

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

APRIL ATKINSON,	:	
	:	
Plaintiff,	:	
	:	
v.	:	CASE NO. 3:10cv1015 (RNC)
	:	
STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT	:	
OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION	:	
SERVICES,	:	
	:	
Defendant.	:	

SEALING ORDER

On July 23, 2010, the *pro se* plaintiff filed her Objection to Recommended Ruling, doc. #7. Attached to plaintiff's Objection were a series of exhibits. Those exhibits included a great deal of sensitive information, in violation of Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2, Local Rule 5(e)(8) and section III(C) of the court's Electronic Case Filing Policies and Procedures.

Pro se parties, like all others filing documents with the court, are responsible for ensuring that sensitive information is not publicly filed. In this instance, the clerk of the court took note of the information and, recognizing its sensitivity, removed the documents from the record by provisionally sealing them.

Pursuant to D. Conn. L. Civ. R. 5(e), Exhibit 1 to plaintiff's Objection to Recommended Ruling shall be sealed. Sealing is supported by clear and compelling reasons because the documents at issue consist of sensitive, private information, including medical records, the plaintiff's date of birth and

social security number, and documents referring by name to patients at a medical facility.

For future reference, the *pro se* plaintiff is advised that the sensitive information should have been redacted prior to filing. Pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2(a),

in an electronic or paper filing with the court that contains an individual's social-security number, taxpayer-identification number, or birth date, the name of an individual known to be a minor, or a financial-account number, a party or nonparty making the filing may include only:

- (1) the last four digits of the social-security number and taxpayer-identification number;
- (2) the year of the individual's birth;
- (3) the minor's initials; and
- (4) the last four digits of the financial-account number.

See also D. Conn. L. Civ. R. 5(e)(8) and ECF Procedures §III(C)¹.

In addition, the ECF Procedures require filers to exercise

¹The court's Electronic Case Filing Policies and Procedures are available at <http://www.ctd.uscourts.gov/cmecf/>. Those procedures state in relevant part:

To address the privacy concerns created by internet access to court documents, litigants should not include sensitive information in any document filed with the court unless such inclusion is necessary and relevant to the case If sensitive information must be included, the following personal data identifiers must be partially redacted from the pleading *whether it is filed traditionally or electronically*:

- 1.Names of minor children to the initials;
- 2.Financial account numbers to the last four digits;
- 3.Social Security numbers to the last four digits;
- 4.Dates of birth to the year; and
- 5.Home address to City and State.

ECF Procedures § III(C) (emphasis added).

caution when filing documents that contain medical records, employment history, or other sensitive information. If such documents are relevant and necessary, they should be redacted to remove personally-identifying information.²

SO ORDERED at Hartford, Connecticut this 30th day of July, 2010.

_____/s/_____
Donna F. Martinez
United States Magistrate Judge

²There are, of course, situations where it is important for the court to see certain sensitive information, or where the document is so imbued with sensitive information that redaction is not a practical solution, and in those cases a motion to seal should be filed pursuant to D. Conn. L. Civ. R. 5(e) and ECF Procedures § III(C).