

United States District Court  
Southern District of New York

Addendum to Electronic Case Filing Rules & Instructions  
Temporary Acceptance of Pro Se Filings by Email

April 1, 2020

Temporary Acceptance of Pro Se Filings by Email

**Background**

In response to the coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic, the President of the United States has declared a national emergency and the Governor of New York has banned mass gatherings and ordered other restrictive measures throughout the state.

In order to protect the health of the public and staff while continuing court operations, effective April 1, 2020, and until further order of the Court, the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York has announced the temporary acceptance of filings via email from pro se parties without electronic filing privileges (see details below).

Pro se parties who do not have electronic filing privileges or who are unable to send documents by email may continue to submit documents by regular mail or through the depository box located in the lobby of the U.S. Courthouse at 500 Pearl Street, New York, NY, or the U.S. Courthouse at 300 Quarropas Street, White Plains, NY.

Questions may be directed to the Pro Se intake Unit at (212) 805-0175.

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ECF Rules - Section 1. Scope of Electronic Filing

**1.1** *(IMPORTANT NOTE - due to the coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to accepting pro se filings in paper form, the court has announced the temporary acceptance of filings via email from pro se parties without electronic filing privileges. See the April 1, 2020, Addendum to these Rules for further instructions.)*

Except as expressly provided and in exceptional circumstances preventing a party from filing electronically, all documents required to be filed with the Court must be filed electronically. Any party unable to comply with this requirement must seek permission of the Court to file in the traditional manner, on paper. Any such application made after regular business hours may be submitted through the night depository box maintained pursuant to [Local Civil Rule 1.2](#).

Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, documents filed by *pro se* litigants must be filed in the traditional manner, on paper, and will be scanned and docketed by the Clerk's Office into the ECF system.

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Instructions

**Procedures for Emailing Pro Se Documents for Filing**

- Documents submitted electronically must be in PDF format, no larger than 10 megabytes;
- Documents to be filed may be emailed to [Temporary\\_Pro\\_Se\\_Filing@nysd.uscourts.gov](mailto:Temporary_Pro_Se_Filing@nysd.uscourts.gov);
- Documents to be filed must be attached to the email;
- Documents must be signed by the filing party by either
  - (a) signing by hand and then scanning the document;
  - (b) signing electronically using a digital signature; or
  - (c) by typing: "s/Filer's Name;"
- The email and attached documents must contain the filer's name, address, and telephone number;
- For new cases, the subject line of the email must read "PRO SE FILING – NEW CASE;"
- For existing cases, the subject line of the email must read "PRO SE FILING – [case number];"
- A document submitted for filing by email does not have to be delivered to the court in hard copy form.

**Limitations**

- Pro Se filings emailed to any email address other than [Temporary\\_Pro\\_Se\\_Filing@nysd.uscourts.gov](mailto:Temporary_Pro_Se_Filing@nysd.uscourts.gov) will be disregarded;

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- This email address is solely for submitting attached PDF documents for filing;
- Any additional comments, questions, or other messages in the email will be disregarded;
- Any additional correspondence included in the email will be disregarded.

**Payment for New Cases**

- For new cases for which the filing fee is to be paid, payment must be sent separately by mail, within 14 days of filing, addressed to:

Cashiers-Room 120, 500 Pearl Street, New York, NY 10007

- Personal checks will not be accepted. Payment must be by money order or certified check, must include the case number and must be made payable to:

Clerk, USDC, SDNY

- A pro se party seeking to waive the filing fee for a new case must include an [Application to Proceed Without Prepaying Fees or Costs \(IFP Application\) form](#) (attached);
- 14 days after the mailing or emailing of any newly filed case, pro se filers should call the Pro Se Intake Unit at 212-805-0175, to learn the case number and the name of the assigned judge.

**Sign-Up for Email Notifications**

Pro Se parties without electronic filing privileges but with an email address are strongly encouraged to consent to receive electronic service of filings through notifications sent by email from the court's Electronic Case Filing (ECF) system. Electronic service is faster than service by mail and is the same system used by attorneys.

Pro se litigants who wish to consent to receive electronic service must fill out the [Consent to Electronic Service \(for pro se cases\) form](#) (attached). You may disregard the instruction at the bottom of the form to return the form by mail and instead return the signed consent form by email, in PDF format, to:

[Temporary\\_Pro\\_Se\\_Filing@nysd.uscourts.gov](mailto:Temporary_Pro_Se_Filing@nysd.uscourts.gov)

Pro se litigants who consent to receive electronic service of filings will no longer receive the same documents in paper form by mail.

If you consent to receiving electronic service, you will receive a Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) by e-mail each time a document is filed in your case. After receiving the NEF, you are permitted one "free look" at the document by clicking on the hyperlinked document number in the e-mail. Once you click the hyperlink and access the document, you may not be able to access the document for free again. After 15 days, the hyperlink will no longer provide free access. Any time the hyperlink is accessed after the first "free look", or the first 15 days, you may be charged to view the document. For this reason, you should print or save the document during the "free look" to avoid future charges.

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