

# Special Handling

Special handling is the expedited processing of an application for registration of a claim to copyright or for the recordation of a document pertaining to copyright. It is granted in certain circumstances to those who have compelling reasons for this service. It is subject to the approval of the chief of the Receipt Analysis and Control Division, who must consider the workload of the Copyright Office at the time the request is made.

## *Instances for Which Special Handling Is Granted*

Special handling is granted only in specific circumstances. These are:

- pending or prospective litigation
- customs matters, or
- contract or publishing deadlines that necessitate the expedited issuance of a certificate

Special handling is not available for requests to the Office to reconsider a refusal to register.

## *Processing Time for Special Handling Cases*

Once a request for special handling is received and approved, every attempt is made to process the claim or recordation within five working days. However, no guarantee is made that the work can be processed within this time. If correspondence is required, the Office makes every effort to process the claim expeditiously after the reply is received. Once a claim is processed, the Office either issues the certificate of registration or notifies the applicant of any defect in the claim. In the case of a document, the document is returned with a certificate of recordation. Special handling of a registration requires a special handling fee in addition to the registration fee. Likewise, special handling for recording a document(s) requires a special handling fee in addition to the fee for recording the document(s). The fee may be charged to a deposit account established in the Copyright Office or may be paid by check or money order. The fee may also be paid in cash or by credit card if it is paid in person at the Copyright Office. Filing fees remitted to the Copyright Office for special handling will not be refunded, whether or not the certificate of registration is ultimately issued. To cover administrative and processing costs, fees received in conjunction with requests for services may not be refunded even when the services cannot be provided.

## **Special Handling Fee**

A flat fee is required for a special handling request, plus a registration filing fee. If the request is for recording a document, an additional document recordation fee must be submitted. The fee may be charged to a deposit account established in the Copyright Office or may be paid by check or money order. The fee may

also be paid in cash, or credit card if it is paid in person at the Copyright Office. If a check is returned for insufficient funds, the registration or recordation will be cancelled. Please note that the electronic record of a registration or recordation may not be immediately available.

**About paying the fee:** Drafts (checks) must be redeemable without a service or exchange fee through a U.S. institution, must be payable in U.S. dollars, and must be imprinted with American Banking Association routing numbers. International money orders and foreign postal money orders that are negotiable only at a post office are not accepted. Deposit accounts must contain sufficient funds. If a replenishment check accompanies a claim, processing cannot begin until the money has been posted to the deposit account.

### **Conversion of Checks**

Checks and money orders presented in payment for Copyright Office services will be converted into an Electronic Funds Transfer (ETF). This means the Copyright Office will copy your check and use the account information on it to debit your account electronically for the amount of the check. The debit from your account will usually occur within 24 hours of processing and will be shown on your regular account statement.

You will not receive your original check back. The Office will destroy your original check but will keep the copy of it. If the EFT cannot be processed for technical reasons, the Office will reprocess a paper copy of your original check. If the EFT cannot be completed because of insufficient funds, your service request will not be processed.

**\*NOTE: Copyright Office fees are subject to change. For current fees, please check the Copyright Office website at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov), write the Copyright Office, or call (202) 707-3000.**

### **Multiple Claims with One Deposit**

Fees differ only with the following exception: if special handling is requested for only one of several claims submitted at the same time with a single deposit, which is an acceptable deposit for all the claims, the fee for processing the additional claims is the same as that charged for regular handling plus the filing fee for each claim. The claim for which special handling is requested is processed for the special handling fee plus the filing fee. This narrow exception applies only where a single set of deposit copies may appropriately be submitted to register multiple claims in accordance with the practices of the Copyright Office. The applicant is given the option of

submitting an additional set of copies for each application to avoid assessment of the special fee.

## **How to Request Special Handling**

Special handling may be requested in person or by mail. The Copyright Office has a form that applicants who come in to the Office are asked to fill out indicating the need for special handling. Applicants by mail must provide a letter stating why there is an urgent need for special handling. The urgent need must fall within one of the three previously mentioned categories. The request must also include a signed statement certifying that the information contained in the request is correct to the best of the requestor's knowledge.

The request form or letter must also be accompanied by:

- the appropriate application form for registration or the document that is to be recorded;
- the required deposit copies, phonorecords, or identifying material;
- the nonrefundable filing fee or recordation fee; and
- the special handling fee.

If a certified copy of the deposit is needed, include the request for certification, the certification fee, and the minimum copying fee at the time the request for special handling is made. This will facilitate the certification process and avoid payment of certain fees at a later date. The certified copy will be mailed under separate cover. See Circular 6, *Obtaining Access to and Copies of Copyright Records and Deposits*, for additional information on requesting a certified copy of a deposit.

All these items should be submitted together in one package. Special handling procedures may be applied to cases pending in the Copyright Office, provided the previously mentioned criteria are met.

Regardless of the length of time it takes to process any claim, the effective date of registration is the date the Office receives all the required elements in acceptable form.

### **In-Person Request**

To request special handling in person, a private party should come to the Public Information Office of the Copyright Office, Library of Congress, 101 Independence Avenue SE, Washington, DC, between the hours of 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM, eastern time, Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. *Do not use this address for special handling correspondence. Requests hand-delivered to the Public Information Office must be clearly labeled "Special Handling."*

### **Courier-Delivered Request**

Courier deliveries are made to the Congressional Courier Acceptance Site located at 2nd and D Streets NE, Washington, DC, Monday through Friday between 8:30 AM and 4:00 PM. Items left at the Congressional Courier Acceptance Site are generally delivered to the Copyright Office the next morning. It is important that packages left at the Congressional Courier Acceptance Site be no larger than 12 × 18 × 4". Larger packages will experience a significant delay.

### **Mail-in Request**

If you are mailing in a special handling request, *we strongly encourage you* to use the following address:

*Special Handling  
Copyright RAC Division  
PO Box 71380  
Washington, DC 20024-1380*

**NOTE:** This is a U.S. Postal Service mailbox. Delivery to this address should be by way of the U.S. Postal Service (registered or certified mail if tracking capability is desired), rather than by a private carrier.

Because this mail is delivered via the Congressional Courier Acceptance Site, items mailed to this address must not exceed 12 × 18 × 4" in size. Packages exceeding these dimensions should be sent to the regular Copyright Office address, although the Office strongly suggests they be delivered in person.

### **Requests for Claim Already in the Copyright Office**

The best way to request special handling for a claim that is already in the Copyright Office is to submit another application and deposit material identical to the ones originally submitted. In addition to the special handling request form, you must include a statement verifying that the application and deposit copies are identical to the original ones. This will allow the expedited request to go forward immediately.

If you are unable to submit a replacement application or deposit material, the Copyright Office will have to search to locate the originals. There is an additional charge for this service, which is in addition to the special handling fee, that is assessed hourly (or for part of an hour) with a minimum of two hours paid in advance. Give as much identifying information as possible about the pending claim, including:

- the date of the original submission
- how it was delivered to the Copyright Office (in person, by courier, or by mail)

- if sent by mail, indicate the date of the mailing and the type of mailing (registered, certified, first class, etc.)
- a full description of the deposit copies

Processing for claims already in the Office cannot begin until either a replacement is received or the material in the Office is located. Be sure to include all applicable fees and the special handling request form.

### **For Further Information**

#### **By Internet**

Circulars, announcements, regulations, other related materials, and all copyright application forms are available from the Copyright Office website at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

#### **By Telephone**

For general information about copyright, call the Copyright Public Information Office at (202) 707-3000. Staff members are on duty from 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., eastern time, Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. Recorded information is available 24 hours a day. Or, if you know which application forms and information circulars you want, you can request them 24 hours a day from the Forms and Publications Hotline at (202) 707-9100. Leave a recorded message.

#### **By Regular Mail**

Write to:

*Library of Congress  
Copyright Office-COPUBS  
Publications Section  
101 Independence Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20559-6304*

