

RFEM Update: COVID-19 and IP Venues in the U.S.

Firm News

4.22.20

Dear colleagues and clients,

We hope you and your family are remaining healthy and safe.

The Mayor of the District of Columbia issued a stay-at-home order for the District beginning on April 1, 2020, and the firm continues to allow attorneys and staff to work from home while remaining fully operational.

Below are the latest updates as they pertain to intellectual property venues in the United States. Your Rothwell Figg attorneys will contact you regarding how these modifications impact you, and we will continue to monitor adjustments made due to the COVID-19 pandemic and keep you informed. Of course, if you have any questions or need further clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to your contacts at Rothwell Figg.

United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)

- As of March 31, 2020, the USPTO announced extensions to the time allowed to file certain patent and trademark-related documents and to pay certain required fees. The official Patent notice and the official Trademark notice provide information on which documents in particular are affected. The USPTO also released a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and answers related to the extensions. You can find the FAQs related to patents [here](#) and trademarks [here](#).
- As of March 19, 2020, the USPTO waived the requirement for an original handwritten signature for certain correspondence with the Office of Enrollment and Discipline and certain payments by credit card. You can find the notice [here](#).
- As of March 16, 2020, the USPTO announced that for any patent applicants or patent owners who were unable to timely reply to an Office communication due to the effects of the coronavirus outbreak, which resulted in an application being held abandoned or the reexamination prosecution terminated or limited, the petition fee will be waived. For trademark applications and registrations that were abandoned or canceled/expired due to the inability to timely respond to a trademark-related Office communication as a result of the effects of the coronavirus outbreak, the USPTO will waive the petition fee to revive the abandoned application or reinstate the canceled/expired registration. You can find additional information in the Office notice.

United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit

- As of March 20, 2020, the Federal Circuit implemented additional temporary modifications to court operations, including suspending the filing of certain paper copies, establishing modified filing and service procedures for parties appearing pro se, authorizing changes to how the Clerk's Office

provides assistance to the public, and providing additional guidance to counsel concerning the scheduling of future court hearings. You can find the full administrative order [here](#).

- Following the issuance of the administrative order on March 20, 2020, the Clerk's Office provided public notices of the following temporary changes:
 - Notice of Modified Public Assistance from the Clerk's Office
 - Notice of Modified Filing Procedures for Pro Se Parties
 - Notice of Modified Service Procedures for Pro Se Parties

District Courts

- Federal courts are individually coordinating with state and local health officials to obtain local information about coronavirus, and some have issued orders relating to court business, operating status, and public and employee safety. This page on the Federal Courts website contains links to all federal court websites, as well as links to court orders and other information posted on the courts' websites regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and court business.