

## **Rule 7. The Petition**

(a) [Vacant].

(b) [Vacant].

(c) Nature and contents. The petition shall be a plain, concise and definite written statement of the essential facts constituting the offense charged. It shall be signed by any person specified in D.C. Code § 16-2305(b), and shall be verified upon information and belief. It shall contain a statement that the respondent appears to be in need of care and rehabilitation. The petition need not contain a formal commencement, a formal conclusion or any other matter not necessary to such statement. Allegations made in one count may be incorporated by reference in another count. It may be alleged in a single count that the means by which the respondent committed the offense are unknown or that the respondent committed it by one or more specified means. The petition in a delinquency case shall state for each count the official or customary citation of the statute, rule, regulation or other provision of law which the respondent is alleged therein to have violated. Error in the citation or its omission shall not be ground for dismissal of the petition or for reversal of a judgment if the error or omission did not mislead the respondent to the respondent's prejudice. The petition in a need for supervision case shall state (1) the dates and number of times a respondent is alleged to have been truant from school, in the case of a child charged with habitual truancy; (2) the statute, rule, regulation or other provision of law alleged to have been violated, in the case of an offense committable only by children; and (3) the specific acts and dates thereof giving rise to a charge of ungovernability, in the case of a respondent charged with habitual disobedience of the reasonable and lawful commands of the respondent's parents. Petitions in both delinquency and need for supervision cases shall state (1) the name, birth date and residence address of the respondent, (2) the names and residence addresses of the respondent's parents, or legal guardian, if there be one, or the person or persons having custody and control of the respondent, or the nearest known relative, if no parent or guardian can be found.

(d) Surplusage. The Family Court on motion of the respondent may strike surplusage from the petition.

(e) Amendment of the petition. The Family Court may permit a petition to be amended at any time prior to the conclusion of a fact-finding hearing if no additional or different offense is charged and if substantial rights of the respondent are not prejudiced. The Family Court shall grant the Office of the Attorney General, the respondent, and the respondent's parent, guardian or custodian notice of the amendment and, upon request of any party for good cause shown, a reasonable time to prepare.

(f) Bill of particulars. The Family Court may direct the filing of a bill of particulars. A motion for a bill of particulars may be made before the initial hearing or within 10 days after the initial hearing or at such later time as the Family Court may permit. A bill of particulars may be amended at any time subject to such conditions as justice requires.