



GUIDE TO FILING YOUR FIRST HABEAS CORPUS PETITION

Southern District of California

By ILRC Attorneys¹

Table of Contents

I. Register for PACER.....	3
A. Plan at least 48 hours before client needs to file	3
B. Sign up as an “Attorney Filer” in PACER	3
C. Fill out the online registration form.....	3
D. Apply for Admission and E-filing via CM/ECF.....	5
II. Prepare Documents for Filing Day.....	6
A. Documents required for every case	7
Civil Cover Sheet (Form JS 44)	7
Verified petition for Habeas Corpus	8
Credit card	8
B. Documents you MAY need for your initial filing	8
Supporting evidence	8
Temporary Restraining Order (TRO)	8
Motion to proceed by pseudonym	9
III. Complete This Checklist on Filing Day	9
A. File the Habeas Corpus petition	9
1. Open a new case on CM/ECF	9
2. Check for an email with a link to your filed documents and the assigned judge	13

¹ The ILRC would like to thank the many partners who contributed to this comprehensive guide. In particular, thank you to Joshua A. Altman of Altman Immigration Law, PC. If in using this resource you identify any errors or processes that may be outdated or incorrect, please contact Warren Craig, wrcraig@ilrc.org, and Kate Mahoney, kmahoney@ilrc.org.

3. Read the Civil Standing Orders of the assigned judge	14
B. File the TRO motion	14
1. Give notice to the Assistant U.S. Attorney (AUSA)	15
2. File on CM/ECF	15
3. Follow the judge's rules regarding courtesy copies and proposed orders	16
4. Follow up with the AUSA after filing	17
IV. What to Expect Post-Filing:	17

I. Register for PACER

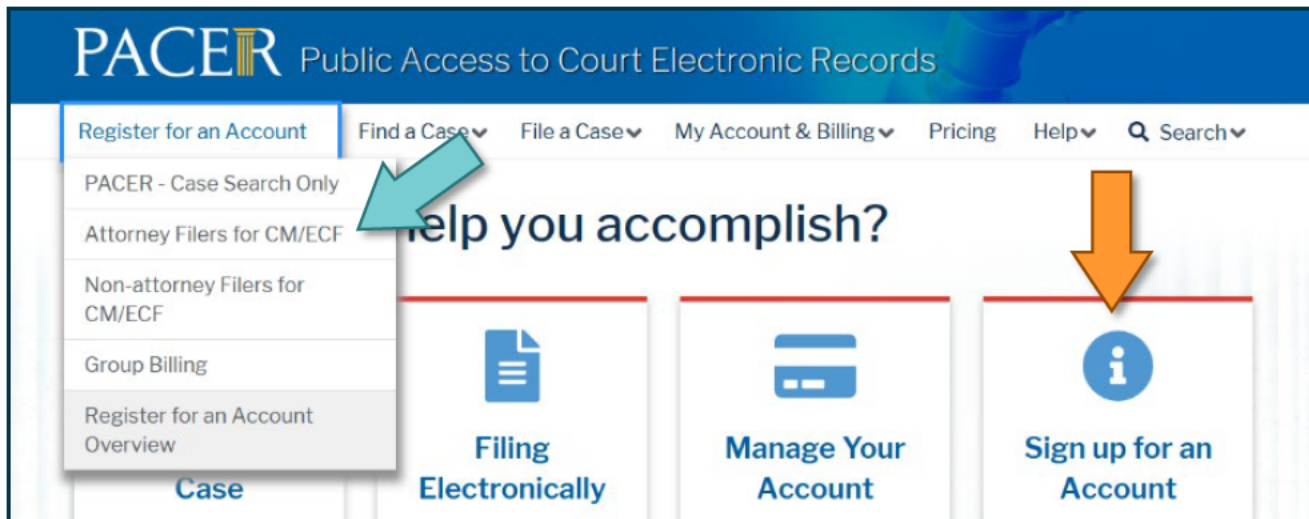
A. Plan at least 48 hours before client needs to file

Register & get admitted before your client needs to file. You will need your California bar license information, and a credit card.

Activity		Duration
Day 1	• Registering for PACER • Registering for ECF	30 minutes
	• Receiving your ECF password	1-2 days
Day 2	• Link your accounts • Submit your petition for admission • Pay the admission fee • Save documents	30 minutes
Total		48 hours

B. Sign up as an “Attorney Filer” in PACER

1. Go to [PACER.uscourts.gov](https://pacer.uscourts.gov).
2. Select “Attorney Filers” by clicking either “[Register for an Account](#)” or “[Sign up for an Account](#)” (see arrows below).



3. Click “Register for PACER Account.”

C. Fill out the online registration form

1. Fill out the required biographic information.

Attorney Admissions and/or E-File Registration

Account Information

** Required Information*

Prefix

First Name

Middle Name

Last Name

Generation

Suffix

Date of Birth

2. Choose an option under “User Type” (this affects how you’ll be billed²):
 - **Individual:** This simplest option means you’ll receive quarterly invoices sent directly to your email.
 - **Law Firm & Non-Profit Organization:** These options require an Employer Identification Number (EIN).

User Type

☐ Check here if this account will be used for the Criminal Justice Act Attorney Panel

User Verification ☐

3. Leave Criminal Justice Act Attorney Panel box unchecked unless you are signing up to be appointed as pro bono counsel in cases filed by unrepresented petitioners.
4. Click “Next.”
5. Create a username that has more than eight (8) characters.
6. Enter the credit card information.
 - No fees are charged for registration, but fees are charged through PACER use, as outlined on the website.
7. Check the box indicating you have read and understand the policies and procedures.
8. Click “Submit.”
9. Check for a confirmation email noting your registration approval.
 - The email should appear within 24-48 hours.

² PACER charges \$0.10 per page for viewing, searching, or printing federal court documents, with a maximum charge of \$3.00 per document (equivalent to 30 pages). This fee is waived if a user accrues \$30.00 or less during a given quarter.

D. Apply for Admission and E-filing via CM/ECF

Before starting this process, you may wish to check your status if you think you may already be registered for electronic filing in this district. You can check your registration status at: <https://www.casd.uscourts.gov/attorney/MemberSearch.aspx>.

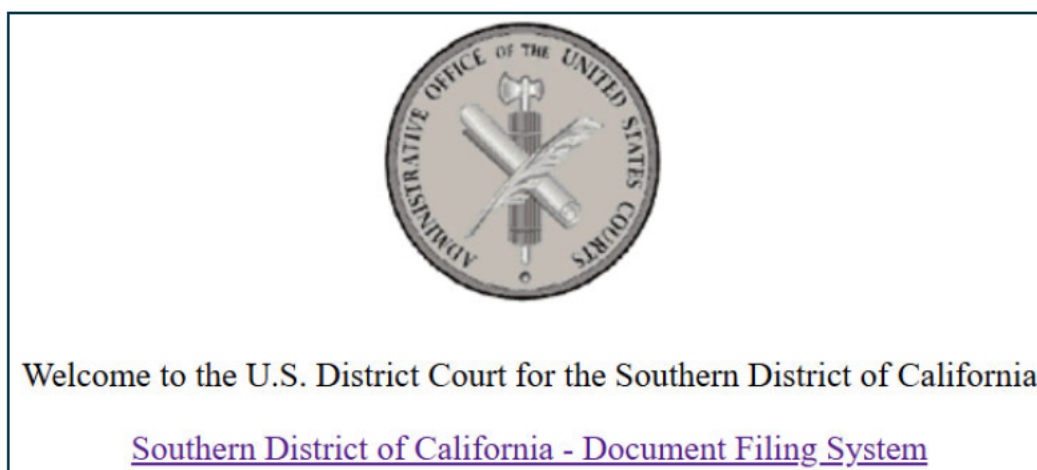
1. Log in to your PACER account.
2. On the “Manage My Account” landing page, select the “Maintenance” tab.
3. Click “Attorney Admissions / E-File Registration.”

4. Select Court Type “U.S. District Courts” and Court “California Southern District Court.”
5. Select “Attorney Admissions and E-File.”
6. Complete all sections of Attorney Admissions:
 - Enter information for any other federal and state bars to which you are admitted.
 - You do not need a Sponsoring Attorney to seek admission.
 - Answer all of the remaining questions in the admissions form.
 - Click “Next.”
7. You will be redirected to the E-File Registration page. Review and update all information, then click “Next.”
8. You will be redirected to the “Manage My Account” landing page and asked to review payment information. You may update this information or skip it and select “Next.”

Next you will be presented with a few terms and requirements. You’ll be asked to read and confirm your agreement to the local e-filing requirements, terms and conditions, and requirements for e-filing. It is important to actually read these materials. It is also a good idea

to download and save copies of these documents for future reference. When you have finished, click “Submit.”

9. Pay the admission fee: You should receive a confirmation email within a few hours with a link to pay the admission fee to complete your admission.
10. You can then log in to this district at <https://ecf.casd.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/ShowIndex.pl>. Click on “Southern District of California-Document Filing System” and enter your log-in information.
 - Note: “client code” is not needed to log in.
 - You should land on a filing page that looks like this:



TROUBLESHOOTING: To confirm or correct information on past admissions, or for all other questions, contact attorneyadmissions@casd.uscourts.gov, or call (619) 557-5600. For website assistance, call the CM/ECF Helpdesk at 800-676-6856 or email ecfhelp@casd.uscourts.gov.

II. Prepare Documents for Filing Day

BEFORE YOU START: Review the Southern District's *General Filing Procedures* and *Electronic Case Filing Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual* for instructions on civil case initiation generally. Also review the Local Civil Rules, specifically CV 5.1 (Form; Paper; Legibility; Nature of Documents to be Filed); CV 7.1 (Motion Practice, Extensions, Enlargements or Shortening of Time, Submission of Orders); and CV 83.3 (Attorneys—Admission to Practice, Standards of Practice, Conduct, Duties).

CHIEF JUDGE ORDER NO. 144: The Chief Judge of the Southern District has promulgated Chief Judge Order No. 144 (CJO No. 144), which provides standard procedures for immigration habeas petitions in the Southern District. Individual judges are free to adopt or modify the order as they see it; in practice, most judges adopt the order. If the judge plans to adopt CJO No. 144 in your case, they will enter an order to this effect on the docket. The provisions of this order are provided below:

- **Administrative notice to respondents:** Upon filing an immigration habeas petition, the court clerk will add the Civil Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of California and the designated Assistant U.S. Attorney as "attorneys to be noticed" in the matter. Thereafter, the CM/ECF system will send them notice of the habeas filing and any subsequent non-sealed filings in the case. This provision of CJO No. 144 applies in all immigration habeas cases.
- **Briefing schedule:** The respondents must file their response to the petition no later than seven days after receiving the notice of court's order adopting the procedures. The petitioner may file a reply in support of the petition no later than seven days after the response is filed. Once the reply is filed, or the deadline for filing has passed, the matter will be deemed submitted for decision without oral argument; however, the judge retains the discretion to schedule a hearing on the petition.
- **Out of district transfers:** The respondents *may not transfer* the petitioner outside the Southern District of California unless the court orders otherwise. The intent of this order is to preserve jurisdiction while the petition is pending.
- **Requests for preliminary relief:** The court will not require separate briefing on, or separately decide, any request for a temporary restraining order (TRO) or other preliminary injunctive relief. Any such request may be considered together with the court's determination on the petition, and the respondent must address any such request in their response. Thus, if the court adopts this provision, filing a motion for a TRO or a preliminary injunction will generally be redundant in most cases.

A. Documents required for every case

Civil Cover Sheet³ (Form JS 44)

Available at https://www.casd.uscourts.gov/_assets/pdf/forms/Civil%20Cover%20Sheet_JS44.pdf.

- Basis of Jurisdiction: U.S. Government Defendant
- Citizenship of Principal Parties: Leave Blank
- Nature of Suit: 463 "Alien Detainee"
- Origin: Original Proceeding
- Cause of Action: 8 USC § 2241
- Brief Description of Cause: Immigration Habeas Petition
- Requested in Complaint: Leave demand blank and check no for jury demand
- Related Case: Complete this only if your client has another immigration-related case pending in federal court.
- Sign with "/s/ YOUR NAME"

Once you have filled out the form, "flatten" the PDF so it can be uploaded in CM/ECF.

³ For more information about filling out the Civil Cover Sheet generally, see NILA, Completing the Civil Cover Sheet (Nov. 1, 2025), <https://immigrationlitigation.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/26.08.31-Updated-Civil-Cover-PA-FINAL.pdf>.

Verified petition for Habeas Corpus

- The caption page should state “PETITION FOR WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS UNDER 28 U.S.C. § 2241” and include your client’s A number (unless you are seeking to file pseudonymously, see below).
- Must be on either numbered pleading paper or using a habeas form (in an emergency, you can use the Southern District’s general pro se habeas petition, which can be found at https://www.casd.uscourts.gov/_assets/pdf/forms/Petition%20for%20Writ%20of%20Habeas%20Corpus%2028USC2241%20-%20Immigration.pdf).
- 28 USC § 2242 requires a “verification” at the end of the petition, which verifies that the factual statements made in the habeas petition are true and correct to the best of the attorney’s knowledge.
- Note that in the Southern District, **it is not necessary to file a proposed summons or otherwise serve the government**, unless ordered to do so by the Court. Once the habeas petition is filed, the U.S. Attorney’s Office will be notified via email through the CM/ECF system.

Credit card

You will be prompted to pay the \$5 filing fee.

B. Documents you MAY need for your initial filing

Supporting evidence

Any evidence in support of the habeas corpus petition, such as declarations, EOIR orders, or ICE/CBP documents. Note that a petitioner declaration is not required because the petition is verified, but some attorneys choose to include one. If you are submitting other documents as exhibits to the petition, an attorney declaration to authenticate other exhibits is recommended.

Temporary Restraining Order⁴ (TRO)

As noted above, if the court adopts the procedures provided in CJO No. 144, it is generally unnecessary to file a motion for TRO or other preliminary relief, as any such relief will usually be decided simultaneously with the petition and will not necessarily result in a quicker disposition. The same order also prevents the government from transferring the petitioner outside the district while the matter is pending. However, if the court does not adopt the provisions in CJO No. 144 or your client requires emergency relief that cannot otherwise be addressed by the standard scheduling order (such as an urgent medical condition or if you have reason to believe, notwithstanding the provisions of CJO No. 144, that the government may remove or transfer your client imminently), you may consider filing a TRO.

If filing an application for TRO, practitioners must comply with Fed. R. Civ. Proc. 65, CV 83.3(g), and any chambers’ rules. Practitioners must submit the following documents:

⁴ For more information on TROs and other forms of injunctive relief, see NILA, *Litigating Injunctions in Federal Court* (Oct. 14, 2025), <https://immigrationlitigation.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/25.10.14-Injunction-Advisory.pdf>.

- Motion for TRO and memorandum in support of the TRO;
- An attorney declaration setting forth the facts and certification required by Fed. R. Civ. Proc. 65(b)(1), accompanied by any exhibits; and
- A proposed TRO (which you must email to the judge's chambers—see **Section III, B, 3**).

Motion to proceed by pseudonym

If you want to keep your adult client's identity out of the public record, you may file a motion to proceed by pseudonym or initials. But note you will still have to disclose your client's identity to opposing counsel. You must also email a proposed order for the motion to the judge's chambers—see **Section III, B. 3**.

TIPS:

- **Redactions.** Fed. R. Civ. Proc. 5.2 requires redaction of the following information:
 - Social Security Numbers, except the last 4 digits
 - Month and day of any birth date
 - Full names of minors. For minor names, use initials
 - Financial account information, except the last four digits
 - While not required, if you are filing using a motion to proceed by pseudonym, you should redact any personally identifying information on the exhibits.
- **Length of Briefs:** Pursuant to CV 7.1(h), briefs in support or in opposition must not exceed 25 pages, and reply briefs must not exceed 10 pages, without leave of court.
- **Table of contents.** Pursuant to CV 7.1(h), any brief exceeding 10 pages must include a table of contents and table of authorities.
- **File size.** In the Southern District, the maximum PDF file size for uploading to CM/ECF is 35 MB. Larger files will need to be split up and labeled clearly.

III. Complete This Checklist on Filing Day

A. File the Habeas Corpus petition

1. Open a new case on CM/ECF

1. Sign in to CM/ECF.
2. Click on "Civil" on top bar.
3. Under "Open a Case," click on "File a New Civil Case – Attorney."

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

Civil Events

Attorney Registration
[Pro Hac Vice Application](#)

Open a Case
[File a New Civil Case - Attorney](#)
[File a New Sealed Misc Case - AUSA](#)

Initial Pleadings and Service
[Complaints, Other Initiating Documents](#)
[Service of Process](#)
[Answers to Complaints](#)
[Other Answers](#)

Motions and Related Filings
[Motions](#)
[Responses and Replies](#)

Proposed Orders
[Email Addresses for Proposed Orders](#)

Other Filings
[Notices](#)
[Trial Documents](#)
[Appeal Documents](#)
[Other Documents](#)
[Credit Card Payments](#)
[Sealed Documents](#)

Resources
[Forms](#)
[View On-Line Demonstrations](#)
[ECF Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual](#)
[CM/ECF Attorney User's Manual](#)

4. A list of notices will appear; review these and then click NEXT.
5. Enter the name of the first plaintiff (your client) and the first defendant you have listed on your habeas petition.

RESPONDENTS/DEFENDANTS: In the Southern District, you should always add the following persons as Defendants (also called “Respondents”) in a habeas matter⁵:

- San Diego ICE Field Office Director: Daniel A. Brightman
- Acting Director, Immigration & Customs Enforcement: David Venturella
- Secretary, Department of Homeland Security: Markwayne Mullin
- Attorney General⁶: Todd Blanche

If your client is detained at the Otay Mesa Detention Center or Imperial Regional Detention Facility, add the warden for the applicable facility:

- Christopher J. LaRose, Warden, Otay Mesa Detention Center
- Sixto Marrero, Warden, Imperial Regional Detention Facility

6. The next screen contains the fee schedule for civil petitions. The fee for filing a habeas petition is \$5. Click NEXT.

⁵ The individuals listed occupy these roles at the time of writing. Practitioners should confirm before filing as the individuals occupying these roles may change.

⁶ Some attorneys only include the Attorney General if they are requesting a bond hearing as a remedy; others do so in all cases because the Executive Office for Immigration Review, which has jurisdiction over the petitioner’s immigration court proceedings, is housed in the Department of Justice.

- Under available events, select “Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus” and then click NEXT.

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

File a New Civil Case - Attorney

Available Events (click to select an event)

- Civil Case
- Miscellaneous Case
- Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus

Selected Event

Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus

Next Clear

- The next screen asks if the initiating pleading and Civil Case Coversheet are signed by the same attorney as the CM/ECF account you are using. Select yes and then click NEXT.
 - Select no for the question, “Does this Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus pertain to a defendant not presented for an Initial Appearance?”
 - The next page is where you will upload the habeas petition and all supporting documents.
 - Upload the Habeas Petition first.
 - Then upload any supporting documents (declarations, etc.) as Attachments. You will need to upload the Civil Cover Sheet here.
- When you attach, you will have the opportunity to name the attachments—this is how they will appear on the court’s record/PACER.

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

File a New Civil Case - Attorney

The Clerk's office will prepare and electronically issue a summons if appropriate. Please do not attach a summons form or file a request for a summons.

For additional information and/or assistance, feel free to call the Clerks Office at (619) 557-6361.

Select the PDF document and any attachments.

Main Document

Browse... 2026-08-31 - [REDACTED] - 2241 Petition.pdf

Attachments	Category	Description
1. Browse... 2026-08-31 - [REDACTED] - 2241 Petition - Exhibits.pdf	Exhibit	
2. Browse... 2026-08-31 - [REDACTED] - JS_044.pdf	Civil Cover Sheet	
3. Browse... No file selected.		

Next Clear

- In the “Description” column, use minimal descriptors, for example, for exhibits simply add “1,” “2,” etc.

- If you are attaching exhibits in bulk but need to split PDFs to conform to the 35 MB doc size limit, consider how you will label the parts in a way that is easily legible such as “Exhibits A-L” and “Exhibits M-Z.”
13. Do NOT file any Notice of Related Case, Application for Pro Hac Vice, or any other type of motion yet.
 14. Click NEXT.
 15. The next page will ask if you are submitting a TRO. Check yes or no depending on whether you will be filing a TRO at the time of filing the petition.
 16. The next screen will ask you if any of the following special circumstances apply. Unless you are a federal defender, select “NONE of the above” and then click NEXT.
 17. After you finalize the petition, you will be redirected to your PACER account page to pay the filing fee of \$5. The case will not be assigned to a judge until the fee is paid.

The screenshot shows the PACER 'Manage My Account' interface. At the top, the PACER logo is displayed with the tagline 'Public Access To Court Electronic Records'. Below the logo, the title 'Manage My Account' is centered in a blue header. The main content area is divided into two sections. The first section, titled 'Account Information', lists the following details: Account Number (redacted), Username (redacted), Amount Due (\$0.00), Account Balance (\$0.00), Case Search Status (Active), Account Type (Upgraded PACER Account), and Multifactor Auth* (Enrolled). The second section, titled 'Pay Filing Fee for California Southern District Court', contains a sub-section for '* Required Information'. This sub-section has a blue header 'Payment Amount' and shows 'Amount Due *' as '\$5.00'. Below this is another blue header 'Select a Payment Method'. Under this header, there are two options: a selected radio button next to a VISA logo (with a redacted card number) and an unselected radio button next to the text 'Enter a credit card'. At the bottom of the payment section, a note states: 'Note: We protect the security of your information during transmission using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) software, which encrypts information you submit.' At the very bottom of the form, there are two buttons: 'Next' and 'Cancel'.

18. Once you have paid, you will be directed back to CM/ECF to finish filing. Review the filing closely to make sure that you have uploaded the correct documents, then click NEXT to submit.

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

File a New Civil Case - Attorney

Docket Text: Final Text

Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus documents submitted (Filing fee received: \$ 5 receipt number ACASDC-21578926.) Plaintiff: [REDACTED]
 Defendant: Christopher J. LAROSE. (Attachments: # (1) Exhibit, # (2) Info Sheet Civil Cover Sheet) [REDACTED]

Attention!! Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue. Have you redacted?

Source Document Path (for confirmation only):

C:\fakepath\2026-08-31-[REDACTED]	2241 Petition.pdf	pages: 27
C:\fakepath\2026-08-31-[REDACTED]	2241 Petition - Exhibits.pdf	pages: 40
C:\fakepath\2026-08-31-[REDACTED]	JS_044.pdf	pages: 1

Next Clear

19. You will be directed to a screen with the title “THIS IS NOT THE FINAL SCREEN.” Click NEXT.

20. You will then be directed to a confirmation screen, which you can print for your records.

2. Check for an email with a link to your filed documents and the assigned judge

Once the court clerk has processed the filing, you will receive an email confirming that the petition was filed. This may take several hours or, if filed late in the afternoon or after hours, you may receive the email on the next business day. You will also be notified of the case number and which district judge and/or magistrate judge is assigned to the case.

Activity in Case [REDACTED] v. LaRose et al Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus

efile_information@casd.uscourts.gov
 To: efile_information@casd.uscourts.gov
 Fri 2026-08-28 8:50 AM

You forwarded this message on Fri 2026-08-28 9:22 AM View conversation

This is an automatic e-mail message generated by the CM/ECF system. Please DO NOT RESPOND to this e-mail because the mail box is unattended.

*****NOTE TO PUBLIC ACCESS USERS***** Judicial Conference of the United States policy permits attorneys of record and parties in a case (including pro se litigants) to receive one free electronic copy of all documents filed electronically, if receipt is required by law or directed by the filer. PACER access fees apply to all other users. To avoid later charges, download a copy of each document during this first viewing. However, if the referenced document is a transcript, the free copy and 30 page limit do not apply.

U.S. District Court
 Southern District of California

Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was entered on 8/28/2026 at 8:48 AM PDT and filed on 8/27/2026

Case Name: [REDACTED]
 Case Number: [REDACTED]
 Filer: [REDACTED]
 Document Number: [1](#)

Docket Text:
 Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus against Daniel A. Brightman, Christopher J. LaRose, Markwayne Mullin, David J. Ventura (Filing fee \$ 5 receipt number ACASDC-21568527.), filed by [REDACTED] (Attachments: # (1) Civil Cover Sheet, # (2) Exhibit)

The new case number is [REDACTED]. Judge [REDACTED] and Magistrate Judge [REDACTED] are assigned to the case. ([REDACTED])(ddo)

Once you receive the email, you should download the filed petition and all documents and save them for your records. This is your only opportunity to save the time-stamped document for free. If you later try to obtain the time stamped documents directly from CM/ECF you will be charged per page.

You can now upload any other documents you want to file by clicking “Civil” on the top menu bar and selecting the appropriate filing. Any additional documents you file must contain the assigned case number on the cover page. After you file, you will receive an email notifying you of activity in your case, with a link to the documents you filed. Click on the link in the email to view and download the files.

3. Read the Civil Standing Orders of the assigned judge

Reading the Civil Standing Orders will help you determine your next steps before filing additional documents. In particular, individual judges’ standing orders often include rules on document formatting, page limits, and TRO and ex parte procedures. Each judge also has their own policy on chambers copies, i.e. whether copies of filings need to be provided to chambers, either electronically or physically, in addition to CM/ECF filing. It is important to know these rules *before* you take any further action in the case.

- Standing orders for all judges: <https://www.casd.uscourts.gov/rules/general-orders.aspx>.
- Additional orders at each judge’s individual web page: <https://www.casd.uscourts.gov/Judges.aspx>.

B. File the TRO motion

As noted above, review CJO No. 144 when assessing whether to request a TRO in your case. Generally, practitioners should only file TROs in the Southern District to remedy truly emergent circumstances; otherwise, the judge is unlikely to adjudicate the TRO separately from the habeas petition. Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 65 governs TROs and CV 83.3(g) governs ex parte matters. If your judge has a standing order related to emergency relief, ensure that you are also following the judge’s specific requirements. Under the rules, a party seeking a TRO must include:

1. The motion, which must be accompanied by a memorandum containing the reasons for the seeking of an ex parte order, and points and authorities in support thereof.
 - Pursuant to CV 7.1(h), the brief may not exceed 25 pages in length without leave of the court.
2. A declaration from the attorney setting forth the immediate and irreparable harm that will result to the client before the government can be heard in opposition, and a certification of any efforts made to give the government notice.

Attorneys may also include any other relevant supporting documents.

EMERGENCY FILINGS: If you are filing an emergency TRO during regular business hours (Mon-Fri, 8:30am–4:30pm), you should call the judge’s courtroom deputy (phone numbers available on the Southern District’s website) or, if the case has not yet been assigned, contact the clerk’s office at (619) 557-5600. The Southern District’s clerk’s office does not maintain an after-hours

contact line, but you can leave a message for the judge's courtroom deputy. You should also review the assigned judge's civil procedures for any additional steps you can take.

1. Give notice to the Assistant U.S. Attorney (AUSA)

As noted, your TRO motion must be accompanied by a declaration explaining that notice has been provided.

You must show you've attempted to give notice.			
If	An AUSA has already entered an appearance OR An AUSA has otherwise been in communication with you, ...	Then	• Call the AUSA, and • Send them a copy of the TRO motion, and • Send them all attachments via email.
If	No AUSA has yet been assigned, ...	Then	• Call the U.S. Attorney's Office at (619) 557-5610, and • Email the motion and all attachments to USACAS.Habeas2241@usdoj.gov.
If	You are proceeding using a pseudonym, ...	Then	• You must still inform the U.S. Attorney's Office of your client's name and A number.

2. File on CM/ECF

1. Select "Civil"
2. Select "Motions and Related Filings" and then select "Motions."

Civil Events

Attorney Registration
[Pro Hac Vice Application](#)

Open a Case
[File a New Civil Case - Attorney](#)
[File a New Sealed Misc Case - AUSA](#)

Initial Pleadings and Service
[Complaints, Other Initiating Documents](#)
[Service of Process](#)
[Answers to Complaints](#)
[Other Answers](#)

Motions and Related Filings
[Motions](#) ←
[Responses and Replies](#)

Proposed Orders
[Email Addresses for Proposed Orders](#)

3. Select “Temporary Restraining Order” from the drop-down menu.
4. Enter the case number.
5. Follow up the prompts.

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

Motions

HABEAS,HabeasPSLCIMM

Supporting Memorandum of Points & Authorities, Declarations, and Exhibits associated with this Motion must be filed as attachments pursuant to the Admin Policies & Procedures Manual section II.g.2.

Next Clear

6. Upload the following:
 - TRO Motion (Main Document)
 - Memorandum of Points and Authorities in Support of Motion for TRO
 - Any exhibits, including
 - Affidavit detailing notice, or showing why notice could not be given
 - Affidavit in support of existence of irreparable harm.

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

Motions

HABEAS,HabeasPSLCIMM

Select the PDF document and any attachments.

Main Document

Browse... No file selected.

Attachments	Category	Description
1. Browse... No file selected.		

Next Clear

- Do NOT file the proposed order; rather, you will email this to the judge’s chambers as discussed below.
7. Follow all remaining prompts.
 8. Verify that the filing is correct and then click NEXT to submit.
- 3. Follow the judge’s rules regarding courtesy copies and proposed orders**
- In the Southern District, some judges require a mandatory chambers copy (i.e., a paper copy of an electronically filed document) to be delivered to the chambers of the

assigned judge shortly after filing. **You must review the judge's standing orders to determine whether the assigned judge in your case requires a chambers copy.**

- You must also submit a Word version of the proposed order to the judge's chambers by email to the specific email address designated for proposed orders on the judge's website. You can also find a list of emails in the CM/ECF system by clicking on "Civil" and selecting "Email Addresses for Proposed Orders." The proposed order should not contain the word "proposed" in the caption and should not contain the name and contact information of the filer. Subject line of email should include the case number followed by a short description of the attachment. Remember that you must include the AUSA on any email to the clerk to avoid ex parte communications.

4. Follow up with the AUSA after filing

- Any time you speak to the AUSA, keep your case goals in mind and consider taking the opportunity to:
 - a. **Educate the AUSA about the law** and advocate for your client's immediate release.
 - b. Ask the AUSA to talk to ICE and/or EOIR and have them release your client immediately.
 - c. Negotiate a jointly stipulated briefing schedule.

TROUBLESHOOTING: For any other questions or help, email the CM/ECF Help Desk at ecfhelp@casd.uscourts.gov or call the clerk's office at (619) 557-5600.

IV. What to Expect Post-Filing:

You will receive an email notifying you of activity in your case, with a link to the documents you filed. Click on the link in the email to view and download the files. **This is the only opportunity to save the time-stamped document for free.** If you later try to obtain the time stamped documents directly from CM/ECF you will be charged per page. You can also access your docket later by selecting "Reports" then "Docket Sheet" at the top of the CM/ECF page.

After filing, your first step should be to **contact the Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO)** division of ICE to let them know your client has a pending habeas petition and, if applicable, remind them that, pursuant to CJO No. 144, your client may not be transferred out of the Southern District unless ordered otherwise by the court. If your client is detained at Otay Mesa Detention Center or Imperial Regional Detention Facility, you should contact your client's deportation officer at the applicable facility. For clients detained at Otay Mesa, attorneys should email their G-28 to OMDC-G28@ice.dhs.gov and call (619) 661-3823. For clients detained at Imperial, attorneys can email Deportations.ECC@ice.dhs.gov or call (760) 768-6300. If your client was only recently detained or you cannot reach the deportation officer, you can contact the San Diego Field Office by email at SanDiego.Outreach@ice.dhs.gov or by phone at (619) 436-0410.

If the assigned judge adopts CJO No. 144, the **briefing schedule** will be as follows:

- **Government's Response:** seven calendar days after the CM/ECF system sends the order adopting CJO No. 144 (usually the day the petition is filed or the day after).

- **Petitioner's Reply:** seven days after the government files its response.

Once the reply is filed, the case will be submitted for final disposition. No hearing is required, but a judge has discretion to set a hearing in appropriate cases. If the court schedules a hearing, prepare, prepare, prepare!

- Consider creating an “argument binder” with your outline and cases for reference during argument
- Schedule a moot oral argument with colleagues
- Talk to others who have appeared before this particular judge

In addition to filing a reply brief, you may have to prepare and file additional filings, such as a status update, a motion to enforce, or others.

- **You will need to classify each new filing appropriately.** For example, if you are filing a reply to the AUSA's opposition, you will see an option for “Responses and Replies” under “Motions and Related Filings.”
- **Certain filings will need to be “linked” to earlier filings in the docket.** For example, if you are filing an Opposition to Respondents' Motion to Dismiss, and the Motion to Dismiss is Docket # 21, you must “link” your filing to Docket # 21. Sometimes a filing is not properly labeled on the back end. If this happens and you cannot find the document type you are looking for, you can either contact the ECF Help Desk or classify the document under the category that most closely fits.
- Stay in touch with opposing counsel.
- Continue to review the Local Rules and judge's standing orders for things like document formatting and, if applicable, oral argument instructions.



San Francisco
t: 415.255.9499
f: 415.255.9792

mailto:ilrc@ilrc.org
www.ilrc.org

Washington D.C.
t: 202.777.8999
f: 202.293.2849

Houston

San Antonio

About the Immigrant Legal Resource Center

The Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) works with immigrants, community organizations, legal professionals, law enforcement, and policy makers to build a democratic society that values diversity and the rights of all people. Through community education programs, legal training and technical assistance, and policy development and advocacy, the ILRC's mission is to protect and defend the fundamental rights of immigrant families and communities.

Copyright © 2026 Immigrant Legal Resource Center