
**United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois
JERS (Jury Evidence Recording System) Attorney Instructions**

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Appendix – JERS Naming Conventions

I. OVERVIEW

Jury Evidence Recording System (JERS) provides ready access to the evidence during deliberation through the use of a touch-screen kiosk, reducing the need to handle physical evidence while allowing the jury to view the evidence multiple times, rewind videos, and zoom in on pictures and documents.

JERS is available in courtroom 1919, 2103, 2119, and 2541.

II. BEFORE TRIAL

All Cases

A. Statement of JERS Use at Trial.

In courtrooms where JERS is available, JERS will be used to present electronic evidence to the jury unless otherwise ordered by the presiding judge.

B. Submission of Electronic Exhibits to the Court.

Electronic exhibits shall be exchanged between parties and provided to the court on a data storage device, such as a USB, DVD, or CD.

Please note: *While exhibit stickers are used for paper/physical exhibits, the electronic exhibits provided for use in JERS should not display the exhibit numbering stickers. The exhibit description replaces the use of exhibit stickers on the electronic version of exhibits only.*

Cumulative File Size of Exhibits too Large for One CD/DVD

If a party's electronic exhibits are cumulatively too large to fit on one CD/DVD, then you must use a USB drive with sufficient storage capability for all electronic exhibits to fit on the one drive.

C. Correct Naming Convention for Electronic Exhibits.

1. Plaintiff(s)/Government

a) **General Format:**

<exhibit number> - <exhibit part>_<exhibit description>.<file extension>

****Note: All exhibits shall be described using neutral and non-adversarial terms. For any exhibit that is marked for identification, do not include "(ID)" in the exhibit number or description of the electronic copy submitted for use in JERS.**

b) Maximum Number of Characters: The maximum number of characters that may be used in the <exhibit number> and the <exhibit part> field is 4 each. The maximum number of characters that may be used in the <exhibit description> field is 200.

c) Specific Format: The exhibit name(s) for plaintiff(s)/government begin with numerical characters. Examples:

- (1) *"1_2010 Financial Statement.pdf"*
- (2) *"2-a_Store Surveillance Footage.wmv"*
- (3) *"2-b_Phone Call Recording.mp3"*
- (4) *"1111-aaaa_Store Surveillance Footage 2.mpg"*

2. Defendant(s)

a) General Format:

<exhibit number> - <exhibit part>_<exhibit description>.<file extension>

****Note:** All exhibits shall be described using neutral and non-adversarial terms. For any exhibit that is marked for identification, do not include "(ID)" in the exhibit number or description of the electronic copy submitted for use in JERS.

b) Maximum Number of Characters: The maximum number of characters that may be used in the <exhibit number> and the <exhibit part> field is 4 each. The maximum number of characters that may be used in the <exhibit description> field is 200.

c) Specific Format: The exhibit name(s) for defendant(s) begin with alpha characters. Examples:

- (1) *"A_2010 Financial Statement.pdf"*
- (2) *"B-1_Stor Surveillance Footage.wmv"*
- (3) *"B-2_Phone Call Recording.mp3"*
- (4) *"AAAA-1111_Suspect Surveillance Footage 2.mpg"*

D. Importing Submitted Exhibits into JERS.

Once the electronic exhibits are received by the courtroom deputy, the courtroom

deputy will import them into JERS in preparation for trial. The courtroom deputy will compare the electronic evidence with the exhibit list to ensure we have an electronic copy of all non- physical exhibits.

III. TRIAL

To the extent possible or anticipated, counsel should have an electronic copy of any unlisted exhibits that may be introduced following direct examination of witnesses at trial available for the courtroom deputy prior to its introduction during court proceedings. The electronic copy of unlisted exhibits shall conform to the required naming conventions discussed above. Counsel is expected to work with the courtroom deputy to determine how best to capture newly introduced exhibits into JERS.

A. Load exhibit(s) into JERS during recess or before/after court.

Manual Upload of Exhibits Outside of Trial Proceedings.

Additional electronic evidence may be added manually by the courtroom deputy during breaks of court proceedings or before/after court. The exhibits should be on a CD/DVD or USB drive and named using the proper naming convention referenced above.

B. Review of Admitted Exhibits at the Conclusion of Each Trial Day

Prior to the start of the next trial day, counsel shall provide to the courtroom deputy a list of exhibits entered the previous day. This comparison is to ensure that the electronic version of each exhibit available for viewing by jurors during deliberations using JERS are exact replicas of what was ultimately admitted into evidence. At the end of the trial and prior to the electronic exhibits being released for the jury through JERS, each attorney must sign an Attorney Certification verifying that the exhibits contained in JERS are exact replicas of what was admitted into evidence.

IV. PRE-DELIBERATION

A. Select Exhibits to Release to Jury through JERS.

The courtroom deputy will gather counsel to confer and agree regarding which exhibits will be released to the jury through JERS.

B. Disagreement Between Counsel.

Any disagreement between counsel regarding which exhibits to release to the jury or regarding any requested restriction of exhibits will be resolved by the presiding judge.

C. Paper and Physical Exhibits.

Unless the presiding judge decides to the contrary, jurors will also have access during their deliberations to all paper and physical exhibits. As such, counsel will still be required to review and decide with the courtroom deputy which paper and physical exhibits will be given to the jury. Counsel must provide the presiding judge with a hard copy of all exhibits. The presiding judge will decide if paper exhibits will be allowed in the jury room.

D. Exhibit Report.

The courtroom deputy will provide counsel with a list of exhibits (exhibit report) with a notation as to whether or not the exhibit was released to the jury.

V. DELIBERATION

A. How the Jury Views Electronic Evidence During Deliberations.

The JERS system has a touchscreen monitor, which the jury will use to view a tutorial about how to use JERS as well as to navigate through and view electronic exhibits. Jurors are not able to access any television programming or the internet through the JERS system.

B. Juror Questions Relating to JERS Exhibits.

Juror questions regarding any and all exhibits (JERS/paper/physical) will have to be made in writing and presented to the court for resolution.

C. Technical Failure of JERS system.

No court personnel are allowed to enter the jury room once deliberations have commenced without prior court permission. Any request for technical assistance will have to be made in writing and presented to the court for its consideration before any court staff will assist the jurors. In the event court staff must enter the deliberation room to address a technical problem, the jurors will be escorted to another room to wait while court staff resolves the issue.

VI. POST-TRIAL

Data Storage Devices.

Upon counsel's request, the courtroom deputy will return any USBs, DVDs, CDs containing electronic exhibits to the submitting party.



Jury Evidence Recording System (JERS) Exhibit Naming Conventions

Plaintiff(s)/Government: (Exhibit name(s) begin with numerical characters)

General Format: <exhibit number> - <exhibit part>_<exhibit description>.<file extension>

Examples:

- Documents: "1_2009 Financial Statement.pdf" "2_2010 Financial Statement.pdf"
- Pictures: "3_Picture of Suspect.jpg" "3-a_Picture Suspect Close Up.gif"
- Audio: "4_Phone Conversation 1.mp3" "4-a_Phone Conversation 2.wav"
- Video: "4-b_Suspect in Store.wmv" "4-c_Suspect carrying TV.mpg"

Defendant(s): (Exhibit name(s) begin with alpha characters)

General Format: <exhibit number> - <exhibit part>_<exhibit description>.<file extension>

Examples:

- Documents: "A_2009 Financial Statement.pdf" "B_2010 Financial Statement.pdf"
- Pictures: "C_Picture of Suspect.jpg" "C-1_Picture Suspect Close Up.gif"
- Audio: "D_Phone Conversation 1.mp3" "D-1_Phone Conversation 2.wav"
- Video: "D-2_Suspect in Store.wmv" "D-3_Suspect carrying TV.mpg"

PLEASE NOTE:

- **All exhibits shall be described using neutral and non-adversarial terms. The exhibit description field is limited to 200 characters.**
- **For any exhibit that is marked for identification, do not include "(ID)" in the exhibit number or description of the JERS copy.**