name presented by the party filing a document with the Judicial Branch. Wide variation in naming conventions with respect to punctuation and diacritical marks (for both natural persons and entities) may result in single persons or entities existing within Portal and Odyssey in multiple forms (e.g., Wal-Mart, Walmart). As such, although users may find these Standards and the guidance contained herein helpful in crafting strategies for searching Portal and Odyssey, they should not rely exclusive on these Standards to limit or define the reasonable parameters or methods for locating data within these applications.

All case data included in the manual is fictitious and designed to demonstrate specific features. The screen illustrations displayed throughout this manual are from the release version available at time of manual printing.

## Civil Case Processing (VCAP)

The Civil Case Processing System (VCAP) includes one (1) data entry *Party Name* field. The data entry *Party Name* field is the same for a person and a business. (See screen shot below.)

```
VCDS 22CVD000123          VCDS
NC AOC CIS                CIVIL CASE PROCESSING SYSTEM    02/08/23 11:33:57
999TRAIN                  CVD/CVS CASE ADD

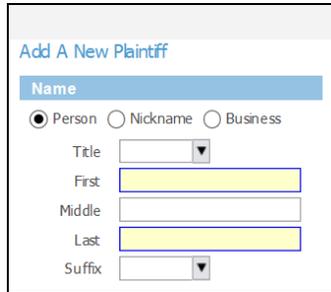
FILE NUM: 22 CVD 000123   CLOCK DT: 010123 JURY: N (Y,N) ARBITRATION: N (Y,N)

PRTY ID  PARTY NAME                TAX ID/SSN X IND
P 1 SMITH, MARY, L                ----- - -
D 1 SMITH CONSTRUCTION COMPANY    ----- - -
----- - -
----- - -
```



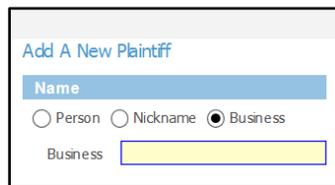
## Odyssey Case Manager

The *Odyssey Case Manager Person* name fields includes five fields: Title, First, Middle, Last, and Suffix. (See screen shot below.)



The screenshot shows a form titled "Add A New Plaintiff" with a "Name" section. It includes three radio buttons: "Person" (selected), "Nickname", and "Business". Below the radio buttons are five input fields: "Title" (a dropdown menu), "First" (a text box), "Middle" (a text box), "Last" (a text box), and "Suffix" (a dropdown menu).

The *Odyssey Case Manager Business* name field includes only one field titled Business. (See screen shot below.)



The screenshot shows a form titled "Add A New Plaintiff" with a "Name" section. It includes three radio buttons: "Person", "Nickname", and "Business" (selected). Below the radio buttons is a single input field labeled "Business".

If an alias is provided for a *Person* (e.g., DBA, FKA, etc.), add the alias and then select the alias from the *Odyssey Case Manager Type* dropdown box (e.g., DBA). (See screen shot below.)

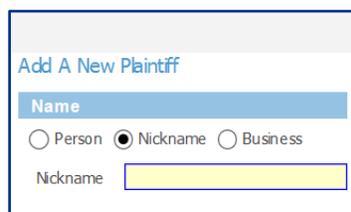


The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Select Names" with a table of names and a "Type" dropdown menu. The table has three columns: "Primary", "Name on Case", and "Type".

Primary	Name on Case	Type
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doe, John	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doe, Jonathon	Alias

At the bottom of the dialog box are three buttons: "New Name", "Continue", and "Exit".

The *Odyssey Case Manager Nickname* field should never be used. (See screen shot below.)



The screenshot shows a form titled "Add A New Plaintiff" with a "Name" section. It includes three radio buttons: "Person", "Nickname" (selected), and "Business". Below the radio buttons is a single input field labeled "Nickname".



## File & Serve

There are two options for indexing party information in File & Serve: the *Person* name fields and the *Entity* name field.

### Person Name Fields

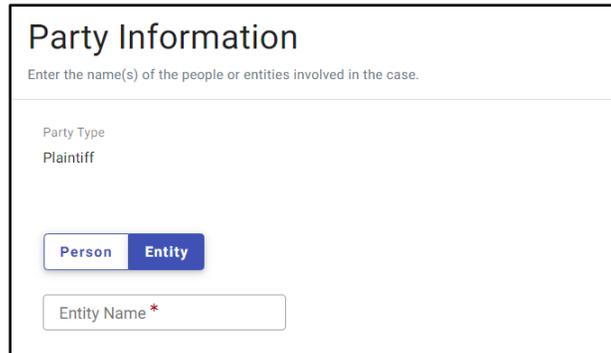
The *File & Serve Person* name fields includes four fields: First Name, Middle Name, Last Name and Suffix. (See screen shot below.)



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Party Information" with the instruction "Enter the name(s) of the people or entities involved in the case." Below this is a "Party Type" dropdown menu set to "Plaintiff". There are two tabs: "Person" (selected) and "Entity". Under the "Person" tab, there are four input fields: "First Name\*" (required), "Middle Name", "Last Name\*" (required), and "Suffix" (a dropdown menu with "Select..." as the current selection).

### Entity Field

The *File and Serve Entity* name field includes only one field title Entity Name. (See screen shot below.)



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Party Information" with the instruction "Enter the name(s) of the people or entities involved in the case." Below this is a "Party Type" dropdown menu set to "Plaintiff". There are two tabs: "Person" and "Entity" (selected). Under the "Entity" tab, there is one input field: "Entity Name\*" (required).



## Indexing Entries by Type

**IMPORTANT:** *Persons and entities shall be indexed WITH all punctuation provided on the document being indexed. Indexing entries shall include proper name capitalization. (Example: Mary Smith and NOT MARY SMITH).* For any diacritical marks used in a filed name, use the corresponding English letter. Diacritical marks appearing above, below or over a letter shall be omitted.

### Person Name Type

The *Person* name fields should be used for human names and should be keyed in based on the name as it appears on the face of the document. The fields should be keyed in as follows:

- **First Name:** This field should be populated with all characters, including punctuation, that appear before the first space in an individual's full name.
- **Last Name:** This field should be populated with all characters, including punctuation, that appear after the last space in an individual's full name.
- **Middle Name:** This field should be populated with all characters including punctuation that appear between the first and last space in an individual's full name.
- **Suffix:** Selected from the suffix dropdown field. Professional certifications or degrees showing a level or type of education such as CPA, DDS, and MD, should not be keyed into the *Person* name fields but may be available in the suffix dropdown field. If the name contains more than one suffix, the eFiler must select the suffix that is part of the name and not the professional certification or degree.
- **Title (Odyssey Case Manager ONLY):** Selected from the title dropdown field.



The table below provides examples of how to enter names into the *Person* name fields.

<b>Person Name Type</b>	
<b>Type</b>	<b>Name (as documented on pleading/filing)</b>
<b>Name (No Middle Initial/Name Designated)</b>	<b>Mary Smith</b> <i>Indexed First Name: Mary</i> <i>Indexed Middle Name:</i> <i>Indexed Last Name: Smith</i>
<b>Name (Including Middle Initial)</b>	<b>Mary L. Smith</b> <i>Indexed First Name: Mary</i> <i>Indexed Middle Name: L.</i> <i>Indexed Last Name: Smith</i>
<b>Name (Including Middle)</b>	<b>Mary Lynn Smith</b> <i>Indexed First Name: Mary</i> <i>Indexed Middle Name: Lynn</i> <i>Indexed Last Name: Smith</i>
<b>Compound Non-Hyphenated First Name</b>	<b>Mary Ann Jones Smith</b> <i>Indexed First Name: Mary</i> <i>Indexed Middle Name: Ann Jones</i> <i>Indexed Last Name: Smith</i>
<b>Single Name:</b> Enter single word person name in both first and last name fields.	<b>Topika</b> <i>Indexed First Name: Topika</i> <i>Indexed Last Name: Topika</i>
<b>Hyphenated First Name</b>	<b>Mary-Ann Jones Smith</b> <i>Indexed First Name: Mary-Ann</i> <i>Indexed Middle Name: Jones</i> <i>Indexed Last Name: Smith</i>
<b>Hyphenated Last Name:</b> Enter hyphenated last name in last name field with hyphen.	<b>Mary Ann Jones-Smith</b> <i>Indexed First Name: Mary</i> <i>Indexed Middle Name: Ann</i> <i>Indexed Last Name: Jones-Smith</i>
<b>Title in Name (Odyssey Case Manager):</b> Only enter a title if one is provided in the title dropdown field.	<b>Dr. Mary Lynn Smith</b> <i>Title: Dr.</i> <i>Indexed First Name: Mary</i> <i>Indexed Middle Name: Lynn</i> <i>Indexed Last Name: Smith</i>
<b>Title in Name (File &amp; Serve):</b> Do not enter a title if one is provided.	<b>Dr. Mary Lynn Smith</b> <i>Indexed First Name: Mary</i> <i>Indexed Middle Name: Lynn</i> <i>Indexed Last Name: Smith</i> <i>Suffix Dropdown:</i>
<b>Certification or Degrees:</b> Only enter a certification or degree if one is provided in the suffix dropdown field.	<b>Mary Lynn Smith, CPA</b> <i>Indexed First Name: Mary</i> <i>Indexed Middle Name: Lynn</i> <i>Indexed Last Name: Smith</i> <i>Suffix Dropdown: CPA</i>
<b>Suffix in Name:</b> Only enter a suffix if one is provided and select the appropriate description from the Suffix dropdown field.	<b>John Henry Smith, Jr.</b> <i>Indexed First Name: John</i> <i>Indexed Middle Name: Henry</i> <i>Indexed Last Name: Smith</i> <i>Suffix Dropdown: Jr.</i>



## Entity (Business) Name Type

Non-human names shall be entered in the *Entity* (Business) name field.

### i) Entity Name Type Generally

Business, government, and other non-human name types that are not addressed in subsections (ii) and (iii) below shall be keyed into the *Entity* name field with the characters as they appear on the document, including punctuation.

<b>Entity (Business) Type</b>	
<b>Type</b>	<b>Name (as documented on pleading/filing)</b>
Entity/Business	<b>J.G. Wentworth Life Insurance, LLC</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: J. G. Wentworth Life Insurance, LLC</i>
	<b>Smith Construction Company</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: Smith Construction Company</i>
Government/Agency	<b>City of Raleigh</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: City of Raleigh</i>
	<b>State of North Carolina</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: State of North Carolina</i>
	<b>NC Department of Transportation</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: NC Department of Transportation</i>
	<b>Pinetops Housing Authority</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: Pinetops Housing Authority</i>



**ii) Unknown Heirs as an Entity**

While Unknown Heirs of a party are individuals, they shall be indexed collectively as an Entity.

<b><i>Unknown Heirs Name Type</i></b>	
<b><i>Type</i></b>	<b><i>Name (as documented on pleading/filing)</i></b>
Unknown Heirs of Party	<p><b>John Smith Unknown Heirs</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: John Smith Unknown Heirs</i></p> <p><b>Unknown Heirs of John Smith</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: John Smith Unknown Heirs</i></p>

**iii) Estates and Trusts as Entities**

Estates and trusts are common parties in court filings and shall be indexed in the Entity name field as follows:

<b><i>Estate and Trust Name Type</i></b>	
<b><i>Type</i></b>	<b><i>Name (as documented on pleading/filing)</i></b>
Estate as a Party	<p><b>John Smith Estate</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: John Smith Estate</i></p> <p><b>Estate of John Smith</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: John Smith Estate</i></p>
Trust of Party	<p><b>John Smith Revocable Trust</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: John Smith Revocable Trust</i></p> <p><b>Revocable Trust of John Smith</b> <i>Indexed Entity Name: John Smith Revocable Trust</i></p>

**Nickname Type (Odyssey Case Manager ONLY)**

Odyssey Case Manager includes a Nickname field. The *Nickname* field should never be used.

