

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRO SE LITIGANTS FILING AN
EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT UNDER
42 U.S.C. § 2000e, et seq., (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act)
29 U.S.C. § 621, et seq., (Age Discrimination in Employment Act)
OR 42 U.S.C. § 12112, et seq., (Americans with Disabilities Act)**

Explanation and Instructions - Read Carefully

1. This packet includes a complaint form which should be completed as instructed below. Also included is an in forma pauperis application which you must complete if you cannot pay the filing fee.

2. Your complaint must be legibly handwritten, typewritten, or computer generated. Answer all questions on the complaint form. You must furnish your full and correct name as Plaintiff. When listing Defendants, provide name and address for each Defendant. If you need additional space to answer a question, you may use additional blank pages, but do not write on the reverse side of any page. You must sign the complaint on the last page of the complaint form. ANY FALSE STATEMENT MADE ON THIS FORM MAY RESULT IN SANCTIONS AND MAY ALSO SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR PROSECUTION FOR PERJURY. You must file the complaint with your original signature, and you must keep a copy of the complaint for your records. Do not send service copies of the complaint until directed to do so by the Court.

3. State the facts which support your claims in Section III of the complaint form. Each statement of fact should be listed in separately numbered paragraphs, the contents of which shall be limited as far as practicable to a statement of a single set of circumstances. When presenting the facts, do not make legal arguments or provide case citations. If you desire to make a legal argument, you should do so by filing a separate memorandum of law. Such argument is unnecessary at the initiation of a case, however. You will be advised when the submission of evidence or argument in support of your claim is appropriate.

4. In submitting an employment discrimination complaint, you must have been given notice of your right to sue by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. This notice, called a "right-to-sue letter," will state that you have 90 days in which to file suit in the federal courts. That notice must be attached as an exhibit to the complaint. Failure to attach the notice could result in dismissal of your complaint.

5. If you are financially able to do so, you must submit the court's filing fee of \$402.00 at the same time you submit your complaint in order for the complaint to be filed. If you can pay the fee, you are also responsible for the costs of service of the complaint upon the Defendants, although you may seek assistance from the Court. If you are unable to pay the filing fee and service costs for this action, you may petition the Court to proceed in forma pauperis using the forms included in this packet. The forms (consisting of an in forma pauperis motion and financial affidavit) must be submitted simultaneously with your complaint.

6. Those who are allowed to proceed in forma pauperis are entitled to service of the complaint upon Defendants by the United States Marshal. If you are granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis, you should not attempt to effect service of the complaint by yourself, nor should you mail to any Defendant a request for waiver of formal service pursuant to Rule 4 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The Court will order the Marshal to serve the complaint on the Defendants at the appropriate time.

7. After receiving notice from the Clerk of your case number, you must include the case number on all documents you file with the Court. Keep a copy of every document you send to the Court (including a copy of the complaint) as you are not entitled to free copies from the Clerk even if you are proceeding in forma pauperis. After service of the complaint, all documents filed in the Court must contain a "certificate of service" indicating when and how the document was provided to the Defendants or to counsel for the Defendants.

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8. You must immediately advise the Court of any change of address by filing a "Notice to the Court of Change of Address." This notice must contain the address change, effective date, and must be signed. Failure to notify the court of any change of address could result in the dismissal of your case!

9. After service of the complaint, the Defendants may file either an Answer to the complaint or a motion. You do not need to respond to a motion filed by Defendants until directed to do so by the Court.

10. The complaint will be prosecuted in either the Gainesville, Panama City, Pensacola, or Tallahassee Division of the Court, depending on the county of residence of one or more of the Defendants or the place where the events forming the basis of the complaint occurred. You should name the appropriate division of the Court in the space provided at the top of the complaint form.

The following counties comprise the **Gainesville** Division: Alachua, Dixie, Gilchrist, Lafayette, and Levy.

The following counties comprise the **Panama City** Division: Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, and Washington.

The following counties comprise the **Pensacola** Division: Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton.

The following counties comprise the **Tallahassee** Division: Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla.



Cases to be filed in the **Tallahassee** Division should be mailed to:

CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT
111 N. ADAMS STREET
SUITE 322
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32301-7730

Cases to be filed in the **Gainesville** Division should be mailed to:

CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT
401 S.E. FIRST AVENUE
ROOM 243
GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32601-6895

Cases to be filed in the **Pensacola** Division should be mailed to:

CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT
1 NORTH PALAFOX STREET
ROOM 226
PENSACOLA, FLORIDA 32502-5658

Cases to be filed in the **Panama City** Division should be mailed to:

CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT
30 GOVERNMENT STREET
PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA 32401-2758