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CLERK U.S. DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
CLEVELAND

GENERAL ORDER NO. 99-55

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO**

ORDER DESIGNATING SELECTED
SOCIAL SECURITY CASES
FOR ELECTRONIC FILING

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ORDER NO. 99-55

The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio hereby orders that all new social security reviews filed in this district on or after November 1, 1999 by the attorneys listed below be entered into the electronic filing system and that all documents, notices and orders in those cases be filed and noticed electronically, rather than on paper, except as noted below. Electronic filing will be used in all new social security cases filed by the following attorneys:

Megan Bovee
Katherine Braun
David Friedes
Paula Goodwin
Robert Heller
William Higley
Edward Iove
Gregory Kordic
Kenneth Laritz
Michael Malyuk
Marcia Margolius

John McNally
Dianne Newman
Lester Potash
Kirk Roose
Jesus Salas
Debra Shifrin
Vernos Williams
Office of the U.S. Attorney (in all
social security matters filed by
attorneys listed herein)

How documents are to be filed

Complaints and accompanying documents. The complaint and other documents typically submitted at the time a social security case is initially filed in this Court will continue to be filed and served on paper in the traditional manner. Those documents will be scanned by the Clerk's Office and placed into the electronic filing system when the case is opened.

Social security transcripts. Social security transcripts will also be filed and served on paper in the traditional manner since scanning that set of documents, and filing or retrieving them electronically, is impractical at this time. Because transcripts will not be scanned or otherwise placed into the electronic filing system, it will be necessary for the filer to submit a one-page Notice of Manual Filing pursuant to the district's Electronic Filing Policies and Procedures Manual contemporaneously with the filing of those transcripts.

Other documents. All other documents in this litigation will be filed and served electronically unless excepted by the district's Electronic Filing Policy and Procedures Manual or an order of the Court.

E-Mail Notification

Among the primary benefits of electronic filing are the time and cost savings associated with electronic noticing. Attorneys involved in cases that are electronically filed can receive e-mail notice of all filings in those cases by activating their e-mail noticing feature. That feature provides the potential for substantial savings in copying, materials and delivery costs. **All attorneys involved in the electronic filing of social security cases are hereby required to accept electronic notice of documents filed electronically. It is incumbent upon those attorneys to see that their electronic filing accounts are properly set-up to receive those notices. The Court will not, and the other parties will not be required to, manually serve notice of documents that have been electronically filed, even if an attorney has not activated his or her electronic filing e-mail notification. All attorneys are required to check the electronic docket sheets for their cases on a regular basis to see if documents have been filed.**

Privacy Issues

To address the privacy issues raised by the Social Security Administration and some counsel in these cases, the Court will limit Internet access to the individual documents in these cases to counsel and court staff only. This step is being taken in recognition that social security case documents frequently contain social security numbers, medical records and other sensitive information that may need to be protected. While the Court plans to limit Internet access to the individual documents in these cases, it will continue to provide access to those documents upon request at its court houses, just as it has always done. The Court is sensitive to the fact that there is a vast difference between making the documents in all such cases available to anonymous individuals over the Internet versus providing access to specific case files to known individuals in our records rooms. Docket sheets, however, will still be available over the Internet to non-parties.

Conclusion

The Northern District of Ohio has permitted counsel to file documents over the Internet in selected civil cases since January, 1996. The system has proven to be easy and inexpensive to use and has demonstrated the potential to provide substantial savings in copying, material and delivery costs while improving service to the litigants and the Court.

Social security review cases frequently comprise more than 10% of this district's civil docket. All social security practitioners in this district have been on notice since June 1, 1999, that the Court would begin designating selected social security matters for electronic filing as soon as possible. A meeting of all social security practitioners was conducted at the Cleveland Court House on July 8 to further elaborate on the intentions of the Court, to provide a demonstration of the electronic filing system, and to seek attorney input. Forty-two social security practitioners from across the district attended. On August 18, the Court informed each of the attorneys listed above (who are among the highest volume social security filers) that their cases would be designated for electronic filing beginning November 1.

The Court has encouraged counsel to obtain the hardware and software necessary to file electronically (which is minimal and inexpensive) each step of the way. It has offered to provide attorneys and their staffs with training in the use of the electronic filing system through the Clerk's Office. In addition, it has taken steps to ensure that privacy concerns are adequately addressed.

Accordingly, absent a showing of good cause, the Court hereby orders that all social security cases filed on or after November 1, 1999 by the attorneys listed above be electronically filed.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

For the Court



Paul R. Matia

Chief Judge

United States District Court