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be recorded by Assignment Services Division, except for documents filed together with a new application, should be addressed to: Mail Stop Assignment Recordation Services, Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313–1450. *See* § 3.27.

(5) *Office of Enrollment and Discipline correspondence.* All correspondence directed to the Office of Enrollment and Discipline concerning enrollment, registration, and investigation matters should be addressed to Mail Stop OED, Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313–1450.

(ii) *Documents.* All requests for certified or uncertified copies of patent documents should be addressed to: Mail Stop Document Services, Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313–1450.

(b) *Patent Cooperation Treaty.* Letters and other communications relating to international applications during the international stage and prior to the assignment of a national serial number should be additionally marked “Mail Stop PCT.”

(c) *For reexamination proceedings.* (1) Requests for *ex parte* reexamination (original request papers) and all subsequent *ex parte* reexamination correspondence filed in the Office, other than correspondence to the Office of the General Counsel pursuant to § 1.1(a)(3) and § 1.302(c), should be additionally marked “Mail Stop *Ex Parte* Reexam.”

(2) Requests for *inter partes* reexamination (original request papers) and all subsequent *inter partes* reexamination correspondence filed in the Office, other than correspondence to the Office of the General Counsel pursuant to § 1.1(a)(3) and § 1.302(c), should be additionally marked “Mail Stop *Inter partes* Reexam.”

(d) Payments of maintenance fees in patents not submitted electronically over the Internet, and correspondence related to maintenance fees may be addressed to: Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Attn: Maintenance Fee, 2051 Jamieson Avenue, Suite 300, Alexandria, Virginia 22314.

(e) *Patent term extension.* All applications for extension of patent term under 35 U.S.C. 156 and any communications relating thereto intended for the United States Patent and Trademark Office should be additionally marked “Mail Stop Hatch-Waxman PTE.” When appropriate, the communication should also be marked to the attention of a particular individual, as where a decision has been rendered.

(f) [Reserved]

[68 FR 14335, Mar. 25, 2003; 68 FR 19371, Apr. 21, 2003, as amended at 68 FR 48287, Aug. 13, 2003; 68 FR 71006, Dec. 22, 2003; 69 FR 29877, May 26, 2004; 69 FR 35451, June 24, 2004; 69 FR 49997, Aug. 12, 2004; 72 FR 18904, Apr. 16, 2007; 73 FR 47540, Aug. 14, 2008; 75 FR 36295, June 25, 2010; 77 FR 46624, Aug. 6, 2012; 77 FR 48811, Aug. 14, 2012]

§ 1.2 Business to be transacted in writing.

All business with the Patent and Trademark Office should be transacted in writing. The personal attendance of applicants or their attorneys or agents at the Patent and Trademark Office is unnecessary. The action of the Patent and Trademark Office will be based exclusively on the written record in the Office. No attention will be paid to any alleged oral promise, stipulation, or understanding in relation to which there is disagreement or doubt.

§ 1.3 Business to be conducted with decorum and courtesy.

Applicants and their attorneys or agents are required to conduct their business with the United States Patent and Trademark Office with decorum and courtesy. Papers presented in violation of this requirement will be submitted to the Director and will not be entered. A notice of the non-entry of the paper will be provided. Complaints against examiners and other employees must be made in correspondence separate from other papers.

[68 FR 38624, June 30, 2003]

§ 1.4 Nature of correspondence and signature requirements.

(a) Correspondence with the Patent and Trademark Office comprises:

(1) Correspondence relating to services and facilities of the Office, such as

general inquiries, requests for publications supplied by the Office, orders for printed copies of patents, orders for copies of records, transmission of assignments for recording, and the like, and

(2) *Correspondence in and relating to a particular application or other proceeding in the Office.* See particularly the rules relating to the filing, processing, or other proceedings of national applications in subpart B, §§1.31 to 1.378; of international applications in subpart C, §§1.401 to 1.499; of *ex parte* reexaminations of patents in subpart D, §§1.501 to 1.570; of extension of patent term in subpart F, §§1.710 to 1.785; of *inter partes* reexaminations of patents in subpart H, §§1.902 to 1.997; and of the Patent Trial and Appeal Board in parts 41 and 42 of this title.

(b) Since each file must be complete in itself, a separate copy of every paper to be filed in a patent application, patent file, or other proceeding must be furnished for each file to which the paper pertains, even though the contents of the papers filed in two or more files may be identical. The filing of duplicate copies of correspondence in the file of an application, patent, or other proceeding should be avoided, except in situations in which the Office requires the filing of duplicate copies. The Office may dispose of duplicate copies of correspondence in the file of an application, patent, or other proceeding.

(c) Since different matters may be considered by different branches or sections of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, each distinct subject, inquiry or order must be contained in a separate paper to avoid confusion and delay in answering papers dealing with different subjects.

(d)(1) *Handwritten signature.* Each piece of correspondence, except as provided in paragraphs (d)(2), (d)(3), (e) and (f) of this section, filed in an application, patent file, or other proceeding in the Office which requires a person's signature, must:

(i) Be an original, that is, have an original handwritten signature personally signed, in permanent dark ink or its equivalent, by that person; or

(ii) Be a direct or indirect copy, such as a photocopy or facsimile transmission (§1.6(d)), of an original. In the

event that a copy of the original is filed, the original should be retained as evidence of authenticity. If a question of authenticity arises, the Office may require submission of the original.

(2) *S-signature.* An S-signature is a signature inserted between forward slash marks, but not a handwritten signature as defined by §1.4(d)(1). An S-signature includes any signature made by electronic or mechanical means, and any other mode of making or applying a signature not covered by a handwritten signature of §1.4(d)(1). Correspondence being filed in the Office in paper, by facsimile transmission as provided in §1.6(d), or via the Office electronic filing system as an attachment as provided in §1.6(a)(4), for a patent application, patent, or a reexamination proceeding may be S-signature signed instead of being personally signed (*i.e.*, with a handwritten signature) as provided for in paragraph (d)(1) of this section. The requirements for an S-signature under this paragraph (d)(2) of this section are as follows.

(i) The S-signature must consist only of letters, or Arabic numerals, or both, with appropriate spaces and commas, periods, apostrophes, or hyphens for punctuation, and the person signing the correspondence must insert his or her own S-signature with a first single forward slash mark before, and a second single forward slash mark after, the S-signature (e.g., /Dr. James T. Jones, Jr./); and

(ii) A patent practitioner (§1.32(a)(1)), signing pursuant to §§1.33(b)(1) or 1.33(b)(2), must supply his/her registration number either as part of the S-signature, or immediately below or adjacent to the S-signature. The number (#) character may be used only as part of the S-signature when appearing before a practitioner's registration number; otherwise the number character may not be used in an S-signature.

(iii) The signer's name must be:

(A) Presented in printed or typed form preferably immediately below or adjacent the S-signature, and

(B) Reasonably specific enough so that the identity of the signer can be readily recognized.

(3) *Forms.* The Office provides forms to the public to use in certain situations to assist in the filing of correspondence for a certain purpose and to meet certain requirements for patent applications and proceedings. Use of the forms for purposes for which they were not designed is prohibited. No changes to certification statements on the Office forms (e.g., oath or declaration forms, terminal disclaimer forms, petition forms, and nonpublication request form) may be made. The existing text of a form, other than a certification statement, may be modified, deleted, or added to, if all text identifying the form as an Office form is removed. The presentation to the Office (whether by signing, filing, submitting, or later advocating) of any Office form with text identifying the form as an Office form by a party, whether a practitioner or non-practitioner, constitutes a certification under § 11.18(b) of this chapter that the existing text and any certification statements on the form have not been altered other than permitted by EFS-Web customization.

(4) *Certifications*—(i) *Section 11.18 certifications.* The presentation to the Office (whether by signing, filing, submitting, or later advocating) of any paper by a party, whether a practitioner or non-practitioner, constitutes a certification under § 11.18(b) of this subchapter. Violations of § 11.18(b)(2) of this subchapter by a party, whether a practitioner or non-practitioner, may result in the imposition of sanctions under § 11.18(c) of this subchapter. Any practitioner violating § 11.18(b) of this subchapter may also be subject to disciplinary action. *See* § 11.18(d) of this subchapter.

(ii) *Certifications as to the signature:*—(A) *Of another:* A person submitting a document signed by another under paragraph (d)(2) of this section is obligated to have a reasonable basis to believe that the person whose signature is present on the document was actually inserted by that person, and should retain evidence of authenticity of the signature.

(B) *Self certification:* The person inserting a signature under paragraph (d)(2) of this section in a document submitted to the Office certifies that the

inserted signature appearing in the document is his or her own signature.

(C) *Sanctions:* Violations of the certifications as to the signature of another or a person's own signature, set forth in paragraphs (d)(4)(ii)(A) and (B) of this section, may result in the imposition of sanctions under § 11.18(c) and (d) of this chapter.

(e) The following correspondence must be submitted with an original handwritten signature personally signed in permanent dark ink or its equivalent:

(1) Correspondence requiring a person's signature and relating to registration to practice before the Patent and Trademark Office in patent cases, enrollment and disciplinary investigations, or disciplinary proceedings; and

(2) Payments by credit cards where the payment is not being made via the Office's electronic filing systems.

(f) When a document that is required by statute to be certified must be filed, a copy, including a photocopy or facsimile transmission, of the certification is not acceptable.

(g) An applicant who has not made of record a registered attorney or agent may be required to state whether assistance was received in the preparation or prosecution of the patent application, for which any compensation or consideration was given or charged, and if so, to disclose the name or names of the person or persons providing such assistance. Assistance includes the preparation for the applicant of the specification and amendments or other papers to be filed in the Patent and Trademark Office, as well as other assistance in such matters, but does not include merely making drawings by draftsmen or stenographic services in typing papers.

(h) *Ratification/confirmation/evidence of authenticity:* The Office may require ratification, confirmation (which includes submission of a duplicate document but with a proper signature), or evidence of authenticity of a signature, such as when the Office has reasonable doubt as to the authenticity (veracity) of the signature, e.g., where there are variations of a signature, or where the signature and the typed or printed

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce

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name, do not clearly identify the person signing.

(Pub. L. 94-131, 89 Stat. 685; 35 U.S.C. 6, Pub. L. 97-247)

EDITORIAL NOTE: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting §1.4, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.fdsys.gov.

§ 1.5 Identification of patent, patent application, or patent-related proceeding.

(a) No correspondence relating to an application should be filed prior to receipt of the application number from the Patent and Trademark Office. When a letter directed to the Patent and Trademark Office concerns a previously filed application for a patent, it must identify on the top page in a conspicuous location, the application number (consisting of the series code and the serial number; *e.g.*, 07/123,456), or the serial number and filing date assigned to that application by the Patent and Trademark Office, or the international application number of the international application. Any correspondence not containing such identification will be returned to the sender where a return address is available. The returned correspondence will be accompanied with a cover letter which will indicate to the sender that if the returned correspondence is resubmitted to the Patent and Trademark Office within two weeks of the mail date on the cover letter, the original date of receipt of the correspondence will be considered by the Patent and Trademark Office as the date of receipt of the correspondence. Applicants may use either the Certificate of Mailing or Transmission procedure under §1.8 or the Express Mail procedure under §1.10 for resubmissions of returned correspondence if they desire to have the benefit of the date of deposit in the United States Postal Service. If the returned correspondence is not resubmitted within the two-week period, the date of receipt of the resubmission will be considered to be the date of receipt of the correspondence. The two-week period to resubmit the returned correspondence will not be extended. In addition to the application number, all letters directed to the Patent and Trademark

Office concerning applications for patent should also state the name of the first listed inventor, the title of the invention, the date of filing the same, and, if known, the group art unit or other unit within the Patent and Trademark Office responsible for considering the letter and the name of the examiner or other person to which it has been assigned.

(b) When the letter concerns a patent other than for purposes of paying a maintenance fee, it should state the number and date of issue of the patent, the name of the patentee, and the title of the invention. For letters concerning payment of a maintenance fee in a patent, see the provisions of §1.366(c).

(c) Correspondence relating to a trial proceeding before the Patent Trial and Appeal Board (part 42 of this title) are governed by §42.6 of this title.

(d) A letter relating to a reexamination proceeding should identify it as such by the number of the patent undergoing reexamination, the reexamination request control number assigned to such proceeding and, if known, the group art unit and name of the examiner to which it has been assigned.

(e) [Reserved]

(f) When a paper concerns a provisional application, it should identify the application as such and include the application number.

(Pub. L. 94-131, 89 Stat. 685; 35 U.S.C. 6, Pub. L. 97-247)

[24 FR 10332, Dec. 22, 1959, as amended at 46 FR 29181, May 29, 1981; 49 FR 552, Jan. 4, 1984; 49 FR 48451, Dec. 12, 1984; 53 FR 47807, Nov. 28, 1988; 58 FR 54501, Oct. 22, 1993; 61 FR 42802, Aug. 19, 1996; 61 FR 56446, Nov. 1, 1996; 64 FR 48917, Sept. 8, 1999; 68 FR 48288, Aug. 13, 2003; 69 FR 49997, Aug. 12, 2004; 77 FR 46624, Aug. 6, 2012; 77 FR 48812, Aug. 14, 2012]

§ 1.6 Receipt of correspondence.

(a) *Date of receipt and Express Mail date of deposit.* Correspondence received in the Patent and Trademark Office is stamped with the date of receipt except as follows:

(1) The Patent and Trademark Office is not open for the filing of correspondence on any day that is a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday within the