

## Instructions: Interrogatories (Written Questions to Other Parties)

This template was prepared by the Justice & Diversity Center, a nonprofit organization, and is not an official court form. It can be used in certain civil lawsuits in the Northern District Court of California. *This template provides guidance only. Using this template does not guarantee any result in your case.*



### HOW TO GET LEGAL INFORMATION AND ADVICE

This packet provides general guidance about asking written questions to another party in the case. *Before serving this document*, make an appointment for free legal information and advice at one of the Legal Help Centers. If you need to submit interrogatories in an employment discrimination case or if you need to respond to interrogatories from the other side, you can get templates from the Legal Help Centers.



If the case is assigned to a judge in the San Francisco, Oakland, or Eureka federal courthouse, do one of the following:



Call the appointment scheduling line for the Federal Pro Bono Project: 415-782-8982



Sign up in the appointment book at either:

450 Golden Gate Ave., 15th Floor, Room 2796, San Francisco or  
1301 Clay Street, 4th Floor, Room 470S, Oakland



Email us at [federalprobonoproject@sfbar.org](mailto:federalprobonoproject@sfbar.org)

*This email is to schedule appointments only-no legal advice is given over email.*



If the case is assigned to a judge in the San Jose federal courthouse, do one of the following:



Call the appointment scheduling line for the Federal Pro Se Program: 408-297-1480



*Monday to Thursday 9:00 am - 12:00 pm*, drop in at

The Law Foundation of Silicon Valley, 152 North 3rd St., 3rd Floor, San Jose

*Monday to Thursday 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm*, drop in at

280 South 1st Street, 2nd Floor, Room 2070, San Jose



### WHEN TO SEND INTERROGATORIES

1. **Figure out when you can first serve interrogatories.** When the case was filed, the Clerk issued a document called an Initial Scheduling Order, which set the date of the Case Management Conference. Normally, you can serve discovery (such as these interrogatories or document requests)

after this Conference, though the Court may set a different deadline at the Conference.

2. **Figure out the discovery deadline.** After the Conference, the Court will send out an updated Scheduling Order setting the discovery “cutoff.” You must send your final set of interrogatories 33 days before the discovery cutoff (or hand-serve 30 days before).



## HOW TO COMPLETE THIS TEMPLATE FOR INTERROGATORIES

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- Fill in the case information.** Fill in all blanks on the first page.
- Review the Definitions Section.** Review the standard definitions, and add in any definitions specific to your case that will make it easier to understand your interrogatories.
- Write your Interrogatories.** Write simple questions that may help you prove or defend your case. You may send up to 25 interrogatories to each party. You do not have to send them all at once. If you need help writing your interrogatories, make an appointment at the Legal Help Center (see page 1). If this is not the first set of interrogatories you are sending *to this party*, renumber the interrogatories, starting with the number you left off on last time.
- Review, number the pages and sign.** Read the entire document to make sure your Interrogatories are clear, focused on this case, and that you are not repeating any questions. Count the number of pages. On each page, write in the page number and the total. Sign and date.
- Prepare the Certificate of Service.** Each document that you file must be “served” on each other party, usually by sending it in the mail. Follow the instructions on the Certificate of Service.
- Mark your calendar.** The responding party has 30 days (33 days if you serve by mail) to send you a written response. If you need help with getting complete responses to your questions, make an appointment at the Legal Help Center (see page 1).



## SERVING YOUR INTERROGATORIES

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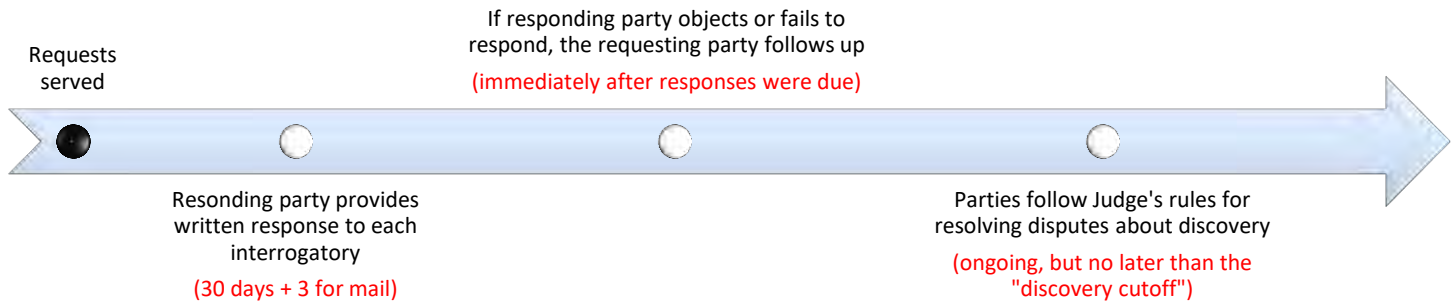
1. **Make copies.** Once the documents are complete, make one copy for each party to the case.
2. **Serve the Requests.** Be sure the Interrogatories and Certificate are served on each party. ***Do not send a copy to the Court.***



## TIMELINE: AFTER INTERROGATORIES ARE SERVED

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The timeline below lists what generally happens after Interrogatories are served. The Legal Help Centers (see page 1) can provide guidance about these steps and have many other templates for you to use.



## STAY UP TO DATE

1. **Update your contact information.** File a notice with the Clerk right away if your address, email, or phone number changes, or you may miss important deadlines, causing you to lose your case.
2. **Check your mail.** Be sure to check regularly for documents from the Court and opposing side.
3. A list of all of the documents that have been filed, and (usually) the documents themselves can be viewed online. See Chapter 7 of the Handbook for Pro Se Litigants (see below), and contact the Legal Help Center for information about how to access the documents (see page 1).



## UNDERSTANDING THE LAWS AND RULES

The Legal Help Centers (see page 1) are the best resource for people without lawyers. There are other resources for understanding the laws and rules of the Court:

1. **Handbook for Pro Se Litigants.** The Handbook is a procedural guide for people who are representing themselves. It was prepared by the Court and is available at the Clerk's Office or on the Court's website at [www.cand.uscourts.gov/prosehandbk](http://www.cand.uscourts.gov/prosehandbk).
2. **Legal Research Guide for Pro Se Litigants.** The Guide provides information for people who are representing themselves about how to do legal research, like finding statutes and decisions in other cases. It was prepared by the Justice & Diversity Center and is available at the Legal Help Centers and at <http://www.cand.uscourts.gov/Legal-Help-Center-Templates>.
3. **Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.** These Rules explain the procedures from filing through trial for all civil cases in the federal courts across the country, and are available at <http://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/rules-of-civil-procedure.pdf>.
4. **Local Rules.** The Local Rules follow the same numbering as the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, but generally provide more detail. They apply in this District only, and are available at <http://www.cand.uscourts.gov/localrules/civil>.

1 Your name: \_\_\_\_\_  
2 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
3 \_\_\_\_\_  
4 Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
5 E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

6 Pro se

7  
8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
9 NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10 Division [check one]:  San Francisco  Oakland  San Jose  Eureka

11  
12 \_\_\_\_\_ ) Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
13 \_\_\_\_\_ ) **INTERROGATORIES TO**  
14 Plaintiff, ) [name of responding party]  
15 vs. ) \_\_\_\_\_  
16 \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
17 \_\_\_\_\_ )  
18 \_\_\_\_\_ ) **SET NO.** \_\_\_\_  
19 \_\_\_\_\_ )  
20 \_\_\_\_\_ )  
21 Defendant. )

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24 Pursuant to Federal Rules of Civil Procedure 26 and 33 and Local Rule 33, [name of  
25 responding party] \_\_\_\_\_  
26 shall respond to these interrogatories within thirty (30) days of service.

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**I. DEFINITIONS**

1. The terms “YOU” or “YOUR” mean *[name of the responding party]*

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including its present and former members, officers, agents, employees, and all other persons acting or purporting to act on its behalf, including all present or former members, officers, agents, employees, and all other persons exercising or purporting to exercise discretion, make policy, and/or make decisions.

2. The terms “DOCUMENT” and “DOCUMENTS” have the same meaning and are equal in scope to the terms “documents” and “electronically store information” as stored in Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 34(a).

3. When used in connection with a person or entity, the term “IDENTIFY” means to state the full and complete: (i) name; (ii) home address, telephone, and email address; (iii) employment address, telephone number, and email address; and (iv) relationship, if any, to the plaintiff or defendant.

4. When used in connection with a document, as defined by Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 34(a), the term “IDENTIFY” means to state: (i) the type of document; (ii) the general subject matter of the document; (iii) the date of the document; (iv) the author(s), according to the document; and (v) the person(s) to whom, according to the document, the document (or a copy) was to have been sent; or, alternatively, to produce the document.

*[You can also create your own definitions.]*

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**II. INTERROGATORIES**

*[Write out each question as simply as possible. It may be useful to include information such names or dates to make your question clear. You can ask up to 25 interrogatories during the case. You do not have to ask them at all once.]*

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Sign Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE OF DOCUMENT OTHER THAN COMPLAINT**

*\* You must serve each document you file by sending or delivering to the opposing side. Complete this form, and include it with the document that you file and serve.\**

1. **Case Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ v. \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Case Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

3. **What documents were served?** Interrogatories

4. **How was the document served?** *[check one]*

Placed in U.S. Mail

Hand-delivered

Sent for delivery (e.g., FedEx, UPS)

Sent by fax (if the other party has agreed to accept service by fax)

5. **Who did you send the document to?** *[Write the full name and contact information for each person you sent the document.]*

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

6. **When were the documents sent?** \_\_\_\_\_

7. **Who served the documents?** *[Whoever puts it into the mail, faxes, delivers or sends for delivery should sign, and print their name and address. You can do this yourself.]*

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing is true and correct.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_