

# PUBLICATION

---

## An Economic Turn for the Better: USPTO Lowers Trademark Fees

Authors: Emily R. Billig

February 04, 2015

**The cost of filing and maintaining federal trademark registrations with the USPTO just got lower. On January 17, 2015, the PTO announced a \$50 per class reduction in initial filing fees for trademark applications filed under the "TEAS Plus" program, while simultaneously introducing a new "TEAS Reduced Fee" (a.k.a. TEAS RF) program at the former TEAS Plus rate, but with less strict filing requirements.**

Traditionally, trademark applicants using the PTO's Trademark Electronic Application System (TEAS) were required to choose between a standard filing, at a cost of \$325 per class, and the TEAS Plus filing program. The latter had a lower filing rate (\$275 per class), but required applicants to abide by sometimes unsavory conditions, such as paying the full filing fee up front, agreeing to electronic communications with the PTO, and, notably, agreeing to use only phrases selected from the Trademark ID Manual in describing its goods/services. Violation of any of these rules would push the applicant into the higher fee schedule, mandating an additional payment of \$50 per class.

The new TEAS RF program may be a more comfortable middle ground for many applicants. At the former TEAS Plus rate, applicants under TEAS RF can avoid some of the potential pitfalls of the TEAS Plus program (but must still agree to electronic communications with the PTO and electronic filing of certain subsequent submissions). The new program is in keeping with the PTO's stated goals of promoting electronic filing and improving efficiency for PTO operations and customers. It also comes shortly after the issuance of the PTO's 2014 Performance and Accountability Report, in which trademark operations received high marks for meeting application pendency targets and increasing both registrations and revenue.

As a boon to all trademark holders, the fee to electronically renew a trademark registration was reduced by \$100, to \$300 per class. And, for the rule followers among us, the TEAS Plus program with its strict filing requirements is still available, now at an even lower rate of \$225 per class.