

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

IN RE: EXEMPTION FROM
THE ELECTRONIC PACER
PUBLIC ACCESS FEES BY
ETHAN BOLDT

Administrative Order
No. 17-MS-089

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

This matter is before the Court upon the application and request by Ethan Boldt, The University of Georgia, for the exemption from the fees imposed by the Electronic Public Access fee schedule adopted by the Judicial Conference of the United States Courts. A copy of the request is attached to this Administrative Order.

This Court finds that Ethan Boldt, an individual researcher associated with an educational institution, falls within the class of users listed in the fee schedule as being eligible for a fee exemption. Additionally, Ethan Boldt has demonstrated that an exemption is necessary in order to avoid unreasonable burdens and to promote public access to information. Accordingly, Ethan Boldt shall be exempt from the payment of the fees for access via PACER to the electronic case files maintained in this Court, to the extent such use is incurred in the course of educational research. He shall not be exempt from the payment of fees incurred in connection with other uses of the PACER system in this Court. Additionally, the following limitations apply:

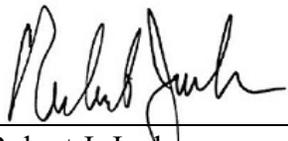
1. This fee exemption applies only to Ethan Boldt and is valid only for the purposes stated above and recited in the request;
2. This fee exemption applies only to the electronic case files of this Court that are available through the PACER system;

3. By accepting this exemption, Ethan Boldt agrees not to sell for profit any data obtained as a result of receiving this exemption;
4. This exemption is valid commencing August 16, 2017 and ending December 31, 2018.

This order may be revoked at the discretion of the Court at any time. A copy of this Order shall be sent to the PACER Service Center.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: August 16, 2017



Robert J. Jonker
Chief United States District Judge



The University of Georgia

School of Public and International Affairs
Department of Political Science

July 27, 2017

Re: PACER fee exemption request

The Honorable Robert J. Jonker
Chief Judge, Western District of Michigan
685 Federal Bldg
110 Michigan St NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Dear Chief Judge Robert J. Jonker,

My name is Ethan Boldt, and I am a doctoral student in the University of Georgia's Department of Political Science. I am writing you in the hope of receiving a discretionary PACER fee exemption for your District so that I may gather data for my dissertation research: "The People and Process of Federal Criminal Cases." Under § 9 of the Electronic Public Access Fee Schedule, the Judicial Conference specifies that individual researchers associated with educational institutions may be granted an exemption from PACER fees.

The Electronic Public Access Fee Schedule requires that, "those seeking an exemption have demonstrated that an exemption is necessary in order to avoid unreasonable burdens and to promote public access to information" and that, "individual researchers requesting an exemption have shown that the defined research project is intended for scholarly research, that it is limited in scope, and that it is not intended for redistribution on the internet or for commercial purposes."

I believe this request meets these requirements. I am interested in gathering a defined sample of criminal case documents for statistical research featured in my dissertation project. Unfortunately, gathering the number of case documents necessary would be prohibitively expensive to do on my own. As a student I have an extremely limited ability to personally pay these fees and cannot effectively gather these case documents without assistance. I will not redistribute the documents I obtain on the Internet or use them commercially. The expected final completion date of PACER document retrieval will be **December 31, 2018**.

My dissertation focuses on how court professionals influence the adjudicatory process for defendants accused of federal crimes. The aspects of the cases being examined include pretrial release, case disposition times, and sanctions. As a quantitative researcher using statistical methods, my project will not shine a spotlight on specific cases or the particular persons involved in them. Instead, I hope to analyze aggregate relationships between variables and outcomes. I seek to draw a random sample of docket sheets and underlying case documents for criminal cases from 2006 to 2011.

Research on the criminal justice process is particularly timely given the increased attention it is receiving from citizens and the government itself. This research may potentially offer key insights to the public, identify inefficiencies, and suggest avenues for bipartisan reform.

I sincerely appreciate your time and effort considering this request. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions by phone at 630-234-8850 or by e-mail at edboldt@uga.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ethan Boldt', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ethan Boldt

PACER account #: 5217557

PACER username: ethanboldt

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