

Rule 34. Producing Documents, Electronically Stored Information, and Tangible Things, or Entering onto Land, for Inspection and Other Purposes

(a) IN GENERAL. A party may serve on any other party a request within the scope of Rule 26(b):

(1) to produce and permit the requesting party or its representative to inspect, copy, test, or sample the following items in the responding party's possession, custody, or control:

(A) any designated documents or electronically stored information—including writings, drawings, graphs, charts, photographs, sound recordings, images, and other data or data compilations—stored in any medium from which information can be obtained either directly or, if necessary, after translation by the responding party into a reasonably usable form; or

(B) any designated tangible things; or

(2) to permit entry onto designated land or other property possessed or controlled by the responding party, so that the requesting party may inspect, measure, survey, photograph, test, or sample the property or any designated object or operation on it.

(b) PROCEDURE.

(1) *Contents of the Request.* The request:

(A) must describe with reasonable particularity each item or category of items to be inspected;

(B) must specify a reasonable time, place, and manner for the inspection and for performing the related acts; and

(C) may specify the form or forms in which electronically stored information is to be produced.

(2) *Responses and Objections.*

(A) *Time to Respond.* The party to whom the request is directed must respond in writing within 30 days after being served, except that a defendant may serve a response within 45 days after service of the summons and complaint upon that defendant or within 75 days after service of the summons and complaint upon the District of Columbia or its officer or agency or the United States or its officer or agency. A shorter or longer time may be stipulated to under Rule 29 or be ordered by the court.

(B) *Responding to Each Item.* For each item or category, the response must either state that inspection and related activities will be permitted as requested or state with specificity the grounds for objecting to the request, including the reasons. The responding party may state that it will produce copies of documents or of electronically stored information instead of permitting inspection. The production must then be completed no later than the time for inspection specified in the request or another reasonable time specified in the response.

(C) *Objections.* An objection must state whether any responsive materials are being withheld on the basis of that objection. An objection to part of a request must specify the part and permit inspection of the rest.

(D) *Responding to a Request for Production of Electronically Stored Information.* The response may state an objection to a requested form for producing electronically stored information. If the responding party objects to a requested form—or if no form was specified in the request—the party must state the form or forms it intends to use.

(E) *Producing the Documents or Electronically Stored Information.* Unless otherwise stipulated or ordered by the court, these procedures apply to producing documents or electronically stored information:

(i) A party must produce documents as they are kept in the usual course of business or must organize and label them to correspond to the categories in the request;

(ii) If a request does not specify a form for producing electronically stored information, a party must produce it in a form or forms in which it is ordinarily maintained or in a reasonably usable form or forms; and

(iii) A party need not produce the same electronically stored information in more than one form.

(F) *Quoting Each Request in Full.* Responses and objections to requests for production of documents must identify and quote each request in full immediately preceding the response or objection.

(3) *Electronic Format.* A party, represented by counsel, requesting production must, upon request of any other party, promptly transmit to such other party an electronic version of the request in a format that will enable the receiving party to copy the language of the request electronically. A self-represented party may participate in electronic discovery pursuant to this rule, provided that the party files a completed Civil Action Form 115, which includes the party's email address and confirms the party's capacity to file documents and receive the filings of other parties electronically and on a regular basis.

(c) NONPARTIES. As provided in Rule 45, a nonparty may be compelled to produce documents and tangible things or to permit an inspection.

COMMENT TO 2017 AMENDMENTS

This rule incorporates the 2015 amendments to *Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 34*, except for the amendment related to early Rule 34 requests, which were deemed inconsistent with Superior Court practice.

COMMENT

Identical to *Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 34*, as amended in 2007, except for: (1) the addition of language in subsection (b)(2)(A), clarifying the extended 75-day response period to requests for the United States, the District of Columbia, or officers or agents of either, and the extended 45-day response period to requests for all other defendants; (2) the addition of subsection (b)(2)(F), which requires that the responses and objections to requests for production must quote each request in full preceding the response or objection; and (3) the addition of subsection (b)(3), requiring represented parties, and self-represented parties electing to participate in electronic discovery to, upon request, transmit electronic copies of requests to any other party.

The language in subsection (b)(2)(F) comes from Local Rule 26.2(d) of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.