

I. General Information

A. Contacting the Court

The Clerk's Office handles all communications and documents from parties, as parties may not directly contact judges or chambers staff.

Mailing Address: Clerk of Court
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit
717 Madison Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20439

Telephone: 202-275-8000

The Clerk's Office is in Room 401 of the National Courts Building and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Time) on weekdays (excluding federal holidays). Papers may be deposited until midnight on weekdays at the night box located at the garage entrance on H Street N.W., between 15th Street and Madison Place.

B. Practice Tips

- Once your appeal has been assigned a Federal Circuit case number, (example: 16-0000) include this number on all correspondence and filings you send to this court and to an opposing counsel/party.
- Keep a copy of all documents you send to this court.
- Your documents can be typed or written, but they must be legible. If the Clerk cannot read the documents you send, they may not be processed.
- If your mailing address changes, promptly notify the Clerk's Office in writing. If you do not, you could miss important notices and papers providing deadlines or decisions in your case. Missing a filing deadline may cause your case to be dismissed.

C. Electronic Case Filing

As an unrepresented, or pro se, party, all documents intended for filing must be provided to the court in paper, except motions and letters that can be emailed to prose@cafc.uscourts.gov or faxed to 202-275-9678.

Unrepresented parties are not eligible to participate in the filing of documents electronically using the Federal Circuit's Case Management/Electronic Case Filing (CM/ECF) system unless they are also members of the Federal Circuit bar.

For additional information, consult the full Guide for Pro Se Petitioners and Appellants online at <http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/pro-se>.

II. Overview of A Case in the Federal Circuit

A. Case Number

A case number is assigned when your notice of appeal, petition for review, or original proceeding is received in the Clerk's Office and is deemed compliant with the rules of the court. When your case is docketed, you will receive:

- Notice of Docketing with assigned case number and a listing of important initial filings dates and the Federal Circuit Rules noting the briefing schedule
- Caption Sheet
- Entry of Appearance Form
- Motion and Affidavit for Leave to Proceed in Forma Pauperis Form, if necessary
- Informal Brief Form
- Statement Concerning Discrimination Form (if from MSPB)
- General Information and Overview of a Case in the Federal Circuit Handout

B. Change of Address

It is your responsibility to immediately advise the Clerk's Office of any change in your address.

C. Filing Fee

1. Paying the Fee

When you file a petition for review or notice of appeal from a decision of a board, a commission, an agency, the Patent and Trademark Office, or a vaccine case from the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, the \$500 docketing fee must be made directly to the Federal Circuit.

In appeals from a District Court, the U.S. Court of International Trade, or the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, you must pay a docketing fee of \$505 (\$500 docketing fee and a filing fee of \$5) made directly with those courts and payable to the clerk of that court. The U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims docketing fee is \$500 and made directly with that court.

The Federal Circuit Clerk's Office cannot refund a fee once it is deposited.

2. Fee Waiver

You may ask that the fee be waived (proceeding in forma pauperis). The motion form to proceed in forma pauperis is included with your case opening materials. Further discussion on how to file an in forma pauperis motion is included in A Guide for Pro Se Petitioners and Appellants. If your motion to proceed in forma pauperis is denied, and you do not pay the fee, your case will be dismissed for lack of prosecution.

D. Briefing

Unrepresented parties may choose to file an informal brief or a formal brief, not both.

1. Informal Brief

In a petition for review or appeal from an agency, a board, a commission, or a vaccine case from the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, you must file an informal brief within 21 days after the certified list or index is served. In an appeal from a court, you must file an informal brief within 21 days after the appeal is docketed.

The other party may file either an informal brief within 21 days or a formal brief within 40 days after service of your informal brief or the certified list, whichever is later. You may choose to file a reply brief within 14 days after service of the other party's brief.

2. Formal Brief

If you elect to file a formal brief, the brief and appendix must comply with the strict requirements of the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure (FRAP) and the Federal Circuit Rules (FCR) or the brief and appendix will not be accepted.

In cases from an agency, a board, a commission, or a vaccine case from the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, a formal brief is due 60 days after the certified list is served. In an appeal from a court, the formal brief is due 60 days after the case is docketed.

The other party must file a formal response brief within 40 days of service of your formal brief. You may choose to file a reply brief within 14 days after service of the other party's brief.

E. Completion of Briefing

The case will be submitted to a panel of three judges after all the briefs and an appendix are filed. You will receive a notice from the Clerk's Office regarding the placement of the case on a calendar.

F. Court's Decision

You will receive a notice from the Clerk's Office along with a copy of the court's decision when the judges have decided your case.

G. Additional Resources

1. Federal Circuit Rules and Procedures

- Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure and Federal Circuit Rules
<http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/rules-of-practice/rules>
- Federal Circuit Internal Operating Procedures
<http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/rules-of-practice/internal-operating-procedures>

2. Forms

- Federal Circuit Forms
<http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/rules-of-practice/forms>

3. Additional Resources

- Guide for Pro Se Petitioners and Appellants
<http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/pro-se>
- Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER)
http://www.pacer.gov/reg_pacer.html
- Federal Deposit Library
<https://www.fdlp.gov/about-the-fdlp/federal-depository-libraries>
- Federal Circuit CM/ECF Reference Material and Filing Resources
<http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/contact/clerks-office/filing-resources>
- Federal Circuit Opinions
<http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/opinions-orders/search/report.html>
- Federal Circuit Argument Calendar
<http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/argument/upcoming-oral-arguments>
- Federal Holidays
<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/federal-holidays/>