

Aug 22 2025

United States District Court
Northern District of Ohio
General Order

AMENDED GENERAL ORDER NO. 2025-16

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO**

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|----------------------------|---|---|
| IN RE: |) | |
| PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING, |) | |
| FILING, AND MANAGEMENT OF |) | ORDER NO. 2025-16-2 |
| SENSITIVE DOCUMENTS |) | (<i>Nunc pro tunc</i> as of 8/13/2025) |
| |) | |
| |) | |

WHEREAS federal courts are updating their security procedures to uniformly protect sensitive documents (SDs), a narrow subset of sealed documents that must be stored outside the court’s electronic systems;

THE COURT FINDS that good cause exists to permit nonelectronic filing under [Civil Rule 5\(d\)\(3\)\(A\) and Criminal Rule 49\(b\)\(3\)\(A\)](#) of SDs, as described and defined herein.

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that effective August 13, 2025, and until such time as the court orders otherwise, SDs will be filed and served in paper form or a secure computer system or electronic device (e.g., USB stick or portable hard drive), in accordance with this standing general order, and will be maintained by the Clerk’s Office in a secure paper filing system or secure computer system or electronic device.¹ This order supersedes any and all prior court orders and inconsistent local rules concerning SDs.²

¹ This guidance does not apply to classified information, which should be handled according to the Classified Information Procedures Act (CIPA) and the Chief Justice’s Security Procedures.

² The protocol for Highly Sensitive Documents remains unchanged. See General Order No. 2024-07-1.

1. Documents and Materials Subject to this Order

- a. **Definition:** A **Sensitive Document (SD)** is a document or other material that contains sensitive, but unclassified, information that warrants special handling and storage procedures to prevent significant consequences that could result if such information were obtained or disclosed in an unauthorized manner.
- b. **SDs include:**
 - i. Warrants under Fed. R. of Crim. P. Rule 41 and all attendant filings;
 - ii. Criminal Complaints, Secret Indictments, and Arrest Warrants;
 - iii. Legal process for electronic surveillance under Rule 41 and/or 18 U.S.C. §§ 2703 and 2705(b), extensions, and all attendant filings;
 - iv. Title III filings pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 2518 and all attendant filings;
 - v. Criminal cooperation agreement addenda;
 - vi. Legal process under 18 U.S.C. §§ 3122 and 3123 and extensions;
 - vii. Delayed notice under 18 U.S.C. § 3103(a) and extensions;
 - viii. *Ex parte* applications/Orders to disclose tax returns/return information pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 6103(i)(1);
 - ix. Any filings related to Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs), Letters Rogatory, and Extradition Requests;
 - x. Letters pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 6(e); and
 - xi. *Ex parte* motions for appointment of counsel (prior to indictment with target letters).

2. SDs: Sources and Characteristics

- a. With the exception of motions to suppress, sentencing memoranda, and *ex parte* motions/orders, SD designation need not be requested by a party in a criminal or civil matter. This standing general order permits the filing of

SDs as a matter of course, without leave of Court, if the document is within one of the categories defined as an SD.³

- b. SDs vary in their physical form and characteristics. They may be paper, electronic, audiovisual, microform, or other media. The term “document” includes all recorded information, regardless of its physical form or characteristics.
- c. Any other material designated SD by a judicial officer.

3. Filing SD Materials:

- a. **Chambers Procedures:** Counsel may submit SD materials via email directly to judicial chambers in paper form or via a secure electronic device (e.g., USB stick or portable hard drive). Once approved by the judicial officer, the Courtroom Deputy Clerk may return completed SD materials to counsel via court email or hand delivery.
- b. **Clerk’s Office Intake Window Procedures:** SD materials hand delivered to the Intake Window shall be in a sealed envelope marked “SENSITIVE DOCUMENTS.” The outside of the envelope shall display the case name and number, a designation as to what the document is, the name of the party on whose behalf it is submitted, and the name of the attorney who has filed the SD materials. If the entire case is sealed (e.g., a *qui tam*), then the envelope shall not include the name of the plaintiff and defendant but shall include all other information.
- c. **Handling:** Any pleadings or other filings created in connection with or containing SD materials should not disclose the subject matter of the SD (including information that may identify the place, object, or subject of an *ex parte* filing).
- d. **Storing:** SD materials shall be stored only in either a secure paper filing system or a secure computer system or electronic device (e.g., USB stick or portable hard drive) and in a designated secure area within the Clerk’s Office.

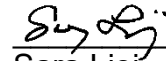
³ This guidance does not apply to classified information, which should be handled according to the Classified Information Procedures Act (CIPA) and the Chief Justice’s Security Procedures.

4. Questions about SD Filing Procedures:

Any questions about how an SD should be filed pursuant to this order should be directed to the Clerk's Office at 216-357-7000 (Cleveland), 419-213-5500 (Toledo), 330-884-7420 (Youngstown) and 330-252-6000 (Akron).

IT IS SO ORDERED, this 22nd day of August, 2025.

FOR THE COURT



Sara Lioi

Chief United States District Judge
Northern District of Ohio