

**Memorandum**

**To:** Winchester-Frederick-Clarke Attorneys  
**From:** John E. Wetsel, Jr., Judge  
**Date:** May 18, 2012  
**Subject:** Practice Changes effective July 1, 2012

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There are two law changes, effective July 1, 2012, which will have a material impact on our procedures.

1. Rules of Evidence go into effect. I do not think this changes anything, but have a copy handy when you try a case.
2. All divorce decrees must contain the following notice (VC § 20-111.1):

Beneficiary designations for any death benefit, as defined in subsection B of § 20-111.1 of the Code of Virginia, made payable to a former spouse may or may not be automatically revoked by operation of law upon the entry of a final decree of annulment or divorce. If a party intends to revoke any beneficiary designation made payable to a former spouse following the annulment or divorce, the party is responsible for following any and all instructions to change such beneficiary designation given by the provider of the death benefit. Otherwise, existing beneficiary designations may remain in full force and effect after the entry of a final decree of divorce or annulment.

As a practical matter, you can change your forms now to include this required language if you want.