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DIRECTIVE # 08-18

To: Assignment Judges
Civil Presiding Judges
Supervising Special Civil Part Judges

From: Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D. 

RE: Non-Inclusion and Removal of Confidential Personal Identifiers from
Documents Submitted to the Court – Sheriffs; Special Civil Part Officers

Date: June 13, 2018

Contrary to Judiciary policy, some Sheriff's departments and some Special Civil Part (SCP) Officers continue to include confidential personal identifiers (CPIs) in documents submitted to the court. Please remedy this situation if it is occurring in your vicinage.

A CPI is defined as a Social Security number, driver's license number, vehicle plate number, insurance policy number, active financial account number, or active credit card number. The Judiciary specifically prohibits submission of documents with CPIs, except in limited circumstances where CPIs are required by statute, rule, administrative directive or court order. See R. 1:38-7(b).

The Judiciary has developed eCourts as an electronic filing and record keeping system pursuant to R. 1:32-2A. Over the past four years, this electronic system has been implemented in the Criminal Division, Tax Court, Foreclosure cases in General Equity, the Special Civil Part (DC cases) and the Civil Part of the Law Division. It is currently being implemented in other Divisions. Documents are being electronically filed by attorneys and are being filed on paper by self-represented litigants and uploaded into eCourts by court staff. These documents are viewable by the public, where appropriate, at public access terminals in each courthouse.

The Civil Division Managers have reported that some Sheriff's departments and some SCP Officers continue to include Social Security numbers and other CPIs on documents submitted to the court, including returns of service and writ execution returns. Rule 1:38-7(b) requires that CPIs must not be included on these documents and must be removed by the officer before submission to the court. If this is happening in your vicinage, please meet with your Sheriff's department and/or your SCP Officers to reinforce that CPIs should not be included in any documents submitted to the court.

Questions may be directed to Michelle M. Smith, Clerk of the Superior Court, at 609-815-2900 ext. 54200 or michelle.smith@njcourts.gov.

cc: Chief Justice Stuart Rabner
Steven D. Bonville, Chief of Staff
AOC Directors and Assistant Directors
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Civil Division Managers
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