

INSTRUCTION FOR FILING A COMPLAINT BY A PRISONER
UNDER THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT, 42 U.S.C. § 1983

This packet includes four copies of a complaint form and two copies of an in forma pauperis petition. To begin an action you must file an original and one copy of your complaint for the court and a copy for each defendant you name. For example, if you name two defendants you must file an original and three copies of the complaint. You should also keep a copy of the complaint for your own records. The Court is not responsible for providing you copies. **ALL COPIES MUST BE IDENTICAL TO THE ORIGINAL.**

The Clerk of the Court will not file your complaint unless it conforms to these instructions and to these forms.

Your complaint must be legibly handwritten in ink or typewritten. If you need additional space to answer a question, you may use the reverse side of the form or an additional blank page. All documents must be submitted on 8 ½ X 11 paper.

Your complaint can be brought in this Court only if one or more of the named defendants is located within this District, or if the claim arose here. In addition, you must file a separate complaint for each claim that you have, unless they are all related to the same incident or issue.

You are required to furnish, so that the United States Marshal can complete service, the correct names and addresses of each person you have named as a defendant. **A PLAINTIFF IS REQUIRED TO GIVE INFORMATION TO COURTS TO ENABLE THE MARSHAL TO COMPLETE SERVICE OF THE COMPLAINT UPON ALL PERSONS NAMED AS DEFENDANTS.**

In order for this complaint to be filed, it must be accompanied by the filing fee of \$120.00. In addition, the United States Marshal will require you to pay the cost of serving the complaint on each of the defendants.

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. Two blank petitions for this purpose are included in this packet. One copy should be filed with the complaint; the other is for you records.

THE COMPLAINT SHOULD NOT CONTAIN ANY LEGAL ARGUMENTS OR CITATIONS. You should only give the facts relating to the complaint.

When the forms are completed, mail the original and the copies to the Pro Se Unit, Clerk of the United State District Court for the District of Maryland, 101 W. Lombard Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201.