

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

IN RE: :
: **STANDING ORDER**
ENSURING PUBLIC ACCESS TO :
COURT RECORDS DURING THE :
COVID-19 PANDEMIC :

In light of the ongoing coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak and in the interest of public health and safety, the Court has taken steps to restrict public access to the Clerk's Office locations in this district. These closures have temporarily eliminated the public's ability to visit courthouse Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) terminals for free access to court records. The online PACER system provides an alternative means of accessing electronic court records, but there are members of the public who are unable to pay the fees associated with the use of this system. The Administrative Office of the United States Courts has encouraged courts to make assistance available to those individuals who would typically need to access the court's public terminals in order to view court records and to consider providing a fee exemption to individuals who qualify according to the criteria in the Electronic Public Access Fee Schedule. While the public terminals remain unavailable, a fee exemption for those who would otherwise use the public terminals to view court records and are unable to pay to access those court records using PACER.gov is necessary to avoid unreasonable burdens and to promote public access to information. It is therefore ORDERED, effective immediately:

1. Individuals who need assistance with accessing court documents and are not able, or cannot afford, to use PACER.gov, should call (215) 597-7704 or email PAED_clerksoffice@paed.uscourts.gov for instructions about submitting an Application for Exemption from the Judicial Conference's Electronic Public Access Fees in the District of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (Application for Exemption) in order to obtain a fee exemption.

2. Upon receiving an individual's completed Application for Exemption, and in order to avoid unreasonable burdens and to promote public access to information, the Clerk's Office may waive the fee and electronically provide the records sought via email only, subject to the limitation set forth in Paragraph 6 below.
3. The user receiving the exemption must agree not to sell the data obtained as a result and must not transfer any data obtained as the result of the fee exemption, unless expressly authorized by the court.
4. Exemptions, if granted, are specific to each request. Each additional request will require a new Application for Exemption.
5. The court may deny future requests for fee exemptions. Abuse of the exemption process, failure to comply with the conditions of this Standing Order or the Application for Exemption, or making false statements in the Application for Exemption will result in requests being denied.
6. If a request or series of requests submitted by an individual who is unable to pay to use PACER.gov would result in greater than \$30.00 (thirty dollars) in PACER fees according to the Electronic Public Access Fee Schedule within a quarterly billing cycle, separate judicial approval will be required.
7. This Order will expire when the Clerk's Office reopens to the public and the public access terminals become available.

 /s/ Juan R. Sánchez
Juan R. Sánchez
Chief Judge

Date: July 10, 2020