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SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

IN THE MATTER OF THE PRISON
ELECTRONIC FILING PILOT
PROJECT

GENERAL ORDER NO. 15- 35-1

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Washington (the Court), the Washington Department of Corrections (WDOC), and the Washington Office of the Attorney General (WOAG) have agreed to participate in a one-year electronic filing pilot project (E-Filing Pilot Project), commencing June 1, 2015. The E-Filing Pilot Project is expected to increase efficiencies in pro se prisoner filings and save costs to prisoner litigants, the WDOC, and the Court by reducing expenses for paper, envelopes, copying, postage, and staff time. This General Order sets forth the rules for managing the E-Filing Pilot Project.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. The E-Filing Pilot Project includes all prisoner civil rights and habeas corpus cases brought under 42 U.S.C. §1983, 28 U.S.C. §§ 2241, 2254, or 2255.
2. Participation in the E-Filing Pilot Project is **mandatory** for all prisoner litigants incarcerated at the Washington State Penitentiary (WSP) and Stafford Creek Corrections Center (SCCC).

1 3. All filings submitted by prisoner litigants to the Court
2 (correspondence, pleadings, motions, and briefs) (hereinafter “court filings”) **must**
3 **be electronically submitted to the Eastern District of Washington.** If a prisoner
4 litigant is later transferred to another facility not included in the E-Filing Pilot
5 Project, he shall resume submitting all court filings by mail.

6 4. Correspondence and requests for discovery between a prisoner litigant
7 and the defendant or respondent shall **not** be electronically submitted but will
8 continue to be exchanged by mail.

9 5. Original service of a complaint or petition may **not** be electronically
10 submitted. Prisoner litigants who have paid the Court’s filing fee must effect
11 service according to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Original service of a
12 complaint or petition on behalf of prisoner litigants proceeding in forma pauperis
13 will be as directed by the Court.

14 6. Electronic court filings will be processed as follows:

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16 **a. Prisoner Litigant Submission of Court Filing:** The prisoner
17 litigant will provide WDOC staff with the original court filing. The court
18 filing must comply with the requirements set forth in the “Electronic Filing
19 Requirements for U.S. District Court,” a copy of which shall be posted or
20 distributed with this Order consistent with WDOC practices. WDOC staff
21 will scan the court filing on a digital scanner and will email the resulting
22 Portable Document Format (PDF) document file to the Court at an email
23 address designated by the Court. After the original court filing has been
24 scanned and sent to the Court, WDOC staff will return the original to the
25 prisoner. The prisoner litigant is expected to keep the original court filing
26 and produce it at a later time, if ordered to do so by the Court.
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1 **b. Docketing:** After the Court receives the court filing by e-mail,
2 it will perform a quality review and will docket the court filing
3 electronically.

4 **c. Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF):** When a court filing is
5 docketed, a Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) is issued. The NEF confirms
6 the date of docketing and contains an electronic link to the court filing. The
7 NEF will be transmitted to an e-mail address established by the Court and
8 WDOC at WSP or SCCC. WDOC staff will print and provide copies of the
9 NEF and the court filing to the prisoner litigant through the institution's
10 existing mail system.

11 **d. Defendant/Respondent Submission of Court Filing:** After a
12 defendant or respondent has electronically submitted a court filing, WDOC
13 staff will print the NEF and the court filing and provide a copy of both to the
14 prisoner litigant through the institution's existing mail system.

15 **e. Other Registered User Defendants:** In cases involving
16 defendants who are not state officials (i.e., local, city, or county officials)
17 who are registered users of the Court's electronic filing system, the Court
18 will order those defendants to accept service of a prisoner litigant's court
19 filings electronically and will notify those defendants that service by mail of
20 their court filings to the prisoner litigant is no longer required.

21 **f. Court Orders:** When the Court issues an order (or other
22 communication) directed to the parties, the WDOC staff will print and
23 provide the prisoner litigant with copies of the NEF and the Court-issued
24 order (or other communication) via the institution's existing mail system.
25 Receipt by the prisoner litigant of the NEF with the Court order (or other
26 communication) constitutes service on the prisoner litigant.
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