

SPECIAL RULES & PRACTICES IN CIVIL PRO SE CASES
THE HONORABLE LORNA SCHOFIELD, UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

Pro Se Intake Unit

United States District Court
Southern District of New York
500 Pearl Street, Room 200
New York, New York 10007
(212) 805-0175

1. Electronic Case Filing for Nonincarcerated Parties

- A. ECF Filing by Pro Se Parties.** Any nonincarcerated pro se party who wishes to participate in electronic case filing (“ECF”) should complete a Motion for Permission for Electronic Case Filing, available in the Pro Se Intake Unit or at <https://nysd.uscourts.gov/forms>. The form should be mailed to the Pro Se Intake Unit, 500 Pearl Street, Room 200, New York, NY, 10007.
- B. Consent to Electronic Service by Pro Se Parties.** Any nonincarcerated pro se party who wishes to receive documents in their case electronically (by e-mail) instead of by regular mail may consent to electronic service by filing a Pro Se (Nonprisoner) Consent & Registration Form to Receive Documents Electronically, available in the Pro Se Intake Unit or at <https://nysd.uscourts.gov/forms>.

2. Communications

- A. By a Pro Se Party.** All communications with the Court by a pro se party that are not filed on ECF must be in writing and sent to the Pro Se Intake Unit at 500 Pearl Street, Room 200, New York, NY, 10007 or through the drop box located in the lobby of the U.S. Courthouse at 500 Pearl Street, New York, NY. Documents or Court filings should not be sent directly to Chambers or Judge Schofield. No telephone calls will be accepted by Chambers.
- B. By Parties Represented by Counsel.** Communications with the Court by a represented party shall be governed by Judge Schofield’s Individual Rules and Practices in Civil Cases, available at <https://nysd.uscourts.gov/hon-lorna-g-schofield>. Except for cases in which the pro se party has received permission to participate in ECF, such communications must include a separate proof of service indicating that the pro se party was served with a copy of the communication.
- C. Conferences and Proceedings.** All routine conferences, proceedings and oral arguments in civil cases may be held either in person at the address provided in the Court’s scheduling order, or telephonically at the number provided in the Court’s scheduling order.
- D. Requests for Adjournments or Extensions of Time.** All requests for adjournments or extensions of time must be made in writing and must state: (1) the original date(s); (2) the number of previous requests for adjournment or extension; (3) whether these previous

requests were granted or denied; and (4) whether the adversary consents and, if not, the reasons given by the adversary for refusing to consent. Requests for extensions of deadlines regarding a matter that has been referred to a Magistrate Judge shall be directed to that assigned Magistrate Judge. Absent an emergency, any request for adjournment of a court conference shall be made at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled appearance. Requests for extensions ordinarily will be denied if made after the expiration of the original deadline.

3. Filing of Papers

- A. **By a Pro Se Party.** If the pro se party is not participating in ECF, all papers to be filed with the Court by a pro se party must be sent to the Pro Se Intake Unit, United States Courthouse, 500 Pearl Street, Room 200, New York, New York 10007. The Court will accept filings via email from pro se parties without ECF privileges. Filings submitted by email must be sent to Pro_Se_Filing@nysd.uscourts.gov, and done so in accordance with the procedures found in Section 1.1 of the ECF Rules and Instructions located at <https://www.nysd.uscourts.gov/rules/ecf-related-instructions>.
- B. **By Parties Represented by Counsel.** Except for cases in which the pro se party has received permission to participate in ECF or has consented to electronic service, counsel in pro se cases must serve a pro se party with a paper copy of any document that is filed electronically and include a proof of service indicating that the pro se party was served with a copy of the filed document. Submissions filed without proof that the pro se party was served will not be considered.

4. Discovery

- A. **Discovery Requests.** All requests for discovery must be sent to counsel for the opposing party. Discovery requests must not be sent to the Court.
- B. **Discovery Disputes.** The parties shall confer amongst themselves with respect to discovery demands prior to raising any issue with the Court. Parties should not contact the Court regarding discovery disputes unless they have first attempted to resolve the issue with the opposing party without the assistance of the Court.

5. Motions

- A. **Filing and Service.** Before filing a motion to dismiss, a party must file a letter stating the basis for the motion and a proposed briefing schedule. The letter shall be no longer than 750 words, single-spaced. No response is required. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, papers filed in opposition to a motion must be served and filed within four weeks of service of the motion papers, and reply papers, if any, must be served and filed within two weeks of receipt of opposition papers.
- B. **Pro Se Notices.** Parties who file a motion to dismiss, a motion for judgment on the pleadings or a motion for summary judgment must provide the pro se party with a copy of the notices required under Local Civil Rules 12.1 or 56.2.

C. Memoranda of Law. All written motions shall be accompanied by a memorandum of law. Unless prior permission has been granted, memoranda of law in support of and in opposition to motions are limited to 8,750 words, and reply memoranda are limited to 3,500 words. If handwritten or prepared with a typewriter, memoranda in support of or in opposition to motions may not exceed 25 pages, and reply memoranda may not exceed 10 pages. These limits do not apply to memoranda in support of or in opposition to a motion for reargument or reconsideration, which are limited to 3,500 words, and reply memoranda are limited to 1,750 words. If a memorandum is handwritten or prepared with a typewriter, it may not exceed 10 pages for memoranda in support of or opposition to reconsideration or reargument, and 5 pages for reply memoranda. Those limits also do not apply to memoranda in support of or opposition to *in limine* motions, which shall not exceed 2,500 words if prepared on a computer, or five pages if prepared with a typewriter or handwritten. Any words or pages in excess of the applicable limit will be disregarded. Those limits do not include the caption, any index, table of contents, table of authorities, signature blocks, or any required certifications, but do include material contained in footnotes or endnotes. If any memorandum of law is filed with a computer, the party shall also file a certificate of compliance as required by Local Civil Rule 7.1(c).

6. Initial Case Management Conference. The Court will generally schedule an initial case management conference within three months of the filing of the Complaint. An incarcerated party may not be able to attend this or other conferences, but may be able to participate by telephone or video conference.

7. Trial Documents

A. Joint Pretrial Statement. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, within 30 days of the completion of discovery, the parties shall file a concise, written Joint Pretrial Statement. This Statement need take no particular form, but it must contain the following: (1) a statement of the facts that each party hopes to prove at trial; (2) a list of all documents or other physical objects that each party plans to put into evidence at trial; and (3) a list of the names and addresses of all witnesses that each party intends to have testify at trial. The Statement must be sworn by the parties to be true and accurate based on the facts known by the parties. If any party is represented, that party shall file the Joint Pretrial Statement. If no party is represented, the parties shall jointly file an original of this Statement with the Pro Se Intake Unit.

B. Other Pretrial Filings. At the time of filing the Pretrial Statement, any parties represented by counsel must also submit proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law, if the case is to be tried before only a judge without a jury, or a proposed jury charge, if it will be tried before a jury. The pro se party may also file either proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law or a proposed jury charge, but is not required to do so. In all jury cases, the parties also shall file joint proposed case specific voir dire (i.e., jury selection) questions and a one or two paragraph statement describing the case that will be read to the prospective jurors and the beginning of voir dire. The parties need not file generalized jury instructions or voir dire instructions.

8. Pro Se Legal Assistance Clinic

The City Bar Justice Center provides limited-scope legal assistance through the Southern District of New York's Pro Se Legal Assistance Clinic. Assistance can be requested through the Center's online application located at <https://www.citybarjusticecenter.org/projects/federal-pro-se-legal-assistance-project/>. If you are not able to complete the form or have questions regarding the form, please contact the Clinic at (212) 382-4794.

If you have any questions about these rules and practices, please contact the Pro Se Intake Unit at (212) 805-0175.

Revised 1/22/2025.