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AALL Calls on Federal Courts to Address PACER Fees

Association files *amici curiae* brief with D.C. District Court

CHICAGO—Sept. 6, 2017—[The American Association of Law Libraries](http://www.aallnet.org) (AALL) today filed an [amici curiae brief](#) with the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, calling on the judicial body to ensure that the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts (AO) makes electronic federal court records freely available “to the greatest extent possible.”

Filed in response to *National Veterans Legal Services Program et al v. United States of America*, AALL supports the plaintiff’s recent motion for summary judgement.

In its brief, AALL and its co-signatories argue that Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) fees prevent libraries and scholars from protecting and promoting essential public access benefits. AALL notes academic law libraries are unable to provide patrons with no-fee access to court documents through PACER, harming law libraries’ abilities to provide permanent public access to legal information, to teach effective legal research, and to preserve legal materials.

“Our purpose in filing this brief is to focus on the negative effect of PACER fees on access to legal information and scholarship,” noted Greg Lambert, president of AALL. “PACER fees can be substantial, despite years of pressure from members of Congress and AALL urging the AO to comply with the E-Government Act of 2002. The brief calls on the District Court to enforce Congress’s requirement to provide greater public access to court records.”

AALL has long been a proponent of no-fee access to PACER. The association has worked for more than a decade with the AO, members of Congress, and the Government Publishing Office on various methods and strategies to eliminate or reduce PACER fees for law libraries and the public.

About AALL

The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) is the only national association dedicated to the legal information profession and its professionals. Founded in 1906 on the belief that people—lawyers, judges, students, and the public—need timely access to relevant legal information to make sound legal arguments and wise legal decisions, its nearly 4,500 members are problem solvers of the highest order. AALL fosters the profession by offering its members knowledge, leadership, and community that make the whole legal system stronger. For more information, visit www.aallnet.org.