

Subject: Service of Pro-Se Prisoner and Non-Prisoner complaints and/or Petitions by CD-R media as opposed to photocopies of documents.

I would like to suggest that the AO look into the possibility of amending the service rules to allow service to be made by electronic media or CD in situations where documents are voluminous. It seems that the time and cost savings could be significant as well as ecologically sound.

A recent example of a service order that I processed where the U.S. Marshal was directed to serve a pro-se prisoner complaint and additional exhibits.

Complaint named 30 defendants with additional service to be made on the Attorney General of the State of PA. The Complaint and exhibits totalled 300 pages. Total of 9300 pages to be copied and served.

Cost of a case of paper \$39.00 (5000 pages)

Certified Mail with return receipt for service of 300 pages \$12.50 (it is my understanding that the USM serves via U.S. Postal Service, certified mail, return receipt)

Not included is the cost of shipping the 9300 pages via UPS to the USM Office in Scranton for service*. Or the wear and tear on photocopy machines and employee time to monitor the copying.

Before processing, I contacted the Pro-Se Law Clerk involved with the case and requested her to contact the department of corrections to see if they would allow service of a CD-R disc with pdf files of the documents. They approved. Resulting in the following costs:

Cost of a CD-R \$0.30

Certified Mail with return receipt for service of CD-R Disc \$6.90

The only paper used was for copying of the summons attached to each CD-R.

I understand that having the Federal Rules of Service amended probably takes an act of congress. But, I am thinking that a district could adopt service changes via their local rules.

That is my suggestion in a nutshell.

Thanks for reviewing it.

Mark Armbruster, Middle District of Pennsylvania

*In this particular instance we could possibly have had our Scranton Clerk's Office process the service order and carry the documents to the USM located in the same building.