

Practice Update

International Bureau Suspends Transmission of Paper PCT Documents

April 9, 2020

On March 30, 2020, the International Bureau (IB) of the World Intellectual Property Organization announced that it would no longer send paper Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) documents to applicants and agents.

Effective immediately, the IB (including in its capacity as a Receiving Office) will transmit PCT documents exclusively via email. The IB considers email to be a reliable means for correspondence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If an applicant or agent has not yet provided the IB with an email address for an international application, then the IB encourages that applicant or agent to urgently do so. The IB identified four methods by which an applicant or agent can provide a relevant email address.

The applicant or agent can:

1. Populate the information directly in ePCT (assuming that the applicant or agent has access rights for the international application);
2. Use the PCT Contingency upload service;
3. Send an email to eservices@wipo.int or pct.infoline@wipo.int conveying the relevant email address; or

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4. Use the “[Contact Us](#)” function on the WIPO webpage.

The PCT-related documents for an individual international application continue to be visible through ePCT or, after international publication, on [PATENTSCOPE](#).

Furthermore, due to reduced postal services and scanning operations, the IB urges all PCT users to communicate with the IB exclusively by electronic means. The IB recommends electronically communicating with it through [ePCT](#).

For detailed instructions on providing relevant information in ePCT, the IB directs all applicants and agents to review the “[Electronic communication methods with the International Bureau](#)” webpage. Applicants and agents can also refer to the [ePCT FAQs](#) webpage, which addresses an applicant’s or agent’s desire to receive IB forms by email only.

Finally, for additional assistance, the IB encourages applicants and agents to contact pct.eservices@wipo.int.

This information is intended to inform Akerman clients and friends about legal developments. Nothing in this Practice Update should be construed as legal advice or a legal opinion from Akerman, and readers should not act upon the information contained in this Practice Update without seeking the advice of legal counsel. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome.