

Instructions for Filing a Complaint by a Prisoner
Under the Civil Rights Act 42 U.S.C. 1983

This packet includes:

- *A Complaint Form
- *A Civil Cover Sheet (2 pages)
- *Summons Forms (with sample)
- *Marshal Service Forms USM-285 (with sample)
- *A Financial Application Packet, to include the following:
 - *Application to Proceed Without the Prepayment of Fees
 - *Affidavit of Prisoner
 - *Request for Certified Account Statement & Acknowledgement of Understanding

To start an action, you must submit an original complaint, one copy of the complaint for every defendant listed, and one extra copy to be time stamped and returned to you. For example, if you name two defendants, you must provide the original and four copies of your complaint. All copies of the complaint must be identical to the original. **IMPORTANT:** Make sure that if you have more than one plaintiff or defendant, the exact names in the exact same order are listed in the caption of the complaint, the Civil Cover Sheet, and the Financial Application.

Your complaint must be legibly handwritten or typed. You must sign the complaint. If you need additional space to answer a question, you may use an additional blank page (clearly marked with the number of the question which is continued on that page).

In order for this complaint to be filed, it must be accompanied by the filing fee of \$400.00. If you are unable to pay the filing fee for this action, you may file a Financial Application Packet, which is enclosed with this mailing.

An original plus one copy of the summons must be completed for each defendant. (Follow the sample.) If you are not paying the filing fee, you are required to complete and submit a USM-285 form for each defendant, with the correct name and address of each person you have named as a defendant so that the United States Marshal can complete service. (Follow the sample.)

When these forms are completed, mail the original, all necessary copies, and completed forms to the following address:

Office of the Clerk
United States District Court, Northern District of Ohio
Carl B. Stokes United States Courthouse
801 West Superior Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44113-1830

Failure to follow these instructions may delay the processing of your case.