

UPDATED: COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts Intellectual Property Process

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We continue to monitor the impacts of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) on business and commerce. To help you stay informed we are providing guidance from the USPTO and the Copyright Office related to patents, trademarks and copyrights regarding signature on filings, petition fees, closed offices and payment options.

USPTO and Register of Copyrights Authority under the Stimulus and Economic Rescue Act (CARES)

The stimulus and economic rescue bill known as the CARES Act includes temporary authority for the USPTO Director and Register of Copyrights to “toll, waive, adjust, or modify, any timing deadline” established by U.S. patent, trademark or copyright laws or prior regulations, with the exception of provisions of the U.S. Copyright Act requiring commencement of an action or proceeding in Federal court within a specified period of time. Such authority begins with the enactment of the Act and lasts until the end of the COVID-19 national emergency plus 60 days, and expires altogether in 2 years. Prior to the CARES Act, neither office had the authority to modify statutory deadlines, so earlier guidance from both offices was limited to waiving certain regulatory penalties for customers impacted by the coronavirus. We will wait to see if any new directives are issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and U.S. Copyright Office after enactment of the CARES Act.

USPTO

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) considers the effects of coronavirus to be an ["extraordinary situation"](#) within the meaning of 37 CFR 1.183 and 37 CFR 2.146. Therefore, it is waiving petition fees in certain situations for customers impacted by the coronavirus. Also the USPTO is [waiving the requirements](#) of 37 CFR 1.4(e)(1) and (2) for an original handwritten signature for certain correspondence with the Office of Enrollment and Discipline and certain payments by credit card.

From March 13, 2020 until further notice, oral hearings before the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB) and other in-person hearings, meetings, and interviews taking place at USPTO offices will be conducted remotely by telephone or video.

All USPTO offices are closed to the public as of March 16, 2020 until further notice. USPTO operations will continue without interruption, and patent and trademark application deadlines and other deadlines have not been extended.

U.S. Copyright Office

All Library of Congress buildings, which includes the U.S. Copyright Office, [will be closed](#) to the public until Wednesday, April 1, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. EST. To utilize U.S. Copyright Office services, submit applications online. An electronic deposit of a work may be filed if a physical version is required. The electronic deposit must be accompanied by a declaration or statement certifying that it has the same content as the physical one.