A SUMMARY OF:

THE SUPREME COURT (MANDATORY UPLOAD OF ELECTRONIC COPIES OF PROCESSES, RECORD OF APPEAL, AND OTHER MATTERS) PRACTICE DIRECTIONS, 2026

Marginal Note	Summary of Provisions	Commentary
Commencement	The Practice Direction (PD) formally came into force on July 1st 2026	All filings of appeals to the Supreme court from this date forward must comply.
1. Purpose	The PD aims to ensure timeliness in justice delivery, improve case management, and simplify access to court records.	Focus on administrative efficiency and digital transformation.
2. Scope	Applies to all appeals to the Supreme Court currently pending or initiated after the commencement date.	Lawyers must digitize records for pending cases.
3. Legal Mail	The Nigeria Case Management System (NCMS) is accessible only via the legal e-mail system issued by the Court.	Requires active and valid judiciary-issued email credentials verified by membership credentials in the NBA portal.
4. Mandatory Submission	Parties must submit electronic copies of records and processes. For pending matters, this includes processes filed by them or served on them.	Covers all filings by both parties.
5. Responsibility	Where a party is represented by counsel, the counsel is personally responsible for making the submissions.	
6. File Requirement	Documents must be in OCR-enabled[1] PDF and include a **hyperlinked** table of contents at the beginning.	Standard scans are insufficient; files must be technologically "smart" for navigation.
7. Naming Convention	Strict adherence to the naming format in the First Schedule is mandatory.	The row on "First Schedule" below contains more on this. Incorrect naming may lead to filing errors or rejection.

[1] Optical Character Recognition. This simply means that the text in the PDF must be searchable by a computer. In other words, lawyers should not scan a paper document as image.

8. Mode of Submission	Use the designated portal at https://efiling.courts.gov.ng	Relies on the reliability of the Court's e-filing portal.
9. Declaration	A solemn declaration on oath must be made on the portal affirming the electronic version matches the court-filed hard copy.	Falsely affirming completeness could expose one to perjury and professional misconduct.
10. Deadline	Deadline for submitting electronic copies of documents in pending matters shall not be later than 30 days before hearing. The hard copies of electronically filed documents shall be submitted to the registry within 7 days or 48 hours before hearing (whichever is earlier).	The electronic deadline is significantly earlier than the physical one. Retaining hard copies provides a necessary contingency against potential digital portal downtime. The Supreme Court's cautious approach prioritizes continuity, ensuring that technical instability does not disrupt judicial proceedings while the electronic infrastructure is still maturing.
11. Non-Compliance	No appeal will be scheduled for hearing until all electronic processes are submitted.	It bars progress for non-compliant parties. Although, a mischievous party might be tempted to use this to delay the progress of an appeal, but other provisions including the existence of high daily default fees can make one have a rethink.
12. Direct Compilation	Allows Appellants to compile/transmit records if the lower court Registrar fails to do so. Must be done within 30 days after the Registrar's time expires.	Gives Appellants a mechanism to bypass administrative delays at lower courts.
13. Electronic Record	Appellant uploads the compiled record to NCMS. The generated Appeal Number must be inscribed on all physical copies.	Links the digital file to the physical paper trail. Requiring the electronic appeal number on all physical copies serves as a mandatory cross-referencing link. This creates a clear, traceable connection between physical and digital records, facilitating efficient document management and simplified audit trails.
14. Transmission Date	The legal date of transmission is the day the electronic copy is uploaded and an Appeal Number is generated.	This is very important in deciding when an appeal has been entered: *Regd. Trustees, Mission House v A.S.T.B Plc* (2024) 10 NWLR (Pt. 1947) 565.
15. Transmission Fees	₦500,000.00 for uploading the Record; ₦250,000.00 for uploading additional records.	This is in addition of such amount as the Registrar of the lower court may assess for compilation and transmission.
16. Security for Costs and Due Prosecution	Registrar assesses security based on case complexity and due prosecution of the appeal and any unpaid costs from lower courts.	This assessment is subjective.
17. Indigent Parties	Parties granted leave to proceed as Indigent are exempt from the fees in 15 and 16 above.	Aimed at improving access to justice.
18. Default Fees	Applies fees from the Second Schedule in addition to existing Supreme Court Rule fees.	Generally cumulative penalties for delay.

19. Formatting	Margins: 2.54cm. Size: A4 Font: Arial, Times New Roman, Tahoma (14pt) Spacing: 1.5 lines	Non-conforming documents will not be accepted or deemed "properly filed".
First Schedule	Format: Appeal Number-Description-Party-Ref Number. Eg: SC/CV/2649/2026 shall be written as SC_CV_2649_2026 Forward slashes ("/") must be replaced with underscores (" ")	Computer system often reject slashes; underscores are required for system compatibility.
Second Schedule	Sets default fee at ₦10,000.00 per additional day of failure to file.	Has the tendency to reduce delays.
General Comments	The Judicial Information Technology Policy of the Nigerian Judiciary (JITPO)	While the Practice Directions do not explicitly cite JITPO, the former is the operational realization of the latter. From the use of official emails to the adoption of OCR-enabled PDFs, the Practice Directions implement key JITPO recommendations. JITPO functions as the foundational policy framework that enabled these procedural advancements.