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Rule 6-8. Certification Of Questions Of Law.

(a) Power to Answer. (1) The Supreme Court may, in its discretion, answer questions of law certified to it by order of a federal court of the United States if there are involved in any proceeding before it questions of Arkansas law which may be determinative of the cause then pending in the certifying court and as to which it appears to the certifying court there is no controlling precedent in the decisions of the Supreme Court.

(2) The Supreme Court shall decide whether to answer the question so certified within 30 days of the filing of the certification order. The Clerk shall mail notice of this decision to the certifying court, counsel of record, and parties appearing without counsel. The notice shall also state whether portions of the record, if any, are to be filed pursuant to subdivision (d) of this rule, as well as the briefing schedule and the approximate date the question certified will come before the Supreme Court for consideration.

(3) If the Supreme Court takes no action within 30 days of the filing of the certification order, the Court shall be deemed to have declined to answer the question unless it has by order extended the time.

(4) If the certification order is filed when the Supreme Court is formally in recess, the 30-day time period shall commence when the Court returns from the recess.

(5) In its discretion, the Supreme Court may at any time rescind its decision to answer a certified question. The Clerk shall promptly mail notice to the certifying court, counsel of record, and parties appearing without counsel.

(b) Method of Invoking. This rule may be invoked upon motion of a federal court of the United States or upon motion of any party to the cause pending before the court.

(c) Contents of Certification Order. (1) A certification order shall contain: (A) the question of law to be answered; (B) the facts relevant to the question, showing fully the nature of the controversy out of which the question arose; (C) a statement acknowledging that the Supreme Court, acting as the receiving court, may reformulate the question; and (D) the names and addresses of counsel of record and parties appearing without counsel.

(2) If the parties cannot agree upon a statement of facts, the certifying court shall determine the relevant facts and state them as a part of its certification order.

(d) Preparation of Certification Order. The certification order shall be prepared by the certifying court, signed by the judge presiding at the hearing, and forwarded to the clerk of the Supreme Court by the clerk of the certifying court under its official seal. The Supreme Court may require the original or copies of all or any portion of the record before the certifying court

to be filed if, in the opinion of the Supreme Court, the record or portion thereof may be necessary in answering the questions.

(e) Costs of Certification. Fees and costs shall be the same as in civil appeals docketed before the Supreme Court and shall be equally divided between the parties unless otherwise ordered by the certifying court in its certification order.

(f) Briefs and Argument. Proceedings in the Supreme Court shall be those provided in these rules.

(g) Opinion. The written opinion of the Supreme Court stating the law governing the questions certified shall be sent by the clerk under the seal of the Supreme Court to the certifying court and to the parties.

(h) Power to Certify; Procedure. The Supreme Court or the Court of Appeals, on their own motion or the motion of any party, may order certification of questions of law to the highest court of any other state when it appears to the Supreme Court or the Court of Appeals that there are involved in any proceeding before the court questions of law of the receiving state which may be determinative of the cause then pending and that there are no controlling precedents in the decisions of the highest court of the receiving state. The procedures for certification from this state to the receiving state shall be those provided in the laws of the receiving state.

Associated Court Rules:

Rules of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals of the State of Arkansas

Group Title:

Article VI. Special Proceedings

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