

Rule 9. Electronic Filing of Documents

(a) **Electronic Filing Required.** Unless exempt as provided in paragraph (c), all documents in civil cases shall be electronically filed with the clerk of court using an electronic filing system approved by the Supreme Court of Illinois.

(b) **Personal Identity Information.** If filing a document that contains Social Security numbers as provided in Rule 15 or personal identity information as defined in Rules 138 or 364, the filer shall adhere to the procedures outlined in Rules 15, 138, and 364.

(c) **Exemptions.** The following types of documents in civil cases are exempt from electronic filing:

- (1) Documents filed by a self-represented litigant incarcerated in a local jail or correctional facility at the time of the filing;
- (2) Wills;
- (3) Documents filed under the Juvenile Court Act of 1987; and
- (4) All documents filed in a specific case, upon good cause shown by certification. Good cause exists where a self-represented litigant is not able to e-file documents for the following reasons: no computer or Internet access in the home and travel represents a hardship; a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, that prevents e-filing; or a language barrier or low literacy (difficulty reading, writing or speaking in English). Good cause also exists if the pleading is of a sensitive nature, such as a petition for an order of protection or civil no contact/stalking order.

A Certification for Exemption from E-filing shall be filed with the court—in person or by mail—and include a certification under 1-109 of the Code of Civil Procedure. The court shall provide and parties shall be required to use a standardized form expressly titled "Certification for

Exemption from E-filing" adopted by the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Access to Justice.

Judges retain discretion to determine whether, under particular circumstances, good cause exists without the filing of a certificate and the court shall enter an order to that effect.

Judges retain discretion to determine whether good cause is shown. If the court determines that good cause is not shown, the court shall enter an order to that effect stating the specific reasons for the determination and ordering the litigant to e-file thereafter.

Committee Comments

(Date)

- a. The implementation of electronic filing in Illinois courts should not impede a person's access to justice.
- b. Where a party has filed a *Certification for Good Cause Exemption from the E-filing Requirement* or the court has granted a good cause exemption *sua sponte* that party may file documents in person or by mail unless ordered otherwise by the court.