 Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH)	Transmittal Number: 00-04
Procedures Transmittal	Date: February 9, 2000
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Distribution:	
ALB OAH Staff [x] UPS ALJs/ [x] Upstate LDSS [] SUP ALJs [x]	Subject: Document Imaging Implementation
NYC OAH Staff [x] NYC ALJs/ [x] NYC Agencies [] SUP ALJs [x]	

As of December, 1999 Office of Administrative Hearings File Management Unit staff have been phasing out the current file storage procedures and have begun to utilize scanning equipment installed to "document image" the contents of all closed fair hearing files for on-line storage and retrieval. This initiative is the result of an approximate \$1 million budgetary appropriation, which was allocated following extensive research, including visits to other facilities that utlize imaging in their daily operation, as well as exhaustive assistance from staff in the Applications Services Center. On-going modifications have characterized this project as we attempt to integrate it into present requirements of the hearing process. Ultimately, the OAH imaging system will play an instrumental role not only in the fair hearings process, but Department-wide as other divisions develop imaging applications. Within the Office of Administrative Hearings, components such as video hearings and an automated taping system will be interactively connected to the imaging function, thereby creating the capacity for on-line access to all hearingrelated documentation.

The current "debugging phase" of the imaging process has consisted of document imaging while maintaining the paper file system as a back up. While we realize imaging will impact both "in-house" staff and those in the field at our regional offices, as well as staff at the local agency level, there are certain procedures that must necessarily be modified to accommodate new requirements as we change from a paper system to an electronic system. We have identified some of these changes and set forth below suggested ways that staff can assist in easing this transition. Other changes will be communicated as we progress. If you have any suggestions or comments, please provide them to your supervisor or to Ed McCarthy, who has responsibility for coordinating document imaging implementation and on-going maintenance of this process. He also has been assigned supervisory responsibility for staff in the File Management Unit, who are being asked to carry out the individual tasks necessary to the successful functioning of the imaging process.

To the extent possible, it will be helpful if all documents inserted in the fair hearing file remain free of staples. Your cooperation in ensuring that new documents being inserted in the file are not stapled will greatly assist staff assigned to the document imaging task.

Since colored paper creates imaging problems, we would like to reduce its use. The use of "greensheets" should be discontinued immediately. Any remaining stock of the green-colored supply of the OTDA-1962 should be destroyed and only white photocopies of this form should be used until we can ascertain a scannable colored substitute. Please do not write in the margins of any forms or on the inside file jacket since such information may not be scannable or scannable only with a considerable amount of effort. A preferred method of including additional information that does not fit on existing forms is to insert an 8 1/2-inch by 11-inch sheet of white paper with such information plainly written and identified as to what it is. Please try to limit information handwritten on the exterior of the file jacket to those items that are required to be filled in such as Tape Numbers/Digits; Disposition Outcomes; Adjournment Codes; ALJ Number; Representative, etc.

While we can't control what documents are provided by appellants, representatives, and agency staff, keep in mind that the following kinds of documents are difficult, if not impossible, to scan:

Colored documents	Legal-size documents
Faxed documents	Onion-skin documents
Documents containing "Post-Its"	Illegible documents

Therefore, if a document of one of the above types is submitted by a walk-in appellant, representative, or agency representative for inclusion in the file and if a photocopy must be made of the document, whenever possible, the photocopy should be retained with the file and the original "hard-to-scan" document should be returned to the individual submitting it.

For any staff who have occasion to handle perforated green-bar printouts from either the WMS, PDS, or BICS system or perforated printouts from the FHIS system, it would be helpful, whenever possible, if these pages could be torn apart at the perforations rather than being inserted in the files as one continuous document.

A separate transmittal (OAH 00-05) has been forwarded to local agency staff to request their cooperation in avoiding the submission of the above-mentioned types of difficult-to-scan documents as part of their evidentiary packets. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation as the document imaging project phases move forward. If you have any questions as to the impact of document imaging on office operations, you may contact Mr. McCarthy at (518) 473-8920 or via email LA0088.

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