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1 **HOUSE BILL NO. 555**

2 Offered January 14, 2026

3 Prefiled January 13, 2026

4 *A BILL to amend and reenact § 8.01-271.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to signing of pleadings, motions,*
5 *and other papers of a party; certain information required.*

6 Patron—Anderson

7 Committee Referral Pending

8 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**9 **1. That § 8.01-271.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**10 **§ 8.01-271.1. Signing of pleadings, motions, and other papers; oral motions; sanctions.**11 A. Except as otherwise provided in §§ 16.1-260 and 63.2-1901, every pleading, motion, or other paper of
12 a party represented by an attorney shall be signed by at least one attorney of record who is an active member
13 in good standing of the Virginia State Bar ~~in~~ with his individual name, and the attorney's *mailing* address
14 ~~shall be, Virginia State Bar number, email address, and telephone number~~ stated on the first pleading filed by
15 that attorney in the action. A party who is not represented by an attorney, including a person confined in a
16 state or local correctional facility proceeding pro se, shall sign his pleading, motion, or other paper and state
17 his *mailing* address, *email address, and, if available, telephone number*. The signature of a person other than
18 counsel of record who is an active member in good standing of the Virginia State Bar or a pro se litigant is
19 not a valid signature. A minor who is not represented by an attorney shall sign his pleading, motion, or other
20 paper by his next friend. Either or both parents of such minor may sign on behalf of such minor as his next
21 friend. However, a parent may not sign on behalf of a minor if such signature is otherwise prohibited by
22 subdivision 6 of § 64.2-716. The signature required by this section may be an electronic signature as defined
23 in § 59.1-480 or a digital image of a signature. If a pleading, motion, or other paper is not signed in
24 compliance with this paragraph, it is defective. Such a defect renders the pleading, motion, or other paper
25 voidable.26 B. The signature of an attorney or party constitutes a certificate by him that (i) he has read the pleading,
27 motion, or other paper, (ii) to the best of his knowledge, information and belief, formed after reasonable
28 inquiry, it is well grounded in fact and is warranted by existing law or a good faith argument for the
29 extension, modification, or reversal of existing law, and (iii) it is not interposed for any improper purpose,
30 such as to harass or to cause unnecessary delay or needless increase in the cost of litigation.31 C. An oral motion made by an attorney or party in any court of the Commonwealth constitutes a
32 representation by him that (i) to the best of his knowledge, information and belief formed after reasonable
33 inquiry it is well grounded in fact and is warranted by existing law or a good faith argument for the extension,
34 modification or reversal of existing law, and (ii) it is not interposed for any improper purpose, such as to
35 harass or to cause unnecessary delay or needless increase in the cost of litigation.36 D. If a pleading, motion, or other paper is signed or made in violation of this section, the court, upon
37 motion or upon its own initiative, shall impose upon the person who signed the paper or made the motion, a
38 represented party, or both, an appropriate sanction, which may include an order to pay to the other party or
39 parties the amount of the reasonable expenses incurred because of the filing of the pleading, motion, or other
40 paper or making of the motion, including reasonable attorney fees.41 E. Failure to raise the issue of a signature defect in a pleading, motion, or other paper before the trial
42 court's jurisdiction expires pursuant to Rule 1:1 (a) and Rule 1:1B waives any challenge to that pleading,
43 motion, or other paper based on such a defect.44 F. Signature defects in appellate filings, including the notice of appeal, shall be raised in the appellate
45 court where the appeal is taken. Failure to timely raise the issue of a defective signature in an appellate
46 pleading, motion, or other paper while the case is pending before the appellate court waives any challenge to
47 that pleading, motion, or other paper based on such a defect.48 G. If a signature defect is not timely and properly cured after it is brought to the attention of the pleader or
49 movant, the pleading, motion, or other paper is invalid and shall be stricken. A signature defect shall be cured
50 within 21 days after it is brought to the attention of the pleader or movant. If a signature defect is timely and
51 properly cured, the pleading, motion, or other paper shall be valid and relate back to the date it was originally
52 served or filed.

INTRODUCED

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