

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

**STANDARDS  
FOR  
INDEXING LAND RECORD  
INSTRUMENTS**

## PREFACE

This document has been developed to provide Circuit Court Clerks with a set of standards to facilitate consistent automated indexing of land records and other instruments filed for recording in their offices. These standards will address all documents recorded after their full implementation date, currently scheduled for implementation \_\_\_\_\_. They may not apply to documents recorded prior to that time.

This standard provides rules for what gets indexed, how it gets indexed, the format of entries for the automated index, and appropriate definitions and valid abbreviations (see Appendices B, C and D) for use in indexing instruments. (With regard to the information shown under the heading "Instrument Type," this information is provided solely for the information of the user, and in no way warranted by the Clerk.)

The standard was written to provide consistency in developing the indexing information for entry into an automated index system. It does not attempt to address individual automated indexing systems requirements, but assumes that system inputs mechanisms will be appropriately configured or altered to accept indexing information developed using this standard.

Placing index information in its correct position on the input mechanism (worksheet, data entry screen, land records cover sheet, etc.) of the automated indexing system is the responsibility of the person developing the land records cover sheet or directly entering the data via a data entry screen.

When submitting a document to be recorded in the deed books, it will be the responsibility of the preparer of the document to fill out the Land Records Cover Sheet. This Cover Sheet is only required for those documents recorded in the deed books. Clerks will follow the indexing standards when indexing judgments, financing statements and estate matters, but no cover sheet will be required.

Persons who want to use the index to find an instrument already recorded can get an overview of the indexing system by reading Sections 1 through 4. Persons recording and indexing instruments will be concerned primarily with Sections 5 and 6, which describe the process for preparing name information for entry into the automated indexing system.

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## **1.00 APPLICATION OF THESE INDEXING RULES**

### **1.01 Where**

These rules apply to those offices of the Clerks of Circuit Courts in the Commonwealth of Virginia which use electronic media for indexing land record instruments.

Instruments, which were recorded and indexed prior to the adoption of these rules, probably will not conform to these standards. This nonconformity may continue even though, after the effective date of these standards, such records may have been taken from an obsolete indexing system, reformatted, and merged into the database with current recordings.

### **1.02 Posting of These Rules**

- a) All such clerks shall have the full printed text of these standards conveniently available to any user who may need to refer to them. The date of adoption of these standards shall be clearly displayed.
- b) The clerk should also provide a local guide listing the various series of records available in his office with the dates of those records and with directions on where to find them.
- c) The clerk should provide directions for use of any public use machines, including explanations of the data fields that appear on each screen.

## **2.00 FINDING NAMES IN THE ELECTRONIC INDEX**

### **2.01 Grouping of Names**

- a) The electronic indexing system may produce names from various series of records (deeds, wills, judgments, etc.) in the same merged list, or the individual series may be produced separately. Grantors may be merged with grantees, or they may be listed separately. Human names may be merged with non-human names, or they may be separate.

Note: Most local indexing systems allow the user to choose any of the above group options.

- b) All such lists produced shall be in telephone book style listing, i.e., continuous alphabetical listing. The alphabetical subsections indexing system (e.g. pages for Ba, Bi, Bl, etc.) and/or "Family" index system (e.g., pages for Smith, Jones, Black, etc.) shall not be used. Set outs (e.g. CHURCH, LODGE, etc) shall not be used.

### **2.02 How Names Are Expressed in Machine Language**

- a) Human names will be comprised of just the 26 letters of the English alphabet and only in capitals. The surname will appear first. The surname will be followed by one or more given names or initials separated by blank spaces. Suffixes, when applicable, are displayed at the end of the name.

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- b) Non-human names will consist of the 26 capital letters in English, ten numeral digits, the ampersand symbol (&) when used to represent the word "and", and the slash symbol (/) when used in numeral fractions or in dates. Non-human names may have multiple words separated by blank spaces.
- c) Abbreviations are not created in the indexing process. Names too long to fit in the space available in the name field are truncated at the end of the available space; however, space is reserved at the end for suffixes. The name field will hold at least 50 characters. Names which appear on the land records cover sheet or in the source document in abbreviated form remain in that form after being indexed and are not expanded into a full word. Most punctuation, special characters and some blank spaces will have been removed in accordance with the conventions for formatting names as described in Section 6.00.

### **3.00 INDEX SYSTEM DATA**

#### **3.01 Data Fields**

- a) The following index data fields will be found in the index: Indexed Party, Date Recorded, Reverse Party, Instrument Type, Reference to Book & Page or Instrument Number, Description, and also Parcel Identification Number in those localities where it is being used.
- b) As a local option, the clerk may include additional fields as needed. When this is done a clear illustration will be found as a local addendum to these standards.
- c) The data may appear on the system screen in any order; however, written instructions and explanations are available for all local variations.

#### **3.02 Description of the Data Fields**

- a) *Indexed Party:* For a human name, the Indexed Party is listed by the entire surname first, followed by the full and complete given name(s). For a non-human name, the entire name (subject to name field size limitation) will be listed beginning with the first word of the name. (However, see 6.05a concerning "The" when it is the first word of a non-human name). The surname might be grouped with given names ascending alphabetically underneath, and business names and human names might be listed once for numerous entries. If the Indexed Party is acting as a trustee or other designated status for another party, the trustee or other designated status is treated as a suffix (see Section 5.01d). A minimum of 50 characters is displayed for the indexed party name.

The different parts of a human name (surname, given name and suffix) taken from the source document may be entered into the automated index via separate fields or in a single field separated by special characters or codes. Likewise they may be stored in the automated index as separate fields or in a single field separated by special characters or codes. However, the method of entry and storage will not be apparent to the user looking at the display screen.

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- b) *Date Recorded*: Date Recorded is the date that the document was recorded in the clerk's office. The date is in numeric form and is in the order of two-digit month (followed by a slash [/], two-digit day (followed by a slash [/], and four-digit year.
- c) *Reverse Party*: For a human name, the Reverse Party is listed either as the entire surname first, followed by the full and complete given name(s); or full and complete given name(s) first followed by the entire surname. For a non-human name, the name is the entire name (subject to name field size limitation) beginning with the first word of the name. (However, see 6.05a concerning "The" when it is the first word of a non-human name). When a document contains two or more names which could comprise the Reverse Party of the index, any of the names might be used as the Reverse Party on the display screen or in the printed list. However, all names which have been indexed will appear as indexed parties (see paragraph a above). If the Reverse Party is acting as a trustee or designated representative for another party, the trustee or other designated status is treated as a suffix (see Section in 5.01d). A minimum of 50 characters is displayed for the reverse party name.

The different parts of a human name (surname, given name and suffix) taken from the source document may be entered into the automated index via separate fields or in a single field separated by special characters or codes. Likewise they may be stored in the automated index as separate fields or in a single field separated by special characters or codes. However, the method of entry and storage will not be apparent to the user looking at the display screen.

- d) *Type*: The type field contains the type of document that is indexed. The type of document is abbreviated according to the codes for Instrument Type in Appendix B. With regard to the information shown under the heading "Instrument Type," this information is provided solely for the information of the user, and in no way warranted by the Clerk.
- e) *Reference*: The Reference field gives the document number or the book and page location of a document or plat.
- f) *Description*: The Description field contains a brief identification or description of the property or the instrument. Depending on the type of document, this description can describe a property, be a reference to a book/page or instrument number, be a local property tax number, or state the intent of the document. When describing a property, the description is not a full and legal description of the property, but is used only for document identification purposes.
- g) *PIN*: The parcel identification number (PIN) is a unique parcel identifier as specified by the local government in conjunction with a geographic information system or other property identification system. If the local government does not use the PIN system, the PIN field will be left blank. However, space is allotted in the automated indexing system for the addition of PIN numbers at a later time.

## **4.00 ALPHABETIZING RULES**

### **4.01 Basic Alphabetizing Procedures**

- a) *Alphabet*: All names are arranged alphabetically according to the order of ASCII standards with the English alphabet. Umlauts, accents, dieresis and other diacritical marks in other languages are not used.
- b) *Word by word*: All entries shall be arranged word by word, alphabetizing character by character within the word. Alphabetizing shall begin with the first character of the first word and end with the last character of the last word. The principle of "nothing before something" shall be applied, considering the space between words a "nothing." Thus, a single letter or shorter word precedes a longer word beginning with the same letter or letters. When two or more entries begin with the same word, the entry will be arranged by the first different word.

Example: AD VIDEO  
ADAM INSTRUMENT INC  
ADAMS BILT CO  
ADAMS BILT LOT CO  
ADAMS GERALD R  
ADAMSON HARRY T  
ADVENT SPEAKERS INC

- c) *Human Names*: Human names shall be alphabetized on the basis of the surname followed by the given name(s).

Example: SMITH JAMES  
SMITH JOHN  
SMITH JOHN E  
SMITH JOHN W  
SMYTH JOHN D  
SMYTH JOHN J  
SMYTH JOHN L  
SMYTH JOHN LAR

- d) *Non-human Names*: Non-human and/or corporate entries shall be arranged word by word, alphabetized character by character, within the word(s). Alphabetizing shall begin with the first word of a non-human or corporate name, then go to the next word, etc., ending with the last character of a non-human or corporate name. A number, single letter, initial, or grouping of letters can be the first word of a non-human or corporate name.

Example: WINSTON ROOF AND PORCH CO  
WINSTON ROOF AND SIDING INC  
WINSTON ROOFING AND GUTTERING CO  
WINSTON ROOFING CO

- e) *Numbers:* Arabic numerals shall be used for numeric numbers. For the purposes of alphabetizing/sorting, a number consisting of one or more numerals shall be considered as a word.

Example: 2 GUYS CO  
23 STREET INC  
4 PENNIES INC  
40 THIEVES MARKET  
401 AMOCO FOOD MARKET  
4TH STREET OYSTER BAR INC

#### **4.02 Sorting Order for Index**

The location of an entry in the index shall be determined by the following hierarchical sorting order:

- a) *Human Name Section:*
- 1) Last name or surname ascending alphabetically.
  - 2) Given names ascending alphabetically.
  - 3) Trustee or other designated status.
  - 4) Date - ascending (in a continuous listing of names in the index); however on a detail display screen where multiple instruments are listed under a specific party's name, some local systems might provide an option for reverse order to list the most recent recording first.
- b) *Non-Human Section:*
- 1) All words or abbreviated words in the name ascending alphabetically.
  - 2) Trustee or other designated status - no status then alphabetical status.
  - 3) Date - ascending (in a continuous listing of names in the index); however on a detail display screen where multiple instruments are listed under a specific party's name, some local systems might provide an option for reverse order to list the most recent recording first.
- c) Human and non-human names may be merged in the same listing as stated in Section 2.01.



## **5.00 SELECTION OF NAMES FROM THE SOURCE DOCUMENT FOR INDEXING**

Recorded instruments are located by the names that are indexed. In some future time, land records might be indexed by Parcel Identification Numbers (PIN). At the present time, the names of the parties affected by the recorded instrument are the key to finding the instrument in the land records, so it is important that a systematic method of entering names into the index is established and routinely followed. The rules that govern that selection process are covered in this section.

### **5.01 General Rules for Selecting Names**

- a) *Names of Parties Affected:* The names of parties participating in, or directly affected by, an instrument should be entered into the automated index.

Other names, such as those found in the property description, may not be directly affected and would not need to be indexed. A person can be a party to an instrument without signing the instrument.

- b) *Names of "Others":* The full name of each party affected by an instrument shall be indexed, and the name of each such party shall be entered in such a manner as to ensure its proper alphabetical location in the automated Index. Notations or abbreviations such as "et al.", "and others", "and wife", "et ux.", "and husband", etc. shall not be used in the Index. Those other names, when known and where they have equal status, shall be entered as full and separate names.
- c) *Some names that do not need to be indexed:*
- 1) The name of a beneficiary of a deed of trust need not be indexed when the first named trustee is indexed (see Virginia Code § 17.1-249).
  - 2) On a deed of trust, if more than one trustee is named, only the first needs to be indexed.
  - 3) Certificates filed pursuant to the Uniform Limited Partnership Act are to be indexed only in the names of the partnership and of the general partners rather than in the name of each limited partner.
  - 4) When an indexed party is a corporation or a limited liability company, the name of the corporation or the name of the limited liability company shall be indexed. The names of the officers or managers shall not be indexed.
  - 5) Names of persons acting in the capacity of power of attorney do not need to be indexed, however the name of the principal party must be indexed. The attorney-in-fact is, himself, a principal in those instruments granting or removing power of attorney.
  - 6) Names of persons signing for governmental agencies do not need to be indexed. Only the agency names are entered.

- d) *Names of trustee or other persons with designated status:* All documents being conveyed by a Trustee, Commissioner, Firm, or other person with a designated status, shall be indexed in the name of the parties for whom the trustee, etc. is acting, as well as in the name of the person with the designated status. See Appendix D for standard abbreviations of designated status. The designated status abbreviation shall be displayed in the index as an extension of the last given name of a human name and as an extension of the non-human name. Names of persons acting in the capacity of power of attorney do not need to be indexed.

Example: Name provided: Richard M Stewart, Trustee

STEWART RICHARD M  
STEWART RICHARD M TR  
STEWART ROBERT MICHAEL

STEWART RICHARD M  
STEWART RICHARD MICHAEL  
STEWART TR RICHARD M                      *INCORRECT (Status after surname)*

Note: When the reverse party is listed with the given name first (see Section 3.02 c), the designated status should appear after the surname just as any other suffix.

Name provided: Stewart Banking & Trust Company, Trustees

STEWART ADCOCK PLUMBING SUPPLY  
STEWART BANKING & TRUST COMPANY TR  
STEWART CONSOLIDATED MTG TR

- e) *Names of designated Spouse:* The names of a husband and wife, when both are parties to an instrument, shall be listed separately and indexed as separate names. The two names shall not appear on the same line in the index.

Example: John L. Smith and Jane Ann Smith, husband and wife

SMITH IVAN A  
SMITH JANE ANN  
SMITH JOHN L  
SMITH JOHN T

SMITH IVAN A  
SMITH JANE ANN JOHN L                      *INCORRECT*  
SMITH JOHN L JANE ANN                      *INCORRECT*  
SMITH JOHN T

- f) *Parties With More Than One Name:* When a name, as it appears in the source document, makes reference to an additional name through terms such as also known as, formerly, formerly known as, etc. or through the use of parentheses, both names shall be indexed separately without being referenced to each other.

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Example: Name provided: Jane Smith (formerly Jane Simpson)

SMITH IVAN A  
SMITH JANE  
SMITH JOHN T  
also  
SIMPSON AUSTON J  
SIMPSON JANE  
SIMPSON MARK O

Example: Name provided - Bar BQ House of Cary Inc.  
(formerly Tom's Bar BQ Inc.)

BABS PANCAKE HOUSE INC  
BAR BQ HOUSE OF CARY INC  
BARBS HOUSE OF CURLS  
also  
TOMPKINS ASSOC INC  
TOMS BAR BQ INC  
TONS OF FUN CO

- g) *Surnames In Parentheses:* A human name containing a surname in parentheses before or after the surname [e.g., Jane Ann (Smith) Simpson, Jane Ann Simpson (Smith)] shall be indexed by the surname only. If the clerk chooses to index the name in parentheses, as a separate surname, that is acceptable, but not required. If the clerk chooses to index the name in parentheses, the parentheses should be dropped.

Example: Name provided: Jane Ann (Smith) Simpson

SIMPSON AUSTON J  
SIMPSON JANE ANN  
SIMPSON MARK O  
And optionally  
SMITH IVAN A  
SMITH JANE ANN  
SMITH JOHN T

- h) *Estate names:* The human name contained within the estate name shall be indexed as a human name with a suffix extension depicting the estate status.

Example: Name provided: The Estate of John Smith  
index as: SMITH JOHN EST

- i) *Names of deceased persons:* When indexing the name of a person who is stated to be deceased, add a suffix extension depicting that status.

Example: Name provided: Henry Jones, who died May 17, 1993  
index as: JONES HENRY DECD

- j) *Names of heirs:* When indexing a person's name and that person is identified as an heir, index it as a name of any other human still living.

Example: Name provided: John W. Davis, Heir  
index as: DAVIS JOHN W

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- k) *Government names*: No document shall be indexed in the name of the individual who signed on behalf of any government, or any agency or unit of government, i.e., the administrator, trustee, state director, agent, etc. Each document will be indexed in the name of the governmental unit as it appears in the source document. When an organizational hierarchy of unit or agency names appears, each governmental unit or agency shall be indexed. However, unit names which appear only in the letterhead of a document do not necessarily need to be indexed (e.g., a notice that the United States claims a lien would be indexed in the name "United States"; but the unit names "Department of Treasury" and "Internal Revenue Service" do not need to be indexed simply because those names appear in the document letterhead.) When a unit or agency of government is acting for the government (United States of America, Commonwealth of Virginia, County, or City/Town) and if the identify of the government is clearly stated, the document shall be indexed under the name of the government and also the unit or agency name. Indexing procedures for Non-Human/Corporate Names shall apply to government units and agencies unless otherwise noted.

Example: United States of America  
by \_\_\_\_\_  
President  
Index as: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Example: United States of America  
Farmers Home Administration  
Department of Agriculture  
by \_\_\_\_\_  
State Director  
Index as: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Example: Farmers Home Administration  
Department of Agriculture  
by \_\_\_\_\_  
State Director  
Index as: FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Example: United States of America  
United States Forest Service  
by \_\_\_\_\_  
Director  
Index as: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE

Example: U. S. National Weather Service  
by \_\_\_\_\_  
Director  
Index as: US NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

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l) *Names of subdivisions and other land plats:*

- 1) The owner(s) of the property shown on the plat shall be indexed as the grantor(s) of the plat.
- 2) The plat title, if shown in the property designation portion of the plat, shall also be indexed as a grantor of the plat. When the plat title is descriptive (i.e., name of subdivision, name of property, etc.), the plat title shall be considered as a non-human name.

Example: Plat Title: Singing Oaks Subdivision  
SIENFELD PROPERTIES INC  
SINGING OAKS SUBDIVISION  
SINGLETON TOWNHOMES

Plat Title: Singing Oaks, Part II  
SIENFELD PROPERTIES INC  
SINGING OAKS PART II  
SINGLETON TOWNHOMES

SIENFELD PROPERTIES INC  
SINGING OAKS SUBDIVISION PART II  
SINGLETON TOWNHOMES

*INCORRECT*

- 3) Plat title showing ownership. When the plat title shows ownership, usually through references such as "Farm of [name of owner]", "Land of [name of owner]", "Property of [name of owner]", "[name of owner] Farm", "[name of owner] Property", etc., the plat title shall be indexed by the name of the owner.

Example: Plat Title: Nat T. Magnum Farm  
MAGNUM ALBERT CARL  
MAGNUM NAT T  
MANION ROBERT L

NANNIES UNLIMITED INC  
NAT T MAGNUM FARM  
NATURAL POWER INC

*INCORRECT*

Plat Title: Farm of Nat T. Magnum  
MAGNUM ALBERT CARL  
MAGNUM NAT T  
MANION ROBERT L

FARLOW FARMS INC  
FARM OF NAT T MAGNUM  
FARMER JOES MARKET

*INCORRECT*

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Plat Title: Property of Nat T. Magnum Inc.  
NANNIES UNLIMITED INC  
NAT T MAGNUM INC  
NATURAL POWER INC

MAGNUM ALBERT CARL  
MAGNUM NAT T INC PROPERTY OF  
MANION ROBERT L

*INCORRECT*

- 4) Maps Attached to Documents: A map or plat that is attached to or is a part of a document shall be considered as part of the document and does not need to be indexed as a separate map or plat; however, in addition to the general Index, the clerk may maintain a separate index of maps and plats and/or condominium plans and plats.
- m) *Names of condominium plats and plans:*
- 1) Condominium plans and plats shall be indexed in the real property index.
  - 2) If the condominium declaration is being recorded with the condominium plat, all persons signing the condominium declaration as well as the name of the condominium shall be indexed as grantors of the condominium plat or plan.
  - 3) The name of the condominium shall be considered as a non-human name.
  - 4) If the condominium declaration has been recorded, and if a reference to the book and page, or instrument number, of that recording is listed on the condominium plat, the clerk may show that reference in the description field.
  - 5) Condominium Declarations: If the condominium plat has been recorded, and if a reference to the book and page of that recording is listed in the condominium declaration, the clerk may list that reference in the description field.

## **5.02 Selection of Names from Specific Types of Instruments**

The following is a general guide to the selection of names from some of the most common types of land records. Often, however, an instrument will have some complexity which affects other parties. The name of any party who is directly affected by an instrument should be indexed. The indexer should consult, at the very least, Virginia Code Sections 17.1-249, 55-48, and 55-58. (There is a Clerk's legislative initiative to require the use of a Land Records Cover Sheet. As of this revision, such legislation is not yet in place.)

Type of Instrument	Names to be Indexed	
a) Agreement	grantors:	property owners relinquishing interest
	grantees:	parties gaining interest
b) Assignment of Deed of Trust	grantors:	property owners
		assignor
	grantees:	assignee

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c)	Certificate of Satisfaction	grantors:	property owners trustee
		grantees:	none
<b>NOTE:</b> If the Clerk has separate hard copy print-out lists for grantors and grantees, the property owner's name should be entered so that it prints out in both lists. See § 55-66.4:2.			
d)	Certificate of Take	grantors:	property owners
		grantees:	Commonwealth Transportation Commissioner
e)	Commencement of Bankruptcy	grantors:	debtor
		grantees:	trustee in bankruptcy
f)	Conditional Septic Tank Permit	grantors:	property owners
		grantees:	property owners Health Department
g)	Condominium Instrument	grantors:	property owners condominium name
h)	Contract	grantors:	property owners
		grantees:	parties purchasing interest
i)	Deed of Assumption	grantors:	sellers purchasers note holder, if he signs
		grantees:	purchaser trustee if named
j)	Deed of Bargain and Sale	grantors:	sellers
		grantees:	purchasers
k)	Deed of Easement/Right of Way	grantors:	property owners
		grantees:	parties who gain use of land
l)	Deed of Exchange	grantors:	all parties conveying interest
		grantees:	all parties receiving interest
m)	Deed of Gift	grantors:	givers
		grantees:	recipients
n)	Deed of Partition	grantors:	all parties
		grantees:	all parties
o)	Deed of Release	grantors:	property owners trustee
			note holder, if he signs
		grantees:	property owners

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p)	Deed of Trust	grantors: grantees:	property owners first named trustee or beneficiary
q)	Deed with Vender's Lien	grantors: grantees:	all parties all parties
r)	Discharge of Debtor	grantors: grantees:	bankrupt parties bankrupt parties
s)	Disclaimer	grantors: grantees:	parties disclaiming interest parties affected
t)	Homestead Deed	grantors: grantees:	property owners property owners
u)	Lease	grantors: grantees:	property owner / lessor lessee
v)	Name Change	grantors: grantees:	old name new name
w)	Notice of Lis Pendens	grantors: grantees:	property owners plaintiff
x)	Notice of Mechanic's Lien	grantors: grantees:	property owners contractor subcontractor contractor
y)	Option	grantors: grantees:	property owners parties acquiring rights property owners parties acquiring rights
z)	Plat	grantors:	property owners subdivision name
aa)	Power of Attorney	grantors: grantees:	principals agents
bb)	Restrictive Covenants	grantors:	property owners subdivision name



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cc)	Revocation of Power of Attorney	grantors:	principals agents
		grantees:	principals agents
dd)	Special Commissioner's Deed	grantors:	property owners losing interest heirs/ deceased/ persons under disability other owners of record special commissioners
		grantees:	purchasers
ee)	Subordination Agreement	grantors:	property owners beneficiary of prior deed of trust trustee of prior deed of trust
		grantees:	new beneficiaries new trustee
ff)	Substitution of Trustee	grantors:	property owners prior trustees note holders
		grantees:	new trustees
gg)	Tax Deed	grantors:	delinquent tax payer/property owners locality/Commonwealth/IRS special commissioners
		grantees:	purchasers
hh)	Trust Agreement	grantors:	creator/trustor
		grantees:	trustees name of trust beneficiaries
ii)	Trustee's Deed on Foreclosure	grantors:	property owners in default trustees
		grantees:	purchasers

## 6.00 FORMATTING OF THE NAMES FOR PLACEMENT IN THE INDEX

### 6.01 The Need for Formatting

The process of formatting names, in most cases, is routine. The main rules to remember are to use all capital letters, no punctuation and, for human names, the last name is indexed before the given name. Unfortunately, numerous rules are still needed to govern the formatting of the few remaining

"special" types of names. These rules are necessary because some names might appear on different documents in different formats. Formatting rules do not correct spelling errors or otherwise change spellings. However, formatting rules, if consistently followed, can help, to some extent, to keep a specific name appearing consistently in the same location in the index.

Some automated indexing systems may require the use of punctuation or special characters as field separators during the data entry process. However such punctuation or special characters will not appear in the automated index.

## **6.02 Capital Letters**

All entries in the Index shall be listed in capital letters. In a machine sort, a lower case letter is a different character than the corresponding upper case letter.

Example: SMITH JAMES  
SMITH JOHN  
SMITH JOHN E

Smith James  
Smith John  
Smith John E

*ALL INCORRECT* (Not in all capital letters)

## **6.03 Truncation and Abbreviation**

As nearly as possible, names shall be placed in the index using the same spelling as appears in the source document. Abbreviations shall not be used except as they may appear in the name provided in the source document. Words too long to fit in the available space of the name field shall be truncated when the end of the name field is reached. Where a full name exceeds the available space, and a suffix (including any designated status extension) is part of that name, the truncation will occur at the place which still leaves room to place the suffix extension on the end of the truncated name. Standard abbreviations shall be used for designated status extensions such as TR for Trustee, etc. (see Appendix D). Abbreviations may be used for property descriptions (see Appendix C). Standard abbreviations shall be used for instrument types (see Appendix B).

## **6.04 Human Names**

- a) *Signature Convention:* It shall be assumed that all names in the source document are in the United States signature convention of given name(s) followed by surname, unless a comma is found appended to the first appearing name, indicating that it is a surname which has been placed before the given name.
- b) *Surname:* For purposes of alphabetizing in the index, any existing spaces embedded in a name, as it appears in the source document, will be retained; any existing hyphens will be removed but the space created by that removal will remain open; any other existing special characters, such as apostrophes, shall be removed without leaving a blank space.

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- 1) Prefix: A name with a prefix is one that begins with a separately written particle consisting of an article (e.g., La Crosse, L'Estrange), a preposition (e.g., De Morgan), a combination of a preposition and an article (e.g., Del Mar, Van der Veer), or a term which originally expressed relationship (e.g., Ap Richard, O'Brien), with or without a space, hyphen, or apostrophe between the prefix and the name.

Examples: Name provided: Anthony La Vopa  
KURTZ LEONARD  
LA VOPA ANTHONY  
LAVOIE EDWARD  
LAW CHARLES

Name provided: Catherine O'Brien  
OBREMSKI JAMES O  
OBRIEN CATHERINE  
OBRIST BARBARA

Name provided: Carl Van Cott  
VALLEY FARM CREDIT  
VAN COTT CARL  
VANCO HELEN  
VANCROFT WILLIAM A

VANCE BRIAN LEE  
VANCOTT CARL            *INCORRECT*  
VANCROFT JOHN  
VANGOGH VINCENT

- 2) M', Mc, Mac: Names beginning with the prefixes M', Mc, or Mac shall be arranged alphabetically according to the order of the alphabet and in the same manner as with any other name. No special section or location shall be developed for these prefixes.

Example: Name provided: John Mac Donald  
MABRY CARRIE R  
MAC DONALD JOHN  
MACATEE PAUL L  
MACEDA NILA

MABRY CARRIE R  
MACATEE PAUL L  
MACDONALD JOHN    *INCORRECT*  
MACEDA NILA

- 3) Compound Surname: A compound surname is a name consisting of two or more separate words or names which are separated by a hyphen or a space. For purposes of indexing, hyphens shall always be dropped from compound surnames and the space retained.

Example: Name provided: Jane Smith-Simpson  
SMITH YVONNE A  
SMITH SIMPSON JANE  
SMITHSON LISA C

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- 4) If it is unknown or unclear if a name is the last given name or is part of a multi-name surname, the name may be treated as the last given name and also as a part of a multi-name surname.

Example: Name provided: Johnny Mack Intosh  
INTEMANN ALFRED W  
INTOSH JOHNNY MACK  
IORFIDO B L  
also  
MACINTOSH JAMES A  
MACK INTOSH JOHNNY  
MACKO ROBERT L

- 5) Human names containing Saint, St or St. shall not be converted into their abbreviated or full form. Punctuation shall be eliminated but preexisting spaces shall be retained.

Examples: Name provided:	Index as:
Barry <u>Saint Leger</u>	SAINT LEGER BARRY
Louis Stephen <u>Saint Laurent</u>	SAINT LAURENT LOUIS STEPHEN
Camille <u>Saint-Saëns</u>	SAINT SAENS CAMILLE
Charles <u>Sainte-Beuve</u>	SAINTE BEUVE CHARLES
David <u>St John</u>	ST JOHN DAVID
Ruth <u>St. Denis</u>	ST DENIS RUTH
Saint Clair <u>Waldheim</u>	WALDHEIM SAINT CLAIR

- c) *Given Names:* Given names will appear in the automated index in the order of first given name (first name) or initial, second given name (middle name) or initial, etc. An initial shall be considered as a given name, and a space shall separate given names and initials that are given names. Commas will not appear in the index list to separate given names from surnames. Periods shall not be used with initials or any other abbreviation. In a special case, the title Mrs. may be considered as a given name (Rule 6.04 c 2).

Example: Name provided: Robert M Stewart  
STEWART R M  
STEWART RICHARD M  
STEWART ROBERT M  
STEWART ROBERT MICHAEL

- 1) For purposes of alphabetizing in the index, any existing spaces embedded in a name, as it appears in the source document, will be retained; any existing hyphens will be removed but the space created by that removal will remain open; any other existing special characters, such as apostrophes, shall be removed without leaving a blank space.

Example: Name Provided:	Index as:
Jo-Ann Taylor	TAYLOR JO ANN
Ty-Anthony Jones	JONES TY ANTHONY
O'Neal White	WHITE ONEAL
Billy Joe Kerns	KERNS BILLY JOE

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- 2) Titles: All titles such as Reverend, Bishop, Dr., Major, Mr. Ms., Mrs, etc. shall be omitted from the listing. However, when a document or instrument contains the name of a female using only the title Mrs. and her surname (e.g., Mrs. Smith) or the title Mrs. and her husband's given name and surname, the title Mrs. shall be retained. The title Mrs. shall be considered as the given name if none other is provided. If the husband's first name is provided the title Mrs. shall be considered as a suffix.

Example: Name provided: Mrs John Smith

SMITH JOHN  
SMITH JOHN A  
SMITH JOHN MRS  
SMITH LEON  
SMITH PAUL

SMITH JOHN  
SMITH JOHN A  
SMITH LEON  
SMITH MRS JOHN  
SMITH PAUL

*INCORRECT* (Indexed on title)

Name provided: Mrs Smith

SMITH LEON  
SMITH MRS  
SMITH PAUL

Note: If the given name of an individual is "Major", "Captain", "Sarge", etc., this rule does not apply.

- 3) Suffix: As the names are displayed, a suffix denoting lineage such as Junior, Jr., Sr., II, III, etc. will appear after the last given name except when the reverse party is listed with the given name first (see Section 3.02 c) the suffix will appear after the surname. No punctuation will appear before the suffix in the automated index.

Example: Name provided: William John Smith, III

SMITH WILLIAM J  
SMITH WILLIAM JOHN II  
SMITH WILLIAM JOHN III  
SMITH WILLIAM MARK

- 4) Professional Titles: Professional certifications or degrees showing a certain level or type of education such as CPA, DDS, and MD, shall not be indexed as part of a human name. If it is unclear whether such document names are human or non-human, the names shall be indexed as a human name without the title and as a non-human name with the title, but without the punctuation.

Example: Name provided: John Smith, CPA

SMITH JOHN (indexed as human name)

also

JOHN SMITH CPA (indexed as a business)

## 6.05 Non-Human/Corporate Names

- a) *"The"*: Non-human and corporate names beginning with the article "The" shall not be indexed under the word "The". The first letter, number etc., immediately following the word "The" shall be used to begin the indexing. When the first word is "The", the word "The" shall be dropped.

Example: Name provided: The Word Publishers Inc.  
WORD POWER INC  
WORD PUBLISHERS INC  
WORDPERFECT CORP

- b) *Human Name/Initials*: The names or words in a non-human entry shall not be reversed even when the non-human entry contains a human name/initials.

Example: Name provided: Carl Magnum Inc  
CARL JONES INC  
CARL MAGNUM INC  
CATS MEOW CORP

MAGIC MAID INC  
MAGNUM CARL INC  
MAGNUM ELECTRIC CO

*INCORRECT* (Human name portion reversed)

- c) *Numbers*:

- 1) When the first word of a non-human name is a number and the number is spelled (e.g., six), the number shall be treated as a word,

Example: Name provided: Five Points Inc  
FIVE POINTS INC (Not 5 POINTS INC)  
FIX IT RIGHT CO

2 GUYS INC  
5 POINTS INC  
5 STRIKE CO

*INCORRECT* (Word converted to a numeral)

- 2) When the first word of a non-human name is a number and the number is in numeric form (e.g., 6), the number shall be placed in alphanumeric character sequence in the index as it appears on the document.

Example: Name provided: 2 Guys Inc  
2 GALS INC  
2 GUYS INC (Not TWO GUYS INC)  
5 STRIKE CO

TWO GUYS INC  
TYLER HOUSE INC

*INCORRECT* (Numeral converted to word)

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- 3) When a non-human name contains a fraction in numeric form, the numerator and the denominator of the fraction shall be separated by a slash (/) with no space on either side of the slash. If a whole number is associated with the fraction, a space shall separate the whole number from the fraction.

Example: Name provided: 7 1/2 PERCENT SOLUTION CO  
7 1/2 PERCENT SOLUTION CO  
7 COME 11 INC  
72 LUMBER CO

- 4) When an ordinal number is in numeric form, a space shall not separate the numeral from the ordinal suffix.

Example: Name: 4TH STREET OYSTER BAR INC  
(Not 4 TH STREET OYSTER BAR INC)

4 PENNIES INC  
40 THIEVES MARKET  
4TH STREET OYSTER BAR INC

- 5) When a non-human name contains a series of two (2) or more single numerals, no space shall separate the single numerals. The series of two (2) or more single numerals shall be combined until the series is broken by a word containing two or more letters or by a number containing two (2) or more numerals.

Example: Name provided: 1 2 3 Go Inc.  
1 WAY HOME INC  
123 GO INC (Not 1 2 3 GO INC)  
2 GUYS CO

1 2 3 GO INC                      *INCORRECT* (Spacing between characters)  
1 WAY HOME INC  
GUYS CO

Name provided: 2 4 T Brunch Club Inc.  
2 GUYS CO  
24T BRUNCH CLUB INC (Not 2 4 T BRUNCH CLUB INC)  
4 PENNIES INC

2 4 T BRUNCH CLUB INC                      *INCORRECT* (Spacing between characters)  
2 GUYS CO  
4 PENNIES INC

- 6) Roman numerals: For purposes of alphabetizing/sorting, Roman numerals shall be considered as alphabetic characters and not numbers. A Roman number shall be considered as an alphabetical word.

Example: Name provided: VIII Division Survivors Fund  
VIDEOFONICS INC  
VIII DIVISION SURVIVORS FUND  
VINYL WHOLESALE SUPPLY CO

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8 BALL INC  
8 DIVISION SURVIVORS FUND  
99 WAYS INC

*INCORRECT* (Roman numeral converted)

EIGHT AND FIVE INC  
EIGHT DIVISION SURVIVORS FUND  
EILER INSTITUTE INC

*INCORRECT* (Roman numeral converted)

- d) Non-human names containing Mount, Mt, Saint or St shall not be converted into their abbreviated or full form. Such words shall be entered into the automated index as they appear in the source document but without periods or other punctuation.

Example: Name provided: Mount Olive Baptist Church  
MOUNT OLIVE APPLIANCE INC  
MOUNT OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH  
MOUNT OLIVE RADIO SUPPLY

MT HERMAN METHODIST CHURCH  
MT OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH  
MT PLEASANT BAPTIST CHURCH

*INCORRECT* (Full word abbreviated)

Name provided: St. Joseph Hospital  
ST CROIX TANNING CENTRE INC  
ST JOSEPH HOSPITAL  
ST MARKS CHURCH

SAINT JAMES BAPTIST CHURCH  
SAINT JOSEPH HOSPITAL  
SAINT MATTHEW BAPTIST CHURCH

*INCORRECT* (Converted to full word)

- e) *Initials, Letters, and Acronyms:*

- 1) When a non-human name contains a human surname and two (2) or more human given name initials, no space shall separate an initial from another given name initial. A space shall separate a single initial or a series of two (2) or more given name initials from a given name or the surname.

Example: Name provided: C C Magnum Inc  
CATS MEOW CORP  
CC MAGNUM INC  
CEASE H CLYMER INC

C C MAGNUM INC  
CA JONES INC  
CATS MEOW CORP

*INCORRECT* (Spacing between initials)

Name provided: A James Smith Inc  
A CATS MEOW CORP  
A JAMES SMITH INC  
ABES AUTO INC

ABES AUTO INC  
AJAMES SMITH INC  
APPLE JUICE BUYERS INC

*INCORRECT* (Incorrect spacing)



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Name provided: Nat T Jones Inc  
NANNIES UNLIMITED INC  
NAT T JONES INC  
NATURAL POWER INC

NANNIES UNLIMITED INC  
NAT TJONES INC  
NATURAL POWER INC

*INCORRECT* (Incorrect spacing)

- 2) When a non-human name contains a series of two (2) or more single characters (characters may be letters, abbreviations, symbols, or numerals), no space shall separate the single characters until the series is broken by a word containing two or more characters. A word is defined as two or more characters that appear together without spaces. See Rule 6.05 e 3 for special rules for ampersand.

Example: Name provided: A & E Associates indexed as A&E ASSOCIATES

Name provided: A T & T indexed as AT&T

Name provided: N C S U Boosters Club Inc indexed as  
NCSU BOOSTERS CLUB INC

NAZARETH HOUSE INC  
NCSU BOOSTERS CLUB INC  
NETWORKS INC

N C S U BOOSTERS CLUB INC  
NA JONES INC  
NAMS WAREHOUSE CO

*INCORRECT* (Spaces between letters)

Name provided: Bar B Q House Inc  
BABS PANCAKE HOUSE INC  
BAR BQ HOUSE INC  
BARBS HOUSE OF CURLS

BABS PANCAKE HOUSE INC  
BAR B Q HOUSE INC  
BARBS HOUSE OF CURLS

*INCORRECT* (Spaces between letters)

- 3) When a non-human name contains an ampersand that is not preceded and followed by single characters a space shall appear before and after the ampersand.

Example: Name provided: Johnny C. & Others, Inc.  
Index as: JOHNNY C & OTHERS INC

Name provided: 9 & Co. Index as: 9 & CO

Name provided: A & E Index as A&E (& is between single characters)

- 4) When a non-human name contains a single character and a number separated by a special character, the special character shall be dropped and no space shall separate the character from the number.

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Example: Name provided: A-1 Auto Sales Inc  
A1 AUTO SALES INC  
AA ELECTROSTATIC CO  
BOBS AUTO INC

A 1 AUTO SALES INC                      *INCORRECT* (Space between A and 1)  
A CUT ABOVE HAIR CARE INC  
AA ELECTROSTATIC CO

Name provided: A/1 And A/2 Dance Studio Inc  
A1 AND A2 DANCE STUDIO INC  
AA ELECTROSTATIC CO  
BOBS AUTO INC

A 1 AND A 2 DANCE STUDIO INC                      *INCORRECT* (Space between characters)  
A DOGS LIFE RESORT INC  
AA ELECTROSTATIC CO

- 5) When a non-human name contains or is an acronym containing single letters, no space shall separate the letters in the acronym.

Example: Name provided: N A T O Suppliers Inc  
NANNIES UNLIMITED INC  
NATO SUPPLIERS INC  
NATURAL POWER INC

N A T O SUPPLIERS INC                      *INCORRECT* (Space between characters)  
NA SMITH INC  
NABISCO INC

Name provided: CAT Inc  
CASTON MOTOR COMPANY INC  
CAT INC  
CATAWBA TIMBER CO

CAMDEN INVESTMENT INC  
CAMERON AVIATION TECHNOLOGY INC                      *INCORRECT* (Acronym spelled out)  
CAMP OMNI INC

- 6) Initials appearing in an appendage to a non-human name which indicate the type of firm or organization (L.P., L.L.C., L.C., N.A., F.S.B., etc.), with or without the periods between the initials, shall be joined together without spaces and periods, but will be separated by a space from words in the major part of the non-human name. Notwithstanding Rule 2) above, even when the major part of the non-human name is a string of initials the appendage shall still be separated.

Example: Name provide: C.O. C., L. L. C.  
COBB ANTHONY J  
COC LLC  
COCHRAN VERGIL D

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f) *Punctuation:* Punctuation such as hyphen, apostrophe, comma, colon, semi-colon, parentheses, quotation marks, brackets, or period shall not be used for non-human names.

- 1) When a non-human name contains words separated by a comma, period, colon, or semi-colon the punctuation shall be dropped.

Example: Name provided: Jones, Smith, Ramsey, and Associates  
JONES SMITH CONSTRUCTION CO  
JONES SMITH RAMSEY AND ASSOCIATES  
JONES TREE SERVICE INC

Name provided: R.O.A.R. Corporation  
ROANOKE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
ROAR CORPORATION  
ROBARGE, HENRY J

R HILL CONSULTANTS  
R O A R CORPORATION                      *INCORRECT* (see 6.05 e 2 and e 5)  
RAAB JOHN B

Name provided: Bankers Trust : California  
Indexed as BANKERS TRUST CALIFORNIA

- 2) When a non-human name contains an apostrophe, the apostrophe shall be dropped. If the apostrophe is between two letters, no space shall separate the letters.

Example: Name provided: Tom's Peanut Co  
TOMPKINS ASSOC INC  
TOMS PEANUT CO  
TONS OF FUN CO

- 3) When a non-human name, not covered by 6.05 e 4, contains two words separated by punctuation such as a hyphen (-) or a slash (/), the punctuation shall be dropped. A space shall separate the two words.

Example: Name provided: Jones-Smith Construction Co  
JONES INSURANCE CO  
JONES SMITH CONSTRUCTION CO  
JONES TREE SERVICE INC

JONES TREE SERVICE INC  
JONESSMITH CONSTRUCTION CO                      *INCORRECT* (Incorrect spacing)  
JONFEL CORP

Name provided: Barclays/American Mortgage Corp  
BARCALOUNGER SALES INC  
BARCLAYS AMERICAN MORTGAGE CORP  
BARHAM CONSTRUCTION CO

BARCALOUNGER SALES INC  
BARCLAYSAMERICAN MORTGAGE CORP                      *INCORRECT* (Incorrect Spacing)  
BARHAM CONSTRUCTION CO

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- 4) Quotation marks, brackets, and parentheses shall be dropped from non-human names.

Example: Name provided: Nationsbank (Virginia)  
Indexed as NATIONSBANK VIRGINIA

g) *Human Name Prefixes:*

- 1) When a non-human name contains a human surname with a separately written prefix (e.g., Van Pell Shoes Inc.), the prefix and the surname shall each be considered as a separate word.

Example: Name provided: Van Pell Shoes Inc  
VALLEY FORGE CORP  
VAN PELL SHOES INC  
VANTAGE PROPERTIES INC

VALLEY FORGE CORP  
VANPELL SHOES INC  
VANTAGE PROPERTIES INC

*INCORRECT* (Space removed)

Name provided: Mac Donald Tire Co  
MABRY SUPPLY  
MAC DONALD TIRE CO  
MACATEE RADIO  
MACEDA CAFE

MABRY SUPPLY  
MACATEE RADIO  
MACDONALD TIRE CO  
MACEDA CAFE

*INCORRECT* (Space removed)

- 2) When a non-human name contains a human surname with a prefix written as part of the surname (e.g., LaVopa Supply Co.), the prefix/surname shall be considered as one word.

Example: Name provided: LaVopa Supply Co.  
LAVINDERS INC  
LAVOPA SUPPLY CO  
LAWN BARBER INC

LA SMITH INC  
LA VOPA SUPPLY CO  
LACOCK SHOE INC

*INCORRECT* (Space inserted)

Name provided: MacDonald Tool Co  
MABRY SUPPLY  
MACATEE PILINGS  
MACDONALD TOOL CO  
MACEDA CAFE

MABRY SUPPLY  
MAC DONALD TOOL CO  
MACATEE PILINGS  
MACEDA CAFE

*INCORRECT* (Space inserted)

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h) *Symbols:*

- 1) The following characters and symbols shall be used for indexing and sorting non-human names:

English alphabet letters (capitals only)  
Arabic numerals  
& (for the word "and")  
/ (for fractions and dates)

If a non-human name contains a character or symbol not listed above, the symbol shall be dropped.

Example: Name provided: 360° Communications  
Index as: 360 COMMUNICATIONS

Name provided: 7½ % Solution Co. (see Rule 6.05 c 3 for similar example)  
Index as: 7 1/2 SOLUTION CO

Note: Fractions should not be represented by a lone special character, e.g. ½.

- 2) Non-human names that contain symbols shall be indexed without the special characters and might thereby lose their unique identity in the index.

Example: Names provided: TGIF! and TGIF?: In the unlikely event that two different such firms exist, both will appear as TGIF in the index. The record searcher will have to look at the source documents to sort out one from the other.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **DEFINITIONS**

#### Human names

For indexing purposes human names are names of individual human beings. Human names are not associated with or used in the names of businesses or other entities.

Examples:

JOHNSON K B  
SMITH JOHN W  
SMITH ROBERT W EST  
SMITH WILLIAM B

#### Non-human names

Non-Human names are names of corporations, partnerships, limited partnerships, general partnerships, proprietorships, other entities such as but not limited to, government agencies, churches, schools, charitable organizations, etc.

Examples:

JOHN W SMITH IRREVOCABLE TRUST  
KB JOHNSON OIL CO INC

When the indexer can not determine whether a name is a human or non-human name, the name shall be indexed as a human name and shall also be indexed as a non-human name.

Reserved for Additional Definitions:

## **APPENDIX B**

### **INSTRUMENT TYPE ABBREVIATIONS**

**NOTE:** Each Clerk in the Commonwealth will develop their own glossary, at their own site which shows what instrument types are covered, and their abbreviations.

## APPENDIX C

### PROPERTY DESCRIPTION ABBREVIATIONS

<u>Word</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Acre	AC
And	&
Avenue	AVE
Block	BLK
Book	BK
Boulevard	BLVD
Building	BLDG
Circle	CIR
Company	CO
Condominium	CONDO
County	CNTY
Court	CT
Development	DEV
Division	DIV
Easement	ESMT
East	E
Estate	EST
Extension	EXT
Heights	HGTS
Highway	HWY
Mount	MT
Mountain	MTN
North	N
Number	#
Part	PT
Phase	PH
Place	PL
Property	PROP
Right of Way	R/W
Road	RD
Section	SEC
South	S
Square Feet	SQFT
Street	ST
West	W



## APPENDIX D

### TRUSTEE AND OTHER DESIGNATED STATUS ABBREVIATIONS

<u>Title</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Administrator	ADMR
Administratrix	ADMR
Commissioner	COMR
Co-Executor	EXOR
Co-Trustee	TR
Custodian	CUST
Deceased	DECD
Estate	EST
Executor	EXOR
Executrix	EXOR
Guardian	GDN
Partner	PTNR
Receiver	RCVR
Special Commissioner	SP COMR
Substitute Trustee	SUB TR
Successor Trustee	SUC TR
Trustee	TR