

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA



IN RE: PRIVACY IN SOCIAL SECURITY OPINIONS

In 2007 Congress adopted Rule 5.2 of the Rules of Civil Procedure to address privacy and security concerns inherent in electronically filed documents that are available publicly. This concern is particularly heightened in Social Security cases, which often contain a large amount of personal and medical information.

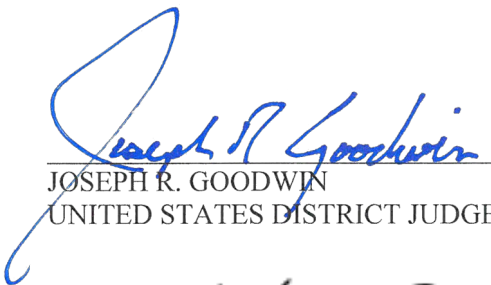
Recognizing this heightened concern, Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 5.2(c) places limitations on remote access to electronic case files in Social Security cases. Those restrictions do not, however, extend to dockets or court-issued opinions. Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2(c)(2)(B). While there is a valid interest in making Social Security opinions publicly available via remote access, doing so limits the goal of restricting remote access to personal and sensitive information.


In May 2018 the Judicial Conference Committee on Court Administration and Case Management recommended that district courts consider adopting a local practice of using only the first name and last initial for any non-government parties in Social Security opinions. Upon consideration, the Court concurs that this is a sound practice that should be adopted in the Southern District of West Virginia.


Accordingly, it is hereby **ORDERED**, effective immediately, that the Court will use only the first name and last initial of any non-governmental party in an opinion, order, judgment, or other disposition of the Court issued in a Social Security case.

SO ORDERED this 31st day of October, 2022.



THOMAS E. JOHNSTON, CHIEF JUDGE



JOSEPH R. GOODWIN
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

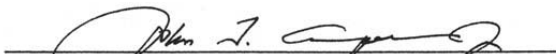

ROBERT C. CHAMBERS
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE


IRENE C. BERGER
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA




Frank W. Volk
United States District Judge


David A. Faber
Senior United States District Judge


John T. Copenhaver, Jr.
Senior United States District Judge