

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA

IN THE MATTER OF:

PROCEDURES FOR SEALED FILINGS

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No. 1:26-mc-00001-JRS

GENERAL ORDER /
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY
2026-02

GENERAL ORDER

The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts has directed the district courts to implement new procedures for the storage and management of sealed documents. Sealed documents include any documents with the following access restrictions: Sealed, Applicable Party, Ex Parte, and Case Participants. **Effective immediately**, and until such time as the court orders otherwise, the United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana sets forth the following procedures for the filing, maintenance, and accessing of sealed documents.

- 1. Filing and Electronic Access to Sealed Documents.** Sealed documents will continue to be filed in CM/ECF under the Court's existing procedures (See Local Rule 5-11 and Local Criminal Rule 49.1-2) subject to the modifications set forth in this Order. After filing, these documents will only be accessible or viewable in CM/ECF by authorized court staff.
- 2. Service of Sealed Documents Filed in CM/ECF.** Since sealed documents filed in CM/ECF will no longer be accessible or viewable by anyone other than authorized court staff, service cannot be accomplished through CM/ECF. Instead, parties will serve sealed documents conventionally by other appropriate means as provided by the Federal Rules of Procedure:
 - i. Civil cases - by any manner specified in Rule 5(b)(2) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, except that service under section (b)(2)(E) (via the court's electronic filing system) is not permitted.

- ii. Criminal cases - by any manner specified in Rule 49 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, except that service under section (a)(3)(A) (via the court's electronic filing system) is not permitted.

Because service of sealed documents can no longer be accomplished through CM/ECF, parties must file certificates of service pursuant to Rule 5(d)(1)(B)(i) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and Rule 49(b)(1) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.

The Court will serve sealed orders, notices, and other Court-generated documents by U.S. Mail or secure electronic means to attorneys of record and via U.S. Mail to pro se litigants.

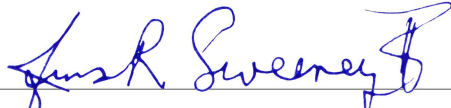
3. **File Stamped Copies.** When the sealed document is filed, the document, along with a copy of the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF), serves as the filing party's "file-stamped" copy of the document. The NEF contains all of the information that the CM/ECF "banner" on the document contains, including case number, document number, and date and time of filing. The NEF also includes the electronic file stamp.
4. **Additional Copies of Sealed Documents.** Since sealed documents filed in CM/ECF will no longer be accessible or viewable by anyone other than authorized court staff, a party with permission to access a sealed document in a case who requires a copy of a sealed document may contact the Clerk's Office to request a copy. Requests should be sent via the Sealed Documents Request Form available at https://tools.insd.uscourts.gov/sealed_request/ and include the full name of the individual requesting the document, their CM/ECF registered email address, the relevant case number and document number. After confirming that the party making the request has permission to access the document, the Clerk's Office will provide the document(s) by either secure electronic means or by U.S. Mail. Requests for copies of sealed documents will be subject to the current docket copy fee rate as set by the [District Court Fee Schedule](#). To avoid the costs and potential delays from seeking a copy from the Clerk's Office, parties should consider working together to re-serve sealed documents when appropriate.
5. **Highly Sensitive Documents (HSDs).** Sealed documents that are defined as HSDs will continue to be subject to the Court's HSD procedures. For more information on the filing of HSDs, see the Court's [General Order Re: Procedures for the Filing, Service, and Management of Highly Sensitive Documents](#).

This Order supersedes all previous general orders regarding sealed documents. To the extent this Order is inconsistent with provisions of any existing local rules, this Order supersedes those provisions as well.

SO ORDERED.

For the Court,

Date: 2/2/2026



JAMES R. SWEENEY II, CHIEF JUDGE
United States District Court
Southern District of Indiana