



# AR LEGAL SOLUTIONS

## Patent Perspectives Quarterly

January 2026

### Welcome!

Thank you for subscribing to our newsletter, *Patent Perspectives Quarterly*. In this issue we offer billing guidance for patent paralegals, updates on Patent Center technical issues and improvements, tips for putting your best foot forward in the new year, and more.

In each issue, we include tips and tricks based on real-world inquiries from paralegals and patent attorneys. We would love for this section to be interactive—feel free to send us additional questions to address in the next newsletter to [newsletter@arlegalsolutions.net](mailto:newsletter@arlegalsolutions.net).

### Top FAQs from Patent Professionals

- 1. I filed a no fee (placeholder) continuation application with a first priority claim that was 10 years old. The USPTO is saying that I have to file a petition for delayed priority claim. Why is this the case?**

Under the new Continuing Application Fee (CAF), fees are due at filing in order to get a priority claim. You do have 4 months from filing date to fix or claim priority. The USPTO will not send a notification to applicants informing them about deletion of the priority claim. To reinstate the priority claims, you must submit a corrected ADS and pay the applicable CAF within 4 months of the continuing application filing date. Best practice is to pay the fee upon filing or docket the 4-month deadline for paying the CAF.

- 2. How does your firm handle IDS filings for continuations? Do you submit a transmittal asking the examiner to consider the parent applications and all prior art found in them or do you fill out the 1449 with everything listed in the parent application?**

Submit IDS transmittal and SB08, checking the box that says look at the parent. Submit the 1449 with a statement on transmittal saying you are not submitting the references from the patent but can as needed. You must file the IDS to have references appear on the patent.

- 3. Is it difficult to file a Track One application?**

Track One applications are not difficult. The key is to be sure not to miss any parts. Choose the Track One application type in the drop down and complete the Track One Request Form, which will indicate the fees due. Be sure you are filing a complete application with the declaration with no more than four independent claims, no more than 30 total claims and no multiple dependent claims. Two of the biggest mistakes when filing a Track One application are not paying the extra processing fee and not checking the pay authorization boxes.

- 4. I am a paralegal looking to transition into IP. Any suggestions on how to get my foot in the door?**

There is a steep learning curve for patent prosecution. Take advantage of the USPTO's training courses found here > <https://www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/attorneys-agents-and-paralegals>

Some other ideas include looking into a docketing role, which can provide a good foundation for future patent paralegal work. If you are near a university, look into technology transfer offices. They could offer a good learning opportunity.

## Start the Year Strong: Reset, Refocus, and Recharge

The start of a new year is a powerful moment to set momentum. It's an opportunity to reflect on what worked, reset your priorities, and realign your goals with where you want to go next. With a thoughtful approach, you can turn lessons from the past year into a clear plan for personal and professional growth in the year ahead.

[Check out our end-of-year habits and checklist here](#)

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## Billing Tips for Paralegals in Patent Practice

For most paralegals, entering time is not the highlight of the workday. The same is true for many attorneys. Yet in every practice area—and especially in patent prosecution—accurate billing is essential. It not only reflects the financial health of your firm but also demonstrates the value paralegals bring to the client relationship.

[Read our full article for practical tips on entering time with clarity, confidence, and consistency!](#)

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## Patent Center Known Issues and Workarounds

Here is our quarterly update on the needs-improvement when it comes to Patent Center.

### **UPDATE: Independent Inventors without a customer number are unable to complete the ID.me Self-enrollment process (02OCT2025)**

Some independent inventor users do not see a “successful message” when completing the ID.me self-enrollment process. According to Patent Center, the process typically is complete if though the message indicating success does not appear. Because there is no workaround, affected users should contact the EBC to escalate the issue. A fix is expected soon

### **eGrants delay**

Effective October 14, 2025, delivery of courtesy ceremonial copies of eGrants will be delayed by up to 90 days.

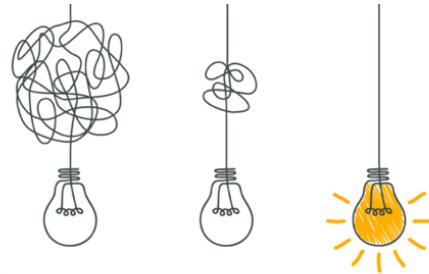
## WHAT'S NEW

**New feature > Filing preliminary amendments in DOCX format in initial submission:** Applicants now have the option to directly upload Preliminary Amendment documents in DOCX format as part of the initial submission of a new utility application under 35 U.S.C. 111(a).

**DOCX document validation:** In training mode, users can now go directly to the upload screen in utility non provisional filings in order validate their DOCX documents

## Patent Center Tips & Tricks

AR Legal Solutions founder Aubre Rabe recently co-presented to IP paralegals on Patent Center Tips & Tricks. Here are some of our favorite tips from that session – a collection of links to Patent Center guides and a handy set of instructions for uploading documents.



### Patent Center Guides

The following guides published by the USPTO on Patent Center are very useful for both new and experienced patent paralegals.

#### Patent Center User Guide

This comprehensive user guide provides information needed to use Patent Center. It includes screen shots. Note the date of last publication is November 2023.

#### Patent Center Sponsorship User Guide

The Sponsorship Tool guide provides instructions for both practitioner and support staff functions and setting up two-step authentication.

#### Document Description List (for uploads)

This Xcel document describes the various documents used in Patent Center and their function.

#### Patent Center e-Terminal Disclaimer Guide

An e-Terminal Disclaimer Quick Start Guide with filing instructions.

#### Patent Center ePetition Quick Start Guide

Another Quick Start Guide covering the 12 different types of ePetitions.

#### Patent Center Web ADS Quick Start Guide

A Quick Start Guide for the Web-based Application Data Sheet to help users understand how to file a Web-based ADS complete with screen shots.

#### Patent Center QPIDS Quick Start Guide

This guide covers how to file a Quick Path Information Disclosure Statement. QPIDS permits consideration of an IDS after payment of the issue fee without having to reopen prosecution in response to an RCE.

## Guided Instructions for Uploading Documents to Patent Center

Other Reference – Patent/App/Search Documents	NPL Documents
Used for submissions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• US Patent Documents</li> <li>• US Application Documents</li> <li>• International or Foreign Search Reports</li> </ul>	Used for any and all non-patent literature references.  Should <b>NOT</b> be used for search reports.
<b>Drawings - only black and white line drawings</b>	<b>Drawings – other than black and white line drawings</b>
Used for one or more drawings where necessary for the understanding of the subject matter sought to be patented. Drawings consist of black and white lines only.	Used for drawings, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grayscale</li> <li>• Shading</li> <li>• Color</li> </ul>
<b>Miscellaneous Incoming Letter</b>	<b>Transmittal Letter</b>
Used for a letter from applicant that is not a response to a requirement, notice of Office Action sent by the USPTO.	Used for a transmittal in a follow-on submission (e.g., IDS transmittal, any other type of transmittal follow-on).

### ProTip!

We recently ran into a problem with PDF drawings. While the application was initially accepted, the Examiner issued an action saying that the uploading drawings were layered.

Layers are created by illustration software and if your drafts person isn't careful, those layers can translate over to the PDF. Adobe offers instructions on how to flatten a PDF, but honestly the latest instructions are either out of date or do not apply to every version of Acrobat. A quick and easy way to prepare your PDFs to avoid issues such as layering is to print it to Adobe PDF. In the Print dialogue box select Adobe PDF as your printer and then click Print. This will save your file as a simple PDF with no layers.

\*We have found that in some versions of Adobe you can go to Compress a PDF – Advanced Optimization. Under Discard User Data make sure that the Discard Hidden Layer Content box is checked.



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