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DISCOVERY

Business Records Subpoena: Getting Copies of Documents from a Non-Party

procedures. www.saccourt.ca.gov

This Guide includes instructions and sample forms. Links to download the fillable forms are at the end of this Guide. Additional copies of this Guide can be accessed at saclaw.org/bus-rec-subpoena.

services. Our guides do not reflect these temporary changes. Contact the

court directly for the most up to date information on court processes and

Parties in a lawsuit can use a "business records subpoena" to obtain records and information from non-party witnesses* such as banks, employers, or police departments. (Cal. Code of Civil Procedure (CCP) § 2020.410.) The procedure requires several steps and takes a month or more, so start early.

OUTLINE OF PROCEDURE:

1. Choose production date and "deposition officer" (photocopy company). Fill out forms.

Skip to "3" if records are not consumer or employee records.

- 2. Serve consumer/employee and all parties.
- a. At least 25 days before production date, have the consumer/employee served with Notice to Consumer/Employee and Deposition Subpoena plus Attachment. Have any other parties served, too.
- b. Wait 10 days for objections. If no objections, move to "3."
- 3. Have the witness (the company or agency with records) personally served and have the parties served by mail.
- a. At least 15 days before the production date, personally serve witness with Notice (showing that consumer/employee was served), Deposition Subpoena plus Attachment, and Proof of Service of Notice and Deposition Subpoena plus Attachment showing service on all parties.
- b. If you skipped "2," serve all other parties now.

If you need testimony from a non-party, don't use this form

A business records subpoena just gets you copies of records. If you need in-person testimony and records from a non-party, use one of the following:

- Deposition: Deposition Subpoena for Personal Appearance and Production of Documents and Things (see saclaw.org/deposition-guide).
- Trial: Civil Subpoena (Duces Tecum) (SUBP-002) www.courts.ca.gov/documents /subp002.pdf

If you need records from a party, don't use this form

To get records from a party, use a Request for Production (see saclaw.org/requestproduction).

Disclaimer: This Guide is intended as general information only. Your case may have factors requiring different procedures or forms. The information and instructions are provided for use in the Sacramento County Superior Court. Please keep in mind that each court may have different requirements. If you need further assistance consult a lawyer.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Determine Whether the Documents Are "Consumer or Employee" Records

If they are, you need to add about two weeks to the process.

"Consumer records" are records sought from telephone companies; banks, insurance and financial services providers; health care providers; schools; attorneys; or accountants. CCP \scitcut 1985.3(a)(1)). An "employee" is individual who is or has been employed by a witness whose records are sought. "Employee records" include books, documents, other writings or electronic data pertaining to employment of any employee or former employee. CCP \scitcut 1985.6.

Once you determine whether you are seeking consumer/employee records, you can determine what steps to take and how far in advance you need to start.

Step 2: Set a Date and Location for Production

Select your date at least 15 days away for nonconsumer/employee records, or at least 30 days away if the records are consumer/employee records.

Contact a copy service in your area to see if they handle document subpoenas. The service you hire to do this is called the "Deposition Officer." The Deposition Officer must be must be a professional photocopier registered under California Business & Professions (Bus. & P) Code §§22450–22463, with some exceptions. You may need to contact several to find one that provides this service.

Step 3: Complete the Required Forms

You will need two forms to subpoena business records:

- Deposition Subpoena for Production of Business Records (SUBP-010)
- Attachment (MC-025), describing the records you need (you will number this "Attachment 3")

Completed samples are at the end of this Guide.

In Sacramento, you can pick up subpoena forms at 720 9th St., Window 18. Ask the clerk if they can issue them (stamp them to make them official) on the spot. Otherwise, you may need to submit them in the dropbox, which will add up to two weeks' delay.

NOTE: When you issue a *Deposition Subpoena for Production of Business Records* (SUBP-010), there are three options for production in the first paragraph of the first page. Option "a" is having the records delivered to the Deposition Officer (generally a copy shop) will be the easiest in most situations. Note that you must arrange to pay the witness their costs before taking delivery of the

Special Protection for Online & Phone Records

Telephone records, email, social media, and texts may require you to get the consumer's signature consenting to release. Cal. Public Utilities Code § 2891 and the Federal Stored Communications Act (18 U.S.C. §§ 2701-2712) protect these types of records. A sample authorization form can be found in Cal. Forms of Pleading and Practice, Ch.535, sec. 535:71.

If the consumer will not sign the release voluntarily, you may need to get a court order requiring the consumer to sign it. This process is not covered in this guide.

copies. Talk to your Deposition Officer about how to accomplish this. One option is to ask the Deposition Officer to pay the witness and then bill you.

Under option (b), a Deposition Officer (copy shop employee) goes to witness's place of business to pick up the copies. Under (c), the subpoenaing party [you] goes to the witness's place of business and copies the records. (CCP §2020.430). Most self-represented litigants should choose option (a).

Step 4: Have the Court Clerk "Issue" Subpoena (Self-Represented Parties Only)

Take the *Deposition Subpoena for Production of Business Records* (SUBP-010) to the court where your case is pending to be "issued" (stamped with the court seal). When the clerk stamps it with the court's seal, it becomes an official court order. Attorneys can sign subpoenas themselves as "officers of the court" and do not need to take this step.

In Sacramento, subpoenas (original and two copies) are placed in the drop box in Room 102 in the Sacramento Superior Court at 720 Ninth Street. Fill out and attach the *Civil Document Drop-Off Sheet*, available at the drop box, and date stamp the back of the packet. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. There is no fee for this. Keep a copy of the subpoena plus attachment for your records. The court will process the paperwork, and return the issued subpoena and copies by mail.

Allow extra time for court to issue subpoenas

If you are not a lawyer, you will need to get the court clerk to stamp ("issue") the subpoena. In Sacramento, it may take up to two weeks to receive the stamped subpoenas back.

You can submit several blank subpoenas (with caption information only, and without attachments) ahead of time so that you have them on hand when you need them.

When you receive the issued subpoena, make enough copies of the stamped subpoena for yourself, the witness, and all parties. You will serve these copies in later steps.

If the Records are NOT Consumer or Employee Records, Skip to Step 9

EXTRA STEPS IF YOU NEED "CONSUMER" OR "EMPLOYEE" RECORDS

To protect people's privacy, subpoenas of consumer and employee records require an extra procedure to give the consumer/employee time to object. This can add as much as two weeks to the process, more if they object. The consumer/employee must be served at least 10 days (5 if you use personal service) before you serve the witness (CCP § 1985.3(b)(3)) and at least 25 days before the date of production (20 if you use personal service) (CCP § 2020.410). See the Worksheet to Determine Dates for Service at the end of this Guide.

Step 5: Complete the Additional Form for Consumer/Employee Records

In addition to the forms in Step 3, fill out page 1 of a *Notice to Consumer or Employee and Objection* (SUBP-025). Make

Shortcut: consumer/ employee can sign release

You can skip the Notice to Consumer/Employee steps if the person whose records you need is willing to sign an authorization.

Include it instead of the copy of Notice to Consumer or Employee and Objection in steps 9 and 10. Sample authorization forms can be found in Cal. Forms of Pleading and Practice, Ch.535, sec. 535:70-73.

enough copies of all forms for yourself, the witness, and all parties. You will serve these copies in later steps.

Step 6: Serve the Consumer/Employee with the Deposition Subpoena and Notice to Consumer or Employee

Serve the consumer/employee with a **copy** of:

- Stamped Deposition Subpoena for Production of Business Records (SUBP-010) and Attachment (MC-025), and
- Notice to Consumer or Employee and Objection (SUBP-025).

You can have this served by mail to the consumer/employee's last-known address or by personal service if you are low on time.

The person who is serving the Notice for you must complete the proof of service on the back of the original *Notice to Consumer or Employee and Objection* (SUBP-025). The server then gives the signed original Notice to you. You will use it in step 7.

Step 7: Serve All Parties by Mail

If the only other party is the consumer/employee, skip this step.

Serve by mail all parties (or their attorneys) with copies of

- Deposition Subpoena for Production of Business Records (SUBP-010) (plus Attachment (MC-025))
- Notice to Consumer or Employee and Objection (SUBP-025) (showing the signed proof of service on the back).

Keep the originals for your files.

The person who is serving your documents for you must complete a *Proof of Service by First Class Mail* (POS-030) form. For more information on this Proof of Service, see the guide on our website at saclaw.org/mail-service.

The proof of service form should be completely filled out, but not signed. Make a copy of the unsigned proof of service before proceeding.

The server (person over the age of 18 who is not a party to the case) must then mail a copy of the documents along with a copy of the unsigned Proof of Service form on the opposing attorneys or self-represented litigants.

The server then signs the Proof of Service form, and gives it to you. Keep this in your files.

Step 8: Wait for Consumer/Employee to Respond

Wait at least 10 calendar days (5 if you had the consumer personally served) before moving on to Step 9, "Serve the Witness."

The consumer/employee's deadline to object is 5 days before the production date. A non-party consumer/employee just needs to fill out the objection on *Notice to Consumer or Employee and*

Objection (SUBP-025). A consumer/employee who is a party needs to file a motion to quash the Subpoena in court.

If the consumer/employee objects or files a motion to quash, the witness is not permitted to respond to your Deposition Subpoena. You may make a Motion to Compel Production (deadline: 20 days after service of the written objection), or file an Opposition to the Motion to Quash, as appropriate. Motions to Quash Subpoenas are not covered in this Guide; see a reference librarian for more information on this process. For more information on Motions to Compel Production see the Step-by-Step guide on our website at saclaw.org/motion-compel.

Step 9: Serve the Witness (the Company or Agency with the Records) by Personal Service at Least 15 Days before Production Date

Serve these documents at least 15 days before the production date. (CCP § 2020.410(c))

Fill out but do not sign a *Proof of Service by Mail* (POS-030) listing all of the following documents and showing proof of service by mail on all parties. This Proof of Service will be used in Step 10, but you must include a copy of it in the packet you serve the witness. For more information on this Proof of Service, see the guide on our website at <u>saclaw.org/mail-service</u>.

If the documents are not consumer or employee records, have the witness *personally served* with:

- Deposition Subpoena for Production of Business Records (SUBP-010)
- Attachment (MC-025)
- Proof of Service by Mail (POS-030) on all parties (unsigned but otherwise complete).

If the documents are consumer/employee records, have the witness *personally served* with:

- Deposition Subpoena for Production of Business Records (SUBP-010)
- Attachment (MC-025)
- Notice to Consumer or Employee and Objection (SUBP-025), showing signed proof of service on the back.
- Proof of Service by Mail (POS-030) on all parties (unsigned but otherwise complete).

The server (a person over the age of 18 who is not a party to the case) must personally deliver the required documents on the witness or its representative. If the witness is an organization, any officer, director, custodian of records, or any agent or employee authorized by the organization to accept service of a subpoena can be served on behalf of the organization. (CCP § 2020.220.)

The server then signs the proof of service form on the back of the *Deposition Subpoena for Production of Business Records* (SUBP-010) and returns it to you. Keep this in case you need it for a motion later.

Fees Paid to the Witness:

If you are requesting copies of the documents to be mailed to the Deposition Officer (option "1(a)" or "1(b)" on the Deposition Subpoena), the witness may demand payment of reasonable costs prior to providing the documents to the Deposition Officer. These costs include:

Reproduction costs:

- \$0.10 per page for documents 8 ½" x 14" or less;
- \$0.20 per page for copying documents from microfilm;
- Actual costs for oversize documents or documents requiring special processing;

Other Costs:

- Clerical costs of \$24 per hour per person;
- Actual postage costs; and
- Costs for necessary services of third persons, including retrieval from microfilm.

These costs are paid when the witness delivers the business records and an itemized statement listing costs. Evid C §§ 1563(b)(1), (2), & (3). If you requested to inspect the original documents at the witness's location, the witness is entitled to a fee of \$15, so write a check for the server to take along. Evid C §1563(b)(6).

Step 10: Serve the Other Party or Parties (unless You Served in Step 7)

Skip this step if you completed steps 5-8, Notice to Consumer or Employee. If you did, the service in Step 9 is sufficient.

Serve all parties by mail with copies of all documents listed in Step 9. If they have attorneys, serve the attorneys instead.

The proof of service form should be completely filled out, but not signed. Make a copy of the unsigned proof of service before proceeding.

The server (a person over the age of 18 who is not a party to the case) must then mail a copy of the documents along with a copy of the unsigned proof of service form on the opposing attorney(s) or self-represented litigant(s).

The server then signs the original Proof of Service form, and gives it to you.

Step 11: Wait for the Documents

You're done for now. The documents should arrive at the copy service by your chosen production date.

If your Deposition Subpoena is ignored, or you get nothing but a written objection, you may need to file a motion in court to compel the witness to produce the documents. For more information on motions to compel production, see the guide on our website at saclaw.org/motion-compel.

FOR HELP

For assistance with a business records subpoena, you may want to contact a professional photocopier service to act as Deposition Officer. In some cases, they will do the entire process (forms, service, and copying) for you for a fee. Call a local law office and ask who they use, or look under "Copying and Duplicating Services" or "Attorney Support Services" in the Yellow Pages.

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Sacramento County Public Law Library Civil Self Help Center

609 9th Street, Sacramento 95814

saclaw.org/self-help/civil-self-help-center/

(916) 476-2731 (Appointment Request Line)

Services Provided: The Civil Self Help Center provides general information and basic assistance to people without attorneys on a variety of civil legal issues. All assistance is provided by telephone or Zoom videoconference. Visit "Issues We Can And Cannot Assist With" (saclaw.org/cshc-services) for a list of qualifying cases.

Eligibility: Must be a Sacramento County resident or have a <u>qualifying</u> case in the Sacramento County Superior Court.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

On the Web:

NOLO Law for All: "Formal Discovery: Gathering Evidence for Your Lawsuit"

www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/formal-discovery-gathering-evidence-lawsuit-29764.html

This respected self-help site offers excellent information on discovery in general.

California Courts: "Getting Evidence for Court"

www.courts.ca.gov/xbcr/partners/getting-evidence.pdf

This pamphlet, provided by the Judicial Council's website, contains information about preparing evidence for admission in a court trial or hearing.

At the Law Library:

The following books have information about preparing business records subpoenas:

California Forms of Pleading and Practice KFC 1010 .A65 C3

<u>California Practice Guide: Civil Procedure before Trial</u> <u>KFC 995 .W45</u> Chap. 8, Discovery, Sec. 540-555.

Litigation by the Numbers KFC 995 .G67 Chap.5, Discovery, Sec. 5.3.5.

These books give detailed discussion of the steps needed to use a business records subpoena. *Civil Procedure before Trial* in particular contains discussion of the applicable statutes and cases.

For examples of the types of documents you may want to request in different types of civil cases, see:

Deposition Checklists and Strategies KF 8900 .S33

This book is divided into chapters by type of case (vehicular liability, premises liability, medical malpractice, etc.). Each chapter has a section on "Documents and Exhibits" which lists the types of documents that may be useful in that type of case.

California Points and Authorities KFC 1010. B4 (Ready Reference)

Vol. 8, Chap. 81, Sec. 240-254

Contains information and forms for consumer/employee objections.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS GUIDE, OR IF YOU NEED HELP FINDING OR USING THE MATERIALS LISTED, DON'T HESITATE TO ASK A REFERENCE LIBRARIAN.

ATTACHMENTS: FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

The Judicial Council forms commonly used in this procedure are:

- Deposition Subpoena for Production of Business Records (SUBP-010) www.courts.ca.gov/documents/subp010.pdf
- Attachment (MC-025) http://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/mc025.pdf
- Notice to Consumer or Employee and Objection (SUBP-025) www.courts.ca.gov/documents/subp025.pdf
- Proof of Service by Mail (POS-030) www.courts.ca.gov/documents/pos030.pdf

Sample filled-in forms with instructions are available at the end of this Guide.

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Business Records Subpoena: Worksheet to Determine Dates for Service

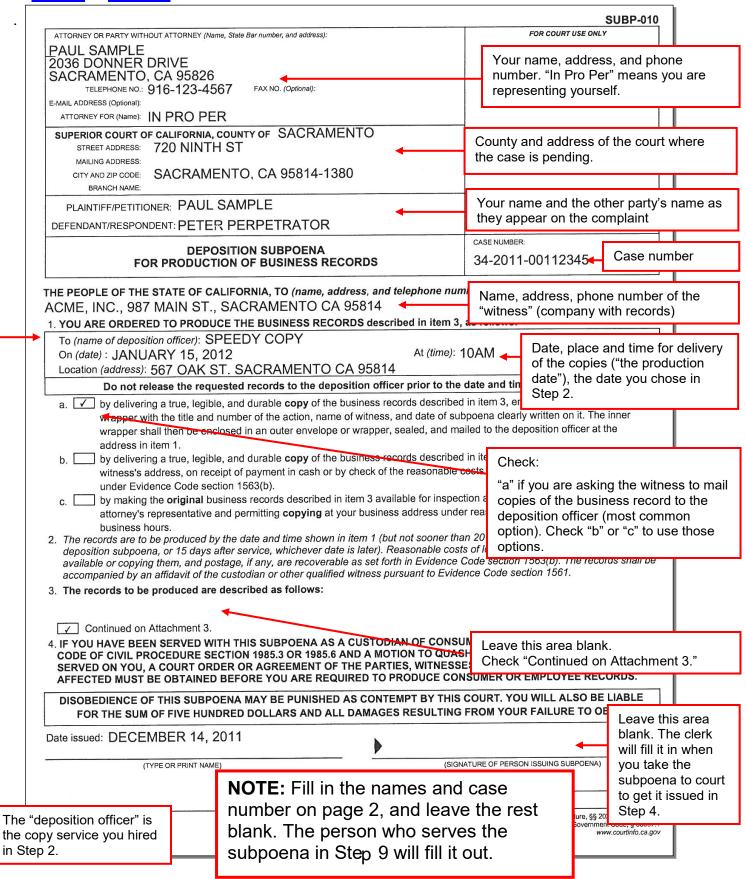
Work backwards from the date you want to receive the documents (Date of Production).

- 1. Choose the date for production of documents.
- 2. Count backwards 15 days. If the 15th day is a holiday or weekend, keep going until you reach a workday. This is the last day the witness can be served. (It is a good idea to serve it a few days early, in case of problems with the service.)
- 3. If you are requesting consumer/employee records: Choose the date you expect to *actually* serve the witness (on or before the date in step 2).
- 4. Count backwards 10 days from the date you expect to *actually serve* the witness. Again, if the 10th day is a holiday or weekend, keep counting backwards until you reach a workday. This is the last day the Consumer/Employee can be served by mail.

If you are short on time, you can save a few days by having the Consumer/Employee personally served. In this case, you only have to count back 5 days from the date you expect to serve the witness.

Worksheet: Fill this out to figure out the dates (using a calendar can help):

Event:	Instructions:	
Date of Production	Enter the date you want to receive the documents here:/20	
Last day to serve the witness	Starting from the Date of Production, count backwards 15 calendar days. If the day you land on is a weekend or holiday, keep going until you reach a workday. This is the last day to serve the witness.	
	Enter that date here://20	
	You can serve the witness earlier, if you choose.	
Day you actually plan to serve the witness	Enter the date you actually plan to serve the witness here:/20	
Last day to serve the Consumer/ Employee	Starting from the day you actually plan to serve the witness, count backwards 10 calendar days (5 if personally serving). If the day you land on is a weekend or holiday, keep going until you reach a workday. This is the last day to serve the Consumer/ Employee by mail.	
	Enter that date here://20	
	You can serve the Consumer/Employee earlier, if you choose.	



		MC-025		
SHORT TITLE:	CASE NUMBER:			
Sample v. Perpetrator	34-2011-00112345			
ATTACHMENT (Number): 3				
Short title (party 1 v party 2) y be used with any Judicial Co	ouncil form.)	Case number		
1. Any and all any and all police reports, arrest reports, case reports, supplementary reports, street files, laboratory reports, notes and memoranda, printed or otherwise, and files relating to the arrest of [Party Name], date of birth of [Party Name], on or about [Date of Arrest or Incident], at or near [Location].				
Fill in "3"				
2. Any and all phone records for the year of [year or range of dates] pertaining to [name of Consumer/ Employee] at [Consumer/Employee's phone number or numbers], including but not limited to text and data and call records.				
3. Employment records for Employee [employee's name] whose Social Security number is, and whose date of birth is, including the following: All documents relating to Employee's employment from [date] to [date], including but not limited to pay checks, pay stubs reviews correspondence, and W-2 forms. 4. All documents relating to medical and physical therapy, examinations, treatment and services rendered to [Party] from [date] to the present, including but not limited to reports, summaries, prognoses, x-rays, statements, and billings.				

5. All documents relating to operation, maintenance, and repair of the automobile [Party] was operating during the accident which is the subject of this action, including repair estimates, repair receipts, owner's manuals,

and records of repairs made by any person or entity, including [Party], from [date] to the present.

Specifically describe each item or reasonably particularize each category of item to be produced (CCP § 2025.410(a)).

Specific information that is identifiable only to the deponent's records system (e.g., a policy number or the date the consumer interacted with the witness) is not required. (CCP § 2020.410(a)-(b)).

Sample language for several common situations is listed here. For more information about how to request specific types of records, talk to the Reference Librarian.

(If the item that this Attachment concerns is made under penalty of perjury, all statements in this Attachment are made under penalty of perjury.)

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(Add pages as required)

Business Records Subpoena

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ATTORNEY OR PARTY WITHOUT ATTORNEY (Name, State Bar number, and address): PAUL SAMPLE	FOR COURT USE ONLY			
2036 DONNER DRIVE	Your name, address, and phone number. "In			
SACRAMENTO, CA 95826	Pro Per" means you are representing yourself.			
TELEPHONE NO.: 916-123-4567 FAX NO. (Optional):				
E-MAIL ADDRESS (Optional):				
ATTORNEY FOR (Name): IN PRO PER	County and address of the court where			
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO STREET ADDRESS: 720 NINTH ST	the case is pending.			
MAILING ADDRESS:				
CITY AND ZIP CODE: SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-1380 BRANCH NAME:	Your name and the other party's name as they appear on the complaint			
PLAINTIFF/ PETITIONER: PAUL SAMPLE	CASE NUMBER:			
DEFENDANT/ RESPONDENT: PETER PERPETRATOR	34-2011-00112345			
NOTICE TO CONSUMER OR EMPLOYEE AND OBJECTION (Code Civ. Proc., §§ 1985.3,1985.6)	Case number			
NOTICE TO CONSUMER OR EMPLOYEE				
TO (name): THERESA THIRDPARTY ← 1. PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT REQUESTING PARTY (name): PAUL SAM	Name of the consumer/employee			
RECORDS FOR EXAMINATION by the parties to this action or				
Your name described in the subpoena directed to witness (specify name)				
are sought): ACME, INC. 987 MAIN ST., SACRAMENTO CA 95	Date of production			
A copy of the subpoena is attached.	(from Step 2)			
2. IF YOU OBJECT to the production of these records, YOU MUST DO ONE OF	THE FOLLOWING BEFORE THE DATE OF LOW ILD.			
IN ITEM a. OR b. BELOW: a. If you are a party to the above-entitled action, you must file a motion pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 1987.1 to				
quash or modify the subpoena and give notice of that motion to the witness and the Name and address of the witness				
at least five days before the date set for production of the records. (company that has the records)				
b. If you are not a party to this action, you must serve on the requesting party	and on			
production of the records, a written objection that states the specific grounds prohibited. You may use the form below to object and state the grounds for the state of the specific grounds for the state of the state of the specific grounds for the state of the specific grounds for the specific grounds are stated as the specific grounds for the specific gr	or vour objection. You must complete the Proof of			
Service on the reverse side indicating whether you personally served or ma	iled the objection. The objection should not be filed			
with the court. WARNING: IF YOUR OBJECTION IS NOT RECEIVED BEF	ORE THE DATE SPECIFIED IN ITEM 1, YOUR			
RECORDS MAY BE PRODUCED AND 3. YOU OR YOUR ATTORNEY MAY CONTA Date, fill in your name, and sign agreement can be reached in writing				
to cancel or limit the scope of the subpoena. If no such agreement is reached, and if you are not otherwise represented by an				
attorney in this action, YOU SHOULD CONSULT AN ATTORNEY TO ADVISE	YOU OF YOUR RIGHTS OF PRIVACY.			
Date: DECEMBER 14, 2011				
PAUL SAMPLE	·			
(TYPE OR PRINT NAME) (SIGN	ATURE OF ✓ REQUESTING PARTY ATTORNEY)			
OBJECTION BY NON-PARTY TO PRODUCTION OF RECORDS				
1. I object to the production of all of my records specified in the subpoena.				
2. I object only to the production of the following specified records:				
	NOTE: Leave this portion blank. The			
	consumers/employees fill it in if they object to the production.			
The specific grounds for my objection are as follows:	Dajost to the production.			
NOTE: Fill in the names and case number on page 2,				
Date: and leave the rest blank. The person who serves the				
notice in Step 6 will fill it out.				
12 🗸				
(TYPE OR PRINT NAivie)	(SIGNATURE)			
(Proof of service on reverse)	Page 1 of 2			

