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FILED  
CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT  
February 28, 2018  
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA  
BY: *Natalie Arroyo* DEPUTY

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF  
PILOT PROJECT FOR THE  
SUBMISSION OF CERTAIN  
PRISONER FILINGS  
THROUGH ELECTRONIC MAIL

} GENERAL ORDER NO. 18-02  
(Supersedes General Order No. 17-04)

The United States District Court for the Central District of California (“Court”) and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (“CDCR”) having agreed, in order to reduce the costs and delays involved in processing court filings in civil rights cases brought by incarcerated plaintiffs pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983, to establish a pilot project to require the submission of certain documents in such cases by prisoners through electronic mail, rather than through the U.S. Mail (“Pilot Project”), the Court hereby adopts this General Order to govern the submission of documents under the Pilot Project.

**I. Definitions**

**A. Participating Facilities**

The California State Prison, Los Angeles County, the California Men’s Colony, the California Institution for Men, the California Institution for Women, the California Rehabilitation Center, the Chuckawalla Valley State Prison, and the

1 Ironwood State Prison are hereby designated as “Participating Facilities.” Only  
2 facilities specifically designated as Participating Facilities in this General Order may  
3 participate in the Pilot Project.

4 **B. Pilot Project Document**

5 To be considered a “Pilot Project Document,” a document must meet all of the  
6 following criteria:

- 7 (1) it must be submitted for filing by a prisoner incarcerated at a  
8 Participating Facility at the time of filing, who is a plaintiff in the case in  
9 which the document is to be filed but is not represented by a lawyer in  
10 that case; and  
11 (2) it must be submitted for filing in a case filed in the Central District of  
12 California on or after January 1, 2018, in which the plaintiff is asserting  
13 claims pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (“1983 Case”).

14 **C. Excluded Documents**

15 Any document that fails to satisfy the criteria listed in Section I.B. shall be  
16 considered an “Excluded Document,” including, but not limited to:

- 17 (1) documents filed by prisoners at facilities not identified as Participating  
18 Facilities in this General Order;  
19 (2) documents intended for filing in any court other than the Central District  
20 of California; and  
21 (3) documents submitted by prisoners for filing in cases in which the  
22 prisoner is not a plaintiff asserting claims pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983.

23 **II. Scope of Pilot Project**

24 All Pilot Project Documents submitted to the Court for filing must be submitted  
25 pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section III of this General Order. All  
26 Excluded Documents submitted to the Court for filing must be submitted by U.S.  
27 Mail. All documents submitted for filing, including both Pilot Project Documents  
28

1 and Excluded Documents, must comply with all federal and local rules.

2 **III. Procedures for Submission of Pilot Project Documents**

3 1. Every Participating Facility shall keep equipment and staff necessary to  
4 scan all Pilot Project Documents prepared by prisoners in paper form, and to transmit  
5 those Pilot Project Documents to the Court by e-mail. Every Participating Facility  
6 must also create and maintain a dedicated e-mail address to submit Pilot Project  
7 Documents to the Court and to receive Notices of Electronic Filing (“NEFs”)  
8 indicating that those documents have been filed by the Court.

9 2. Pilot Project Documents must be submitted to the Court in PDF format  
10 by e-mail. Pilot Project Documents submitted to the Court by any other method, such  
11 as through the U.S. Mail, may be rejected by the Court and returned to the prisoner,  
12 unless covered by one of the following exceptions:

13 (a) the Pilot Project Document is submitted during a period in which  
14 the scanning equipment was inoperable for a period longer than  
15 forty-eight (48) hours, and the Court has been notified by CDCR  
16 of this equipment failure; or

17 (b) the Pilot Project Document is submitted with a motion for leave to  
18 file documents by U.S. Mail that is supported by good cause.

19 3. Prisoners at a Participating Facility will present Pilot Project Documents  
20 to designated CDCR staff (“Scanning Staff”), who will log those documents upon  
21 receipt, and mark the date of receipt on the first page of each such document.  
22 Prisoners must comply with any procedures established by CDCR for the electronic  
23 submission of court filings, and will be subject to CDCR’s regulations providing for  
24 photocopy and other incidental charges. Subsequent documents intended for filing in  
25 an existing case must include the appropriate case number in the caption of each such  
26 document.



1           4.     If a prisoner presents a document to Scanning Staff for which a filing fee  
2 waiver is required, the prisoner shall be responsible for obtaining the certified trust  
3 account statement in compliance with the policies and procedures of the institution  
4 where the prisoner is located.

5           5.     Before scanning and e-mailing Pilot Project Documents to the Court,  
6 Scanning Staff will mark the front page of each such document to indicate the total  
7 number of pages to be scanned together for the same case and the initials of the  
8 person who will scan them. After the documents have been scanned and e-mailed to  
9 the Court, the original documents, except the certified trust account statement, will  
10 promptly be returned to the prisoner.

11          6.     Designated staff at the Court will retrieve the e-mailed Pilot Project  
12 Documents, conduct a readability and page count review, and then file them into the  
13 Court's Case Management/Electronic Case Filing ("CM/ECF") system.

14          7.     The Participating Facility's dedicated e-mail address will receive an NEF  
15 for any new case opened by the Court after the submission of Pilot Project  
16 Documents. The NEF confirms that the case has been received by the Court and  
17 assigned a case number, and provides a link to the case as it appears in the Court's  
18 CM/ECF System. An NEF will also be received for the filing of every subsequent  
19 document in an existing case.

20          8.     Scanning Staff at each Participating Facility will print the NEF received  
21 for every case or document submitted to the Court by e-mail, and distribute that NEF  
22 to the prisoner who filed the case for which the NEF was generated. Because the  
23 original documents will have been returned to the prisoner after they were scanned  
24 and emailed, the filed documents will not be printed for the prisoner, and neither the  
25 Court nor CDCR will be required to provide the prisoner with a conformed, file-  
26 stamped copy of any Pilot Project Document.

1 9. All court orders and other court-issued documents will be served on the  
2 prisoner through U.S. Mail. Except as provided above in paragraph 8, CDCR will not  
3 be required to print copies of any court-issued documents from the CM/ECF System  
4 for the prisoner.

5 **IV. Effective Date**

6 This General Order shall be effective on the date of filing by the Clerk.

7 **V. Duration of Pilot Project**

8 Either the Court or CDCR may terminate the Pilot Project, or participation of  
9 any individual Participating Facility in the Pilot Project, at any time, by written 30-  
10 day notice to the other party. The Court and CDCR will evaluate the Pilot Project on  
11 an annual basis to determine whether it should be continued, terminated, modified, or  
12 expanded.

13  
14 IT IS SO ORDERED.

15   
16 \_\_\_\_\_  
17 CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

18 *Date of Approval by the Court:* December 6, 2017

19  
20 *Date of Filing by the Clerk:* February 28, 2018