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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

IN RE:  
ACTIONS SEEKING REVIEW OF THE  
COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL  
SECURITY’S FINAL DECISION  
DENYING AN APPLICATION FOR  
BENEFITS

**AMENDED GENERAL ORDER 04-15 RE:  
PILOT PROGRAM FOR ELECTRONIC  
SERVICE IN SOCIAL SECURITY CASES**

A significant number of cases are filed in this District seeking review of the Commissioner of Social Security (“Commissioner”)’s decision denying an application for benefits. The Court and the United States Attorney’s Office for the Western District of Washington (“USAO-WDWA”) share an interest in facilitating the efficient resolution of these complaints. To this end, on June 1, 2015, the Court issued General Order 04-15 initiating a one-year Pilot Program for Electronic Service in Social Security Cases (“Pilot Program”). In 2016, and again in 2018, the USAO-WAWD agreed to extend the terms of the Pilot Program set forth in General Order 04-15 for additional two-year periods. The Pilot Program is an on-going success. The USAO-WAWD has again agreed to an extension of two years as set forth in General Order 04-15.

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1           **ACCORDINGLY, THE COURT AMENDS GENERAL ORDER 04-15 AND HEREBY**

2 **ORDERS:**

- 3           (1)       The Pilot Program initiated in General Order 04-15 shall remain in effect through  
4                   June 1, 2022. During this period, the USAO-WDWA may unilaterally modify or  
5                   terminate the Pilot Program.
- 6           (2)       The Pilot Program shall apply only to complaints instituted by a plaintiff against the  
7                   Commissioner to which the only claim that is being brought is pursuant to 42 U.S.C.  
8                   § 405(g). It shall not apply to any other complaint. In particular, the Pilot Program  
9                   does not apply to (a) complaints that include claims against the Commissioner in  
10                  addition to, or other than, those brought pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 405(g); or (b)  
11                  complaints that include defendants other than the Commissioner.
- 12          (3)       Plaintiffs who wish to avail themselves of the Pilot Program for electronic service  
13                  shall:
- 14                  A. Provide the USAO-WDWA with a copy of the summons and complaint by email to  
15                   [USAWAW.SSAClerk@usdoj.gov](mailto:USAWAW.SSAClerk@usdoj.gov);
- 16                  B. Provide the USAO-WDWA with the identifying information set forth in General  
17                   Order 05-15 by email to the same email address; and
- 18                  C. File a Certificate of Service through the Court’s Electronic Court Filing (“ECF”)  
19                   system indicating when the summons and complaint and identifying information  
20                   were sent to the USAO-WDWA’s email address above.
- 21          (4)       Service of a summons and complaint under this Pilot Program will be considered  
22                  complete only when all three steps in paragraph 3 above have been completed.
- 23          (5)       If a plaintiff chooses to avail himself or herself of this Pilot Program and effectuates  
24                  service in accordance with this Amended General Order, the government agrees not  
25                  to raise insufficient service as a defense in its answer or other response to the  
26                  complaint. However, nothing in this Amended General Order or the Pilot Program  
27                  on electronic service shall be deemed to be a waiver of service pursuant to Federal  
28                  Rule of Civil Procedure 4(d).

- 1 (6) This Amended General Order is effective June 1, 2020, and shall remain in effect  
2 through June 1, 2022. However, upon one month's notice, the USAO-WDWA may  
3 unilaterally modify or terminate the Pilot Program.
- 4 (7) The Court reserves the right to rescind this Amended General Order entirely as the  
5 Court determines necessary in light of experience.
- 6 (8) The Clerk shall post a copy of this Amended General Order on the Court's website,  
7 and shall distribute copies as the Clerk deems appropriate.

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9 Dated this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July, 2020.

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13 RICARDO S. MARTINEZ  
14 CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE