

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MAINE

**ORDER**

Rule 7A of the Local Rules of the United States District Court for the District of Maine is hereby amended, effective January 1, 2013. The amended Rule reads as follows:

**RULE 7A**

**(As amended January 1, 2013)**

**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 motion to seal and any supporting document(s) tendered under provisional seal shall remain in the ECF system, sealed indefinitely, unless the Court orders otherwise. The parties

should anticipate that the Court's order granting or denying the motion to seal will not be filed under seal and will be publicly available.

**(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 Court's 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 document that has been redacted solely to remove personal identifiers pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. Pro. 5.2 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 redacted document shall reference the authority for such redaction.
- (2) Documents marked confidential pursuant to an existing protective order may not automatically be filed under seal. The parties must confer and attempt to redact the exhibit in order to remove "confidential" material that is not essential for the court's use in rendering a decision. If the exhibit cannot be redacted by agreement to remove confidential information, the party claiming that the document should be under seal shall file a motion in compliance with paragraphs (a-b) above.
- (3) 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.

So ORDERED.

/s/JOHN A. WOODCOCK, JR.  
Chief United States District Judge

Dated this 21st day of December, 2012.