UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE

FILED
CLERK'S OFFICE
United States District Court
Eastern District of Tennessee
Date: *Oct 26, 2026, 8:50 am*

IN RE: **ASSIGNMENT OF MAGISTRATE JUDGES AND CONSENT TO MAGISTRATE JUDGE JURISDICTION IN SOCIAL SECURITY CASES FILED UNDER 42 U.S.C. § 405(g)**	)	SO-26-07

STANDING ORDER

The following procedures are adopted for the assignment of United States Magistrate Judges, and the parties' consent to Magistrate Judge jurisdiction, in cases filed under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g).

Effective as of the date of this order, the Clerk will assign new cases filed under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) to a Magistrate Judge as the presiding judge. Consent to proceed before the Magistrate Judge under 28 U.S.C. § 636(c) will be presumed at the time of assignment.

Upon assignment, the Clerk, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(c) and Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 73, will provide the "Joint Notice Regarding Assignment of a Magistrate Judge in Social Security Cases Arising Under 42 U.S.C. § 405(g) and Option to Decline Consent Form" ("Opt-out Form") to all parties.

The procedures for consenting to Magistrate Judge jurisdiction are as follows:

1. **Consent to Magistrate Judge Jurisdiction**. To consent, no action is needed by any party. Consent must be unanimous. If all parties consent, the Magistrate Judge will handle all proceedings, including the entry of judgment in the case, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(c).

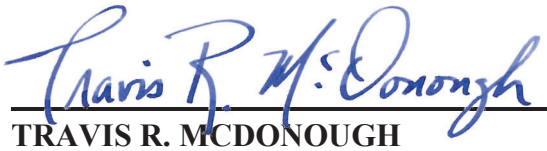
2. **Non-Consent to Magistrate Judge Jurisdiction**. A party is free to decline consent

without adverse consequences. To decline consent, the parties must complete, sign, and jointly file the Opt-out Form in CM/ECF within **twenty-one days** after the Notice of Commencement. If a plaintiff is proceeding pro se, the United States shall file the completed form on behalf of the parties. The Opt-out Form does not reveal the identity of the party or parties declining consent.

If any party declines consent, the Clerk's Office will randomly reassign the case to a United States District Judge. However, the case will remain assigned to the original Magistrate Judge to handle all pretrial and non-dispositive matters and for issuance of a Report and Recommendation on any dispositive matters, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b) and SO-09-01.

3. **Failure to Return the Opt-out Form**. If all parties fail to return the completed Opt-out Form within the twenty-one-day timeframe, the parties will be deemed to have knowingly and voluntarily consented to proceed before the assigned Magistrate Judge under 28 U.S.C. § 636(c).

SO ORDERED.



TRAVIS R. MCDONOUGH
CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE