

THE NARRATIVE BRIEF CHECKLIST

Before you file, confirm your brief has a story, not just an argument.

THE FOUNDATION

- There is a clear protagonist: a person with something at stake, not just a party name
- The stakes are human, not just legal
- The conflict is clear enough that a non-lawyer could understand it
- The relief requested feels like the natural end of the story

THE OPENING

- The first paragraph tells a story, not a procedure
- The stakes are established before the arguments are
- The reader feels something by the end of page one

THE FACTS

- Facts are sequenced to build momentum, not just inform
- Every fact does narrative work — nothing is included without purpose
- Damaging facts appear on your terms, framed your way
- The facts section ends at a moment that makes argument feel inevitable

THE ARGUMENT

- Read only the headings top to bottom - they tell a coherent story alone
- Each argument section opens with a human anchor, not a legal standard
- The law supports the narrative - it does not replace it

THE CONCLUSION

- The conclusion echoes the human stakes from page one
- The ask is stated plainly, without hedging
- The last sentence is written with intention

THE FINAL READ

- Read only the first sentence of every paragraph - they tell a story on their own
- A smart non-lawyer would understand what happened and why it was wrong
- You can answer clearly: *what does the judge feel at the end of this brief?*

Under 15 checked: The brief may be legally sound and still lose. Consider a StoryBar consultation before filing.

Every case is different. The goal is not to check every box – it is to make every choice intentionally.