

Court Information Release



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

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Starting November 1, 2007, District Court to Accept Civil Complaints and Filing Fees On-Line

CHICAGO – November 1, 2007 will mark a new era of electronic filing in the District Court, when civil complaints can be filed through the Court’s electronic filing system and filing fees can be paid on-line.

Until now, initial complaints commencing a civil case had to be filed in paper form. Chief Judge James F. Holderman today implemented the changes by signing a revised version of the Court’s general order on electronic filing, noting: “The Court has taken another important step toward establishing a fully electronic system of filing and maintaining civil case records in the Northern District of Illinois.”

The current electronic filing system (CM/ECF) is in place throughout the entire federal judiciary in both the bankruptcy and district courts. Locally, the e-filing of documents filed after the initial complaint in civil cases has been mandatory in the District Court since October, 2005. There are currently more than 16,000 attorneys registered to e-file in the Court.

In addition to providing for the e-filing of civil complaints, the revised general order allows for other initiating documents that involve fees, such as bankruptcy appeals and notices of appeals, to be filed on-line. The order also reduces the burden on attorneys of filing separate certificates of service, where the party being served is an e-filer or is represented by an e-filer.

The payment of fees on-line by attorneys will be accomplished using a system called “pay.gov.” Already in use in a number of other district and bankruptcy courts across the country, “pay.gov” is a system in which the e-filer uses a charge card to pay filing fees. Should it be necessary for a filing fee to be refunded, the Court’s order authorizes the Clerk of Court to make such refunds.

A copy of the complete general order may be found in the “What’s New?” section of the Court’s web site. Training aids on the steps involved in e-filing initial civil complaints and paying fees on-line will be posted on the Court’s web site and incorporated in the e-filing training classes offered by the Court.