IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN DISTRICTS OF ILLINOIS

IN RE: PROCEDURAL RULES FOR ELECTRONIC FILING PROGRAM	)))))	**GENERAL ORDER: No.** 15-05

This General Order modifies and supersedes General Order No. 2014-1, which was entered on January 16, 2014.

The United States District Courts for the Central and Southern Districts of Illinois and the Illinois Department of Corrections have agreed to participate in an electronic filing program at certain correctional facilities in the State of Illinois. The electronic filing program is designed to reduce the cost of processing court filings made by prisoners in civil rights and habeas corpus cases brought under 42 U.S.C. §1983, 28 U.S.C. §§ 2241, 2254, or 2255, and any other type of case filed in these federal courts. This program will significantly reduce the expenditures for paper, envelopes, copier supplies, and postage for the correctional facilities and the prisoners. Furthermore, it will substantially reduce the amount of staff time spent processing prisoner filings for both the correctional facilities and the district courts.

The details of this program are as follows:

1. Library staff at the participating correctional facilities will scan prisoner filings into a pre-programmed digital sender which converts the filing to .pdf format and e-mails the document directly to the appropriate court. Each divisional office in the Central District of Illinois and the Southern District of Illinois will have a dedicated e-mail address for such filings.

2. Once the document has been scanned and sent to the Court, library staff will return the original document to the prisoner. The prisoner shall keep the original document and produce it at a later time, if ordered to do so by the Court. When dealing with a lengthy document or a document of unusual size or format, library staff may elect to make a copy of the document and send the copy to the appropriate court after returning the original to the prisoner.

3. After receiving the prisoner's document via e-mail from the correctional facility, the document will be filed by court staff into the Case Management Electronic Case Filing (CM/ECF). For any document filed by court staff on behalf of the prisoner (other than a complaint, which requires service of process), the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) generated by the CM/ECF system will constitute official service upon and notice to the other parties in the case, if counsel for the other parties are registered for electronic case filing. If a party to the case is not registered, the Clerk of Court will mail a copy of the prisoner's electronically filed document to each non-registered party on behalf of the prisoner, via the United States Postal Service.

4. Each participating correctional facility will establish an e-mail address by which library staff will receive the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) which issues when a document has been filed electronically. An NEF contains a hyperlink for a free download of the e-filed document. Library staff will print *every* NEF and provide a copy to the prisoner via the institutional mail.

In addition, library staff will print the *entire* document when an NEF is received for any document filed by the Court on its own (orders, notices, minutes, etc.) and will print a copy of the first page of any document that a prisoner has filed (which will demonstrate that the document has been electronically filed and confirm the number of pages filed with the Court). These materials also will be provided to the prisoner via the institutional mail.

5. Defendants and any other non-prisoner party shall mail to the prisoner, via the United States Postal Service, a copy of any document filed on their behalf. Although library staff will print the NEF for documents filed by Defendants and any other non-prisoner party as set forth above, it is not the responsibility of library staff to print a document filed electronically by another party to the case. Any such document will be received by the prisoner via the United States Postal Service.

6. When the prisoner receives a copy of the NEF for a document that was electronically filed on his behalf, he shall verify that the correct number of pages were filed. If there is a problem with the scanned document, the prisoner shall re-submit the original to library staff, who will contact the appropriate court to report the discrepancy. If it is later determined by the Court that a portion of a pleading is missing or illegible, the Court will enter an Order directing the prisoner to mail the original document to the Court or to re-submit the document to library staff for electronic submission.

7. After a merit review hearing or preliminary review of the case has been conducted by the Court, the Clerk of Court will produce the necessary copies of the complaint to accomplish service of process upon the defendants as directed by the Court.

8. Library staff shall verify that any document printed for the prisoner is legible and immediately notify the appropriate court of any printing issues or other technical difficulties.

9. One of the district courts will provide and deliver a digital sender to each correctional facility participating in the Electronic Filing Program. The equipment will at all times remain property of the United States District Court which supplied the digital sender (and bear a property tag reflecting the ownership), and the Department of Corrections will execute an appropriate property receipt provided by the district court. The Department of Corrections will provide a printer and paper necessary to fulfill the requirements of this General Order at each participating correctional facility.

The effective date of this General Order is November 5, 2015.

James E. Shadid

JAMES E. SHADID
Chief Judge, United States District Court
Central District of Illinois

Michael J. Reagan

MICHAEL J. REAGAN
Chief Judge, United States District Court
Southern District of Illinois