UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

JOSEPH KIRCHNER, *Plaintiff,* v. MIKE JOHNSON et al., *Defendants.*	**Case No. 1:25-cv-02735-ACR** CIVIL DIVISION PROCESS SERVICE GUIDANCE WEBPAGE

Civil Division

Peter C. Pfaffenroth, Chief

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Diana V. Valdivia, Deputy Chief
Brenda González Horowitz, Deputy Chief
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Johnny Walker, Appellate Counsel
Dhruman Sampat, Assistant Appellate Counsel

Sean Tepe, Affirmative Civil Enforcement (ACE) Coordinator

Civil litigation involving the Federal government in the District of Columbia is divided among the United States Attorney's Office, other litigating components of the Department of Justice, and federal agencies that have some degree of independent litigating authority. The civil litigation assigned to the U.S. Attorney's Office includes both defensive (U.S. as defendant) and affirmative (U.S. as plaintiff) cases and matters, which are handled by the Civil Division at both the trial and appellate levels. Most of the Civil Division's cases are in Federal District Court and the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, but the Civil Division does have some cases in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, and does occasionally appear in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

The overwhelming majority of the Civil Division's defensive cases involve claims made pursuant to either the Freedom of Information Act, the Administrative Procedure Act, the Federal employment discrimination laws, or the Federal Tort Claims Act. Other defensive cases include constitutional tort claims, actions involving property on which the United States has a lien, claims involving the immigration laws, cases challenging Social Security benefits determinations, claims by health care providers for additional payments from the Medicare and Medicaid programs, Privacy Act claims, third-party subpoenas directed to Federal agencies and employees, and bankruptcy cases in which the Federal government is a creditor.

The Civil Division has a large and productive affirmative practice that principally involves procurement and health care fraud matters. The District of Columbia ranks among the highest in the Nation in the number of qui tam whistleblower cases brought under the False Claims Act, reflecting the strong working relationships that the Civil Division has established with client agencies and private counsel who regularly represent qui tam relators. In addition, the Civil Division has developed a specialized fraud practice involving the General Service Administration's multiple award schedule.

The Civil Division plays an important role in the enforcement of the Lobbying Disclosure Act, which imposes registration and reporting requirements on persons engaged in lobbying activities. If a lobbyist does not comply with those requirements, and fails to remedy the violation after notification from Congress, the Act provides that Congress shall notify the U.S. Attorney's Office. Upon receiving such notification, the Civil Division first attempts to secure compliance through informal outreach and follow-up efforts and then, if those efforts are unsuccessful, through civil actions seeking monetary penalties.

The Financial Litigation Unit (FLU) of the U.S. Attorney's Office is part of the Civil Division. The FLU collects special assessments, fines, and restitution debts imposed in criminal cases, and civil debts owed to the United States and Federal agencies such as civil judgments and settlements in affirmative cases, and student loan debts owed to the Department of Education.

Service of Process in Civil Actions under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 4(i)

**** EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 4, 2024 – SUPERSEDES PRIOR GUIDANCE ****

Hand Delivery or Email Service as outlined below are the preferred means for service of process on the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 4(i) because, due to safety and security procedures, all mail sent to the U.S. Attorney's Office is initially routed through a central mail room at the Department of Justice, which can occasionally result in the delay or mis-delivery of that mail. Service will not be deemed perfected until actual receipt by a Civil Process Clerk at the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Litigants who sue federal defendants should note that Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 4(d)(1) and the corresponding Superior Court Civil Rule 4(c)(4) — which impose a duty to avoid unnecessary expenses of serving the summons on certain individuals, corporations, and associations — do not apply to service on the United States and its agencies, corporations, officers, and employees.

The U.S. Attorney's Office is not authorized to accept service on behalf of the Attorney General or other federal agencies, corporations, officers, or employees. Thus, if an applicable rule requires any such entities and persons to be served, they must be served separately and in addition to service upon the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Hand Delivery and Certified / Registered Mail Service

Service of process on the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia of civil summonses and complaints under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 4(i)(1)(A) may be made by (i) hand delivery or (ii) registered or certified mail at the following:

Civil Process Clerk
U.S. Attorney's Office for D.C.
601 D Street, NW
Washington, DC 20530

For hand delivery, the entrance to the U.S. Attorney's Office is on D Street, NW, between Sixth and Seventh Streets, NW.

Email Service

In addition to the means of service provided under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 4(i)(1)(A), the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia may also be served by email according to the following terms and conditions, which must be strictly adhered to if email service is attempted. If service on the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia is performed consistent with the following provisions, the Government will not argue under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(5) that service on the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia has not been accomplished.

- Service may be made at USADC.ServiceCivil@usdoj.gov and no other email address.
- The subject of the email must contain the caption of the suit with the court assigned docket number — e.g., "John v. Doe, 20-9999".
- The summons, complaint, and all exhibits or other documents must be combined into a single PDF, with the summons coming first in the PDF, unless the file size of the combined PDF exceeds 20 megabytes.
- Service packages exceeding 20 megabytes must be broken into PDF files of no more than 20 megabytes and sent using separate emails with a notation in the subject that it is multi-part service — e.g., "John v. Doe, 20-9999 (Email 1 of 2)".
- If you are serving a copy of a motion for provisional relief with your summons and complaint (i.e., a motion for a preliminary injunction or temporary restraining order), you must also email the Civil Chief indicating as much. Click here to send the Civil Chief an email.

If your service under this procedure is received and accepted, you will receive a responsive email indicating as much, typically within 7 to 10 days after receipt.

Serving the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia via email under these procedures does not relieve a litigant from delivering or serving the other copies as required by Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 4(i) — e.g., to the Attorney General or relevant agencies. Further, the U.S. Attorney's Office does not waive other requirements for effective service under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 4 — e.g., the requirements of Rule 4(c)(2), which require a person other than a party to effect service. Additionally, this procedure for email service applies only for service on the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia and not for U.S. Attorney's Offices for other federal judicial districts or any other component of the Department of Justice.

Please note that the USADC.ServiceCivil@usdoj.gov email address should not be used for any other communications with the U.S. Attorney's Office aside from civil service of process under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 4(i)(1)(A). Other communications sent to that address will be deleted and no response will be forthcoming.

Lastly, please note that the information regarding service on this webpage pertains solely to service of a summons and complaint (and materials accompanying those filings) under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 4(i). It does not pertain to service of filings other than a summons and complaint under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 5. If you wish to seek the U.S. Attorney's Office consent to receive service of filings other than a summons and complaint via email before an attorney has appeared in a case, see Fed. R. Civ. P. 5(b)(2)(E), you should email the Civil Chief using the link above.

Contacting the Civil Division

The Civil Division can be contacted during normal business hours at (202) 252-2500.

The FLU can be contacted during normal business hours at (202) 252-2600.

If you have questions about a notice of non-compliance with the Lobbying Disclosure Act that you received from the Civil Division, please call (202) 252-2616.

In an emergency outside normal business hours when no one can be reached at the Civil Division's general telephone number, contact the Department of Justice Command Center at (202) 514-5000.

Attorney's Fees

To assist with determining reasonable attorney's fees for complex federal litigation in the District of Columbia, the Civil Division uses the following matrix:

Fitzpatrick Matrix, 2013-2025

- Supporting Materials
- Declaration of Brian T. Fitzpatrick
- Declaration Exhibit A
- Declaration Exhibit B
- Declaration Exhibit C
- Former Attorney's Fees Matrices

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