APPENDIX M – Consolidation

A judge may order two or more cases to be handled as one case. This is referred to as consolidation. This may happen when the cases involve similar questions of fact or law and usually include one or more of the same parties. Cases are either consolidated for all purposes or for limited purposes, such as trial or pretrial hearings. If the order is not clear, ask the judge. Also see Administrative Bulletin Number 48.

I. Consolidation for All Purposes

A. File stamp order granting consolidation. See Appendix E, File Stamp Procedures.

B. Make copies of the order for each case number listed on the order.

C. On each file write "Consolidated with Case Number(s) _____". Include all case numbers listed in the consolidation order.

D. Unless otherwise ordered by the court, the original order of consolidation must be filed in the case with the lowest case number, known as the controlling case. Administrative Bulletin 48, Standard 7.

E. Place the original consolidation order in the controlling case. All documents filed after the date of consolidation are placed in the controlling case. Copies of the documents need not be placed in the other files.

F. Complete a Stop Card (TF-320) for all remaining case files:

1. Enter case number.

2. Check box number two indicating consolidation and note the controlling file case number on the line provided.

3. Tie in each file.

G. Close out nonworking files in computer using "other" code.

H. Store files in sequential order. See local practice.

II. Consolidation for Limited Purposes

A. File stamp order granting consolidation. See Appendix E, File Stamp Procedures.

B. Make copies of the order for each case number listed on the order and tie in each case file.

C. On each file, write "Consolidated with Case Number(s) _____ for (purpose). Include all the case numbers listed in the consolidation order.

D. Continue to file documents in individual case files unless multiple case numbers are listed on the document. Attorneys should provide additional copies for each case file listed.

E. Cases may continue to be stored sequentially or may be stored together. If stored together, the out-card replacing a missing file must indicate where the file is located. See local practice.