

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI
SOUTHEASTERN DIVISION**

HERBERT W. MORRISON, JR.,)	
)	
Plaintiff,)	
)	
v.)	No. 4:17-CV-875-NAB
)	
ANDREW HALE)	
)	
Defendant.)	

MEMORANDUM AND ORDER

This matter is before the Court on Plaintiff’s pro se letter to the Clerk of Court, in which he requests two blank subpoenas “for the production of documents, information, or objects.” For the following reasons, the Court will direct the Clerk to send Plaintiff two blank subpoena forms, which Plaintiff shall complete in accordance with the directions in this Order.

Production of documents from a nonparty can be compelled only by a subpoena duces tecum issued under Rule 45 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. *Fisher v. Marubeni Cotton Corp.*, 526 F.2d 1338, 1341 (8th Cir. 1975) (citations omitted). Thus, if Plaintiff seeks to obtain documents from nonparties, he must comply with the provisions of Rule 45.

The Clerk of the Court will be directed to send Plaintiff blank subpoena forms. Plaintiff may fill out the subpoena forms and return them to the Court, along with a Memorandum for Clerk requesting service on nonparties by the U.S. Marshal.¹ Plaintiff should not sign the subpoenas, as they will be signed by the Clerk after they are returned to and reviewed by the Court.

The Memorandum for Clerk must include the following information for each subpoena: (1) the name of the person or entity Plaintiff seeks to serve; (2) the specific documents Plaintiff seeks;

¹ The in forma pauperis (“IFP”) statute provides that officers of the court will issue and serve all process in IFP actions. See U.S.C. § 1915(d). This requirement applies not only to service of original process, but also to service of a subpoena on behalf of an IFP party. See 9 James Wm. Moore, et al., *Moore’s Federal Practice* § 45.20 (3d. ed. 2015).

(3) how the specified documents are relevant to Plaintiff's case; (4) why Plaintiff believes the person or entity to be subpoenaed has possession of the documents; and (5) how Plaintiff will provide the necessary costs related to document productions. The subpoena forms submitted by Plaintiff should be typewritten, if possible, or otherwise must be legible or they will not be considered.

The Court retains the discretion to refuse to issue Rule 45 subpoenas to nonparties if Plaintiff does not provide the required information in the Memorandum for Clerk, or if the Court believes the requests are frivolous or otherwise improper. The Court has the "discretionary power to refuse to subpoena witnesses and to prevent abuse of its process in both civil and criminal proceedings." *Manning v. Lockhart*, 623 F.2d 536, 539 (8th Cir. 1980) (per curiam). This power should be exercised to protect the resources of the Court and the U.S. Marshals Service, and to prevent harassment and undue expense of other parties and nonparties. See, e.g., *Lloyd v. McKendree*, 749 F.2d 705, 707 (11th Cir. 1985).

"Courts exercising inherent supervisory power over in forma pauperis subpoenas generally consider factors such as the relevance and materiality of the information requested and the necessity of the particular testimony or documents to proving the indigent's case." See *Stockdale v. Stockdale*, 2009 WL 4030758 at *1 (E.D. Mo. Nov. 18, 2009); *Tuvalu v. Woodford*, 2006 WL 3201096, at *5 (E.D. Cal. Nov. 2, 2006) ("[A] party's ability to use a subpoena duces tecum is circumscribed by the relevance standards of Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(b)(1)"); *Jackson v. Brinker*, 1992 WL 404537, at *7 (S.D. Ind. Dec. 21, 1992).

Additionally, Plaintiff should be mindful of the fact that although Plaintiff has been granted in forma pauperis status under 28 U.S.C. § 1915, nothing in the statute authorizes or permits the Court to waive the expense requirements of Rule 45. See generally *McNeil v.*

Lowney, 831 F.2d 1368, 1373 (7th Cir. 1987), cert. denied, 485 U.S. 965 (1988); *Badman v. Stark*, 139 F.R.D. 601, 605-06 (M.D. Pa. 1991); *Leadbetter v. City of Fort Wayne*, 2007 WL 2323109, at *2 n.2 (N.D. Ind. Aug. 10, 2007) (citing cases). If Plaintiff were required to file a motion to compel, or if the subpoenaed parties objected to the subpoenas, the Court could condition an order requiring document production upon Plaintiff's advancing the copying costs for those documents. Accordingly, when reviewing subpoenas directed to nonparties, a court should also examine issues related to the expected compliance costs in light of Rule 45's provision that nonparties be protected against significant expense. Jackson, 1992 WL 404537, at *5 ("If a court finds that an indigent party's requests for issuance and service of a subpoena duces tecum . . . would be reasonably certain to result in the indigent's responsibility for significant compliance costs for which he cannot provide, or is otherwise unreasonable or abusive of the court's process, the court may relieve the Marshals Service of its duty under § 1915(c) to serve the subpoenae.").

Plaintiff is cautioned that before he attempts to serve a Rule 45 subpoena, he must serve Defendant with a notice that the subpoena will be issued. See Rule 45(a)(4). Failure to comply with the prior notice requirement could result in the imposition of sanctions, including the exclusion of any evidence produced or the imposition of monetary sanctions. See 9 James Wm. Moore, et al., *Moore's Federal Practice*, § 45.21[3][a] (3d ed. 2015). Adequate notice requires Plaintiff to specifically identify the entities or persons he seeks to subpoena, and the documents he is requesting. Otherwise, the defendant is not given a reasonable opportunity to object to the production. See *id.*

Accordingly,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the Clerk of the Court shall send Plaintiff two blank subpoena forms, which Plaintiff may fill out as required by this Memorandum and Order and return to the Court with a Memorandum for Clerk requesting that the subpoena be served by the U.S. Marshal.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that if Plaintiff requests additional blank subpoena forms in the future, each such request must be accompanied by a Memorandum for Clerk that includes the following information for each requested subpoena: (1) the name of the person or entity Plaintiff seeks to serve; (2) the specific documents Plaintiff seeks; (3) how the specified documents are relevant to Plaintiff's case; (4) why Plaintiff believes the person or entity to be subpoenaed has possession of the documents; and (5) how Plaintiff will provide the necessary costs related to document productions.

/s/ Nannette A. Baker
NANNETTE A. BAKER
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

Dated this 20th day of November, 2017.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
for the

Plaintiff
v.
Defendant
Civil Action No.

SUBPOENA TO PRODUCE DOCUMENTS, INFORMATION, OR OBJECTS
OR TO PERMIT INSPECTION OF PREMISES IN A CIVIL ACTION

To:

(Name of person to whom this subpoena is directed)

Production: YOU ARE COMMANDED to produce at the time, date, and place set forth below the following documents, electronically stored information, or objects, and to permit inspection, copying, testing, or sampling of the material:

Place: Date and Time:

Inspection of Premises: YOU ARE COMMANDED to permit entry onto the designated premises, land, or other property possessed or controlled by you at the time, date, and location set forth below, so that the requesting party may inspect, measure, survey, photograph, test, or sample the property or any designated object or operation on it.

Place: Date and Time:

The following provisions of Fed. R. Civ. P. 45 are attached – Rule 45(c), relating to the place of compliance; Rule 45(d), relating to your protection as a person subject to a subpoena; and Rule 45(e) and (g), relating to your duty to respond to this subpoena and the potential consequences of not doing so.

Date:

CLERK OF COURT

OR

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

Attorney's signature

The name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number of the attorney representing (name of party), who issues or requests this subpoena, are:

Notice to the person who issues or requests this subpoena

If this subpoena commands the production of documents, electronically stored information, or tangible things or the inspection of premises before trial, a notice and a copy of the subpoena must be served on each party in this case before it is served on the person to whom it is directed. Fed. R. Civ. P. 45(a)(4).

Civil Action No. _____

PROOF OF SERVICE

(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 45.)

I received this subpoena for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
on *(date)* _____ .

I served the subpoena by delivering a copy to the named person as follows: _____

_____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

I returned the subpoena unexecuted because: _____
_____ .

Unless the subpoena was issued on behalf of the United States, or one of its officers or agents, I have also
tendered to the witness the fees for one day's attendance, and the mileage allowed by law, in the amount of
\$ _____ .

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ _____ 0.00 .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc.:

Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 45 (c), (d), (e), and (g) (Effective 12/1/13)

(c) Place of Compliance.

(1) For a Trial, Hearing, or Deposition. A subpoena may command a person to attend a trial, hearing, or deposition only as follows:

- (A) within 100 miles of where the person resides, is employed, or regularly transacts business in person; or
- (B) within the state where the person resides, is employed, or regularly transacts business in person, if the person
 - (i) is a party or a party's officer; or
 - (ii) is commanded to attend a trial and would not incur substantial expense.

(2) For Other Discovery. A subpoena may command:

- (A) production of documents, electronically stored information, or tangible things at a place within 100 miles of where the person resides, is employed, or regularly transacts business in person; and
- (B) inspection of premises at the premises to be inspected.

(d) Protecting a Person Subject to a Subpoena; Enforcement.

(1) Avoiding Undue Burden or Expense; Sanctions. A party or attorney responsible for issuing and serving a subpoena must take reasonable steps to avoid imposing undue burden or expense on a person subject to the subpoena. The court for the district where compliance is required must enforce this duty and impose an appropriate sanction—which may include lost earnings and reasonable attorney's fees—on a party or attorney who fails to comply.

(2) Command to Produce Materials or Permit Inspection.

(A) *Appearance Not Required.* A person commanded to produce documents, electronically stored information, or tangible things, or to permit the inspection of premises, need not appear in person at the place of production or inspection unless also commanded to appear for a deposition, hearing, or trial.

(B) *Objections.* A person commanded to produce documents or tangible things or to permit inspection may serve on the party or attorney designated in the subpoena a written objection to inspecting, copying, testing, or sampling any or all of the materials or to inspecting the premises—or to producing electronically stored information in the form or forms requested. The objection must be served before the earlier of the time specified for compliance or 14 days after the subpoena is served. If an objection is made, the following rules apply:

- (i) At any time, on notice to the commanded person, the serving party may move the court for the district where compliance is required for an order compelling production or inspection.
- (ii) These acts may be required only as directed in the order, and the order must protect a person who is neither a party nor a party's officer from significant expense resulting from compliance.

(3) Quashing or Modifying a Subpoena.

(A) *When Required.* On timely motion, the court for the district where compliance is required must quash or modify a subpoena that:

- (i) fails to allow a reasonable time to comply;
- (ii) requires a person to comply beyond the geographical limits specified in Rule 45(c);
- (iii) requires disclosure of privileged or other protected matter, if no exception or waiver applies; or
- (iv) subjects a person to undue burden.

(B) *When Permitted.* To protect a person subject to or affected by a subpoena, the court for the district where compliance is required may, on motion, quash or modify the subpoena if it requires:

- (i) disclosing a trade secret or other confidential research, development, or commercial information; or

(ii) disclosing an unretained expert's opinion or information that does not describe specific occurrences in dispute and results from the expert's study that was not requested by a party.

(C) *Specifying Conditions as an Alternative.* In the circumstances described in Rule 45(d)(3)(B), the court may, instead of quashing or modifying a subpoena, order appearance or production under specified conditions if the serving party:

- (i) shows a substantial need for the testimony or material that cannot be otherwise met without undue hardship; and
- (ii) ensures that the subpoenaed person will be reasonably compensated.

(e) Duties in Responding to a Subpoena.

(1) Producing Documents or Electronically Stored Information. These procedures apply to producing documents or electronically stored information:

(A) *Documents.* A person responding to a subpoena to produce documents must produce them as they are kept in the ordinary course of business or must organize and label them to correspond to the categories in the demand.

(B) *Form for Producing Electronically Stored Information Not Specified.* If a subpoena does not specify a form for producing electronically stored information, the person responding must produce it in a form or forms in which it is ordinarily maintained or in a reasonably usable form or forms.

(C) *Electronically Stored Information Produced in Only One Form.* The person responding need not produce the same electronically stored information in more than one form.

(D) *Inaccessible Electronically Stored Information.* The person responding need not provide discovery of electronically stored information from sources that the person identifies as not reasonably accessible because of undue burden or cost. On motion to compel discovery or for a protective order, the person responding must show that the information is not reasonably accessible because of undue burden or cost. If that showing is made, the court may nonetheless order discovery from such sources if the requesting party shows good cause, considering the limitations of Rule 26(b)(2)(C). The court may specify conditions for the discovery.

(2) Claiming Privilege or Protection.

(A) *Information Withheld.* A person withholding subpoenaed information under a claim that it is privileged or subject to protection as trial-preparation material must:

- (i) expressly make the claim; and
- (ii) describe the nature of the withheld documents, communications, or tangible things in a manner that, without revealing information itself privileged or protected, will enable the parties to assess the claim.

(B) *Information Produced.* If information produced in response to a subpoena is subject to a claim of privilege or of protection as trial-preparation material, the person making the claim may notify any party that received the information of the claim and the basis for it. After being notified, a party must promptly return, sequester, or destroy the specified information and any copies it has; must not use or disclose the information until the claim is resolved; must take reasonable steps to retrieve the information if the party disclosed it before being notified; and may promptly present the information under seal to the court for the district where compliance is required for a determination of the claim. The person who produced the information must preserve the information until the claim is resolved.

(g) Contempt.

The court for the district where compliance is required—and also, after a motion is transferred, the issuing court—may hold in contempt a person who, having been served, fails without adequate excuse to obey the subpoena or an order related to it.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
for the

Plaintiff
v.
Defendant
Civil Action No.

SUBPOENA TO PRODUCE DOCUMENTS, INFORMATION, OR OBJECTS
OR TO PERMIT INSPECTION OF PREMISES IN A CIVIL ACTION

To:

(Name of person to whom this subpoena is directed)

Production: YOU ARE COMMANDED to produce at the time, date, and place set forth below the following documents, electronically stored information, or objects, and to permit inspection, copying, testing, or sampling of the material:

Place: Date and Time:

Inspection of Premises: YOU ARE COMMANDED to permit entry onto the designated premises, land, or other property possessed or controlled by you at the time, date, and location set forth below, so that the requesting party may inspect, measure, survey, photograph, test, or sample the property or any designated object or operation on it.

Place: Date and Time:

The following provisions of Fed. R. Civ. P. 45 are attached – Rule 45(c), relating to the place of compliance; Rule 45(d), relating to your protection as a person subject to a subpoena; and Rule 45(e) and (g), relating to your duty to respond to this subpoena and the potential consequences of not doing so.

Date:

CLERK OF COURT

OR

Signature of Clerk or Deputy Clerk

Attorney's signature

The name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number of the attorney representing (name of party), who issues or requests this subpoena, are:

Notice to the person who issues or requests this subpoena

If this subpoena commands the production of documents, electronically stored information, or tangible things or the inspection of premises before trial, a notice and a copy of the subpoena must be served on each party in this case before it is served on the person to whom it is directed. Fed. R. Civ. P. 45(a)(4).

Civil Action No. _____

PROOF OF SERVICE

(This section should not be filed with the court unless required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 45.)

I received this subpoena for *(name of individual and title, if any)* _____
on *(date)* _____ .

I served the subpoena by delivering a copy to the named person as follows: _____

_____ on *(date)* _____ ; or

I returned the subpoena unexecuted because: _____
_____ .

Unless the subpoena was issued on behalf of the United States, or one of its officers or agents, I have also
tendered to the witness the fees for one day's attendance, and the mileage allowed by law, in the amount of
\$ _____ .

My fees are \$ _____ for travel and \$ _____ for services, for a total of \$ _____ 0.00 _____ .

I declare under penalty of perjury that this information is true.

Date: _____

Server's signature

Printed name and title

Server's address

Additional information regarding attempted service, etc.:

Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 45 (c), (d), (e), and (g) (Effective 12/1/13)

(c) Place of Compliance.

(1) For a Trial, Hearing, or Deposition. A subpoena may command a person to attend a trial, hearing, or deposition only as follows:

- (A) within 100 miles of where the person resides, is employed, or regularly transacts business in person; or
- (B) within the state where the person resides, is employed, or regularly transacts business in person, if the person
 - (i) is a party or a party's officer; or
 - (ii) is commanded to attend a trial and would not incur substantial expense.

(2) For Other Discovery. A subpoena may command:

- (A) production of documents, electronically stored information, or tangible things at a place within 100 miles of where the person resides, is employed, or regularly transacts business in person; and
- (B) inspection of premises at the premises to be inspected.

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(1) Avoiding Undue Burden or Expense; Sanctions. A party or attorney responsible for issuing and serving a subpoena must take reasonable steps to avoid imposing undue burden or expense on a person subject to the subpoena. The court for the district where compliance is required must enforce this duty and impose an appropriate sanction—which may include lost earnings and reasonable attorney's fees—on a party or attorney who fails to comply.

(2) Command to Produce Materials or Permit Inspection.

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(B) *Objections.* A person commanded to produce documents or tangible things or to permit inspection may serve on the party or attorney designated in the subpoena a written objection to inspecting, copying, testing, or sampling any or all of the materials or to inspecting the premises—or to producing electronically stored information in the form or forms requested. The objection must be served before the earlier of the time specified for compliance or 14 days after the subpoena is served. If an objection is made, the following rules apply:

- (i) At any time, on notice to the commanded person, the serving party may move the court for the district where compliance is required for an order compelling production or inspection.
- (ii) These acts may be required only as directed in the order, and the order must protect a person who is neither a party nor a party's officer from significant expense resulting from compliance.

(3) Quashing or Modifying a Subpoena.

(A) *When Required.* On timely motion, the court for the district where compliance is required must quash or modify a subpoena that:

- (i) fails to allow a reasonable time to comply;
- (ii) requires a person to comply beyond the geographical limits specified in Rule 45(c);
- (iii) requires disclosure of privileged or other protected matter, if no exception or waiver applies; or
- (iv) subjects a person to undue burden.

(B) *When Permitted.* To protect a person subject to or affected by a subpoena, the court for the district where compliance is required may, on motion, quash or modify the subpoena if it requires:

- (i) disclosing a trade secret or other confidential research, development, or commercial information; or

- (ii) disclosing an unretained expert's opinion or information that does not describe specific occurrences in dispute and results from the expert's study that was not requested by a party.

(C) *Specifying Conditions as an Alternative.* In the circumstances described in Rule 45(d)(3)(B), the court may, instead of quashing or modifying a subpoena, order appearance or production under specified conditions if the serving party:

- (i) shows a substantial need for the testimony or material that cannot be otherwise met without undue hardship; and
- (ii) ensures that the subpoenaed person will be reasonably compensated.

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(C) *Electronically Stored Information Produced in Only One Form.* The person responding need not produce the same electronically stored information in more than one form.

(D) *Inaccessible Electronically Stored Information.* The person responding need not provide discovery of electronically stored information from sources that the person identifies as not reasonably accessible because of undue burden or cost. On motion to compel discovery or for a protective order, the person responding must show that the information is not reasonably accessible because of undue burden or cost. If that showing is made, the court may nonetheless order discovery from such sources if the requesting party shows good cause, considering the limitations of Rule 26(b)(2)(C). The court may specify conditions for the discovery.

(2) Claiming Privilege or Protection.

(A) *Information Withheld.* A person withholding subpoenaed information under a claim that it is privileged or subject to protection as trial-preparation material must:

- (i) expressly make the claim; and
- (ii) describe the nature of the withheld documents, communications, or tangible things in a manner that, without revealing information itself privileged or protected, will enable the parties to assess the claim.

(B) *Information Produced.* If information produced in response to a subpoena is subject to a claim of privilege or of protection as trial-preparation material, the person making the claim may notify any party that received the information of the claim and the basis for it. After being notified, a party must promptly return, sequester, or destroy the specified information and any copies it has; must not use or disclose the information until the claim is resolved; must take reasonable steps to retrieve the information if the party disclosed it before being notified; and may promptly present the information under seal to the court for the district where compliance is required for a determination of the claim. The person who produced the information must preserve the information until the claim is resolved.

(g) Contempt.

The court for the district where compliance is required—and also, after a motion is transferred, the issuing court—may hold in contempt a person who, having been served, fails without adequate excuse to obey the subpoena or an order related to it.