

RULE 7A

(Amended July 24, 2007)

FILING SEALED DOCUMENTS AND PLEADINGS

A document or pleading may be filed under seal only upon order of the Court, in accordance with the following procedures:

(a) Motion to Seal and Sealed Documents

To obtain an order allowing one or more documents or pleadings to be sealed, a party shall electronically file on ECF a motion to seal together with the separate document(s) or pleading(s) sought to be sealed. The motion shall propose specific findings as to the need for sealing and the duration the document(s) should be sealed. The motion shall include a statement whether there is agreement of the parties to the sealing. The ECF system will generate and send a Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) to counsel of record notifying them of the filing, but counsel will be unable to view the document. If service is required, all counsel must be served in a manner other than through ECF.

(b) Objection to Sealing and Reply

Unless otherwise ordered by the Court, any objection to a motion to seal and any reply thereto shall be filed electronically under seal and in accordance with Local Rule 7.

(c) Order

In making specific findings as to the need for sealing and the duration the document(s) shall be sealed, the Court may incorporate by reference the proposed findings in the motion to seal. If the motion to seal is denied, the document shall be removed from the ECF system by the Clerk, unless the Court orders otherwise.

(d) Public Notice

The docket entry noting the filing of the motion to seal, and of any objection and reply thereto, and of the filing of the order of the Court thereon, and of the filing of any sealed document(s) or pleading(s) shall be publicly available on ECF, but the document(s) or pleading(s) themselves

shall only be available to the Court.

(e) Exceptions

- (1) No motion or order is required for the filing of a redacted document or a document under seal that is already subject to an existing protective order or that is included within a category of pleadings and documents deemed sealed or authorized to be filed ex parte pursuant to a federal statute, the federal rules of procedure, or the local rules of this court. Any filing of a document which had been previously authorized shall reference the prior authority for such filing.
- (2) Sealed pleadings and documents, such as deeds, photographs, or bulky exhibits, which cannot be filed electronically shall be filed in accordance with the provisions of the ECF User Manual and shall be returned to the filing party by the Clerk as directed by the Court.