



**CM/ECF Civil Manual  
FOR NEW USERS**

***Updated: December 8, 2020***

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## GETTING STARTED

### INTRODUCTION

This manual provides instructions on how to use the Electronic Filing System to file documents with the court, or to view and retrieve docket sheets and documents for all cases assigned to this system. Users should have a working knowledge of word processing, web browsers, file management, and Portable Document Format (PDF).

### HELP DESK

Contact the court's ECF Help Desk for assistance between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Local: 612-664-5155

Toll Free: 1-866-325-4975

Email: [ecfhelpdesk@mnd.uscourts.gov](mailto:ecfhelpdesk@mnd.uscourts.gov)

### ECF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

For up-to-date information regarding ECF, visit the U.S. District Court's [website](#).

The [Case Information](#) tab provides access to:

- Live login to ECF
- Training Information
- PACER Information
- Electronic Filing Tools
- New Cases
- Transcript Information
- Violation Notices
- Sentencing Information
- Criminal Debt Information
- Statistics
- PACER Fee Exemption Information

## REQUIREMENTS

### HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

The hardware and software needed to electronically file, view, and retrieve case documents are the following:

- A personal computer running a standard platform such as Windows or Macintosh.
- A PDF-compatible word processor like Macintosh and Windows based version of Corel WordPerfect or Microsoft Word.
- An Internet Service provider.
- A Web browser.
- Software, such as Adobe Acrobat, to convert documents from a word processor format to portable document format (PDF).
- Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available for free, is needed for viewing PDF documents.

- A scanner may be necessary to create electronic images of documents not in your word processing system.

NOTE: Scanning is only used for documents that cannot be produced electronically. Scanned documents lessen the level of service we provide by slowing down the entire system. We are moving away from the utilization of scanned documents internally and ask you do the same whenever possible.

#### **How to View a PDF File**

1. Start a Portable Document Format program such as Adobe Acrobat.
2. Click **File > Open**.
3. Click the location and file name of the PDF document to be viewed.
4. Adobe Acrobat Exchange loads the file and displays it on the screen.

NOTE: If the displayed document is larger than the screen or consists of multiple pages, use the scroll bars to move through the document. Click the View menu for other options for viewing the displayed document. Choose the option that is most appropriate for the document.

#### **How to Convert Documents to a PDF**

The conversion process requires special software such as Adobe Acrobat Writer or FinePrint pdfFactor7. Some software (e.g., WordPerfect and Microsoft Word) have Acrobat components built-in or available as add-ins. These can be used to convert documents to PDF.

Once PDF conversion software is loaded on your computer:

1. **Open** the document to be converted.
2. Select **Print** option.
3. **Change** printer option to the PDF choice available.
4. **“Print”** the file. The file will not actually print; instead, the option to save the file as a PDF file will appear.

NOTE: Make a note of the file location so you can find the document later when you are ready to file it to ECF. Change the location, if necessary.

5. Name the file, giving it the extension “.PDF” and click the **Save** button.

NOTE: Depending on the word processing program being used, it may be necessary to find the printer selection option elsewhere. At that point, change the printer to Adobe PDFWriter, and follow the directions above.

#### **PDF/A Documents**

PDF/A is a standard format that allows for the long-term archiving of electronic documents with the assurance that the documents will be accessible in the future. CM/ECF will accept both PDF and PDF/A documents.

## CENTRAL SIGN-ON (CSO) ACCOUNT

The Central Sign-On functionality in the Next Generation (NextGen) of CM/ECF allows filers to access PACER and NextGen CM/ECF systems using a single PACER account. Once logged in with a CSO account, admitted attorneys with filing privileges can:

- Electronically file pleadings and documents.
- View official docket sheets and documents.
- View various case related reports.

## PUBLIC ACCESS TO COURT ELECTRONIC RECORDS (PACER) ACCESS

PACER is an electronic access service that allows users to obtain case and docket information from Federal Appellate, District, and Bankruptcy courts, and from the U.S. Party/Case Index. Attorneys must have an individual PACER account in order to file in the ECF system. All requests for ECF filing privileges are submitted through PACER. You may register for a PACER account [online](#). Your CSO Account is maintained through PACER. Name, address, login, password, and primary email address information can be updated in the “Manage My Account” section of PACER’s website. If you have forgotten your PACER username and/or password, PACER has an automated password reset and username recovery on the PACER login page.

## ELECTRONIC CASE FILING (ECF) ACCESS

Existing attorneys (those who were admitted in the District of Minnesota prior to October 5, 2015 and have an active ECF account) will link their ECF account to their individual PACER account for filing access. Please see the [Case Information](#) page for additional information and procedures.

Attorneys seeking admission and filing access must make a request through PACER. Please review the [attorney admissions forms](#) for specific instructions. Please note that pro hac vice and Multi District Litigation (MDL) attorneys also obtain filing access with the court through PACER.

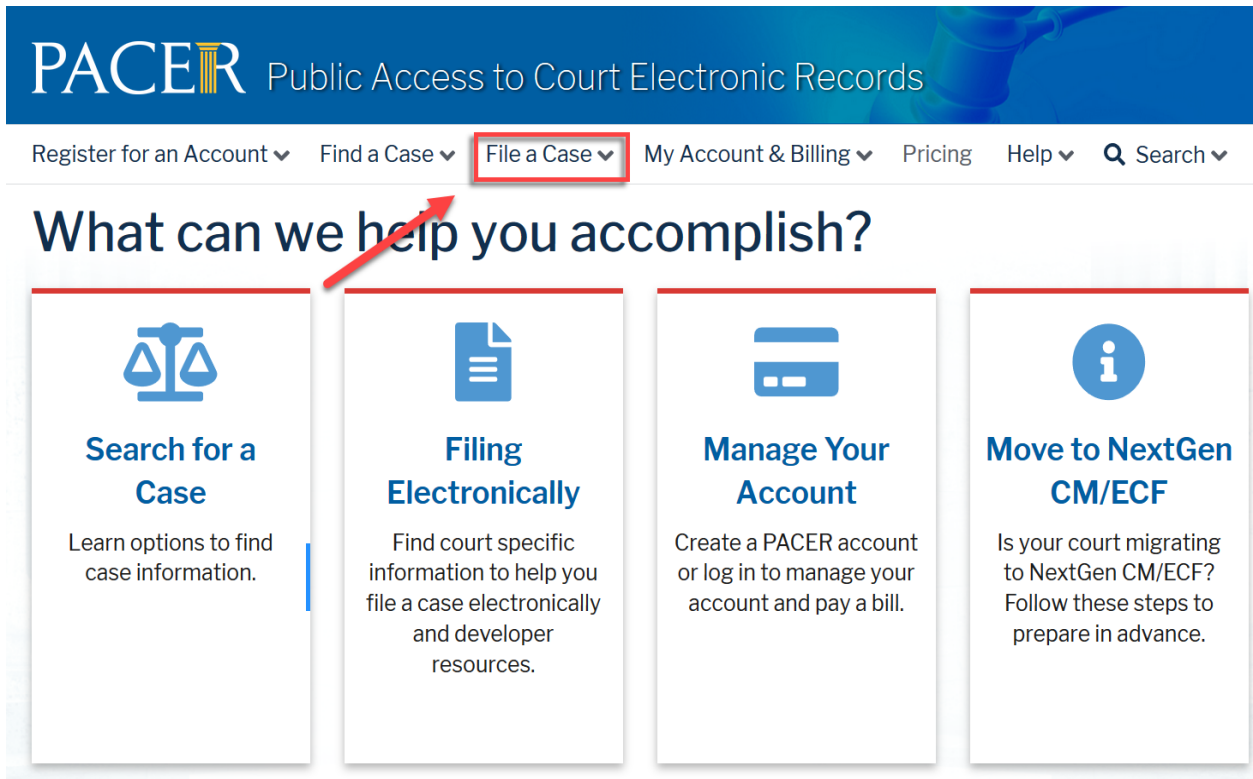
Attorneys will only retain filing access while in good standing with the bar of this court or when admitted pro hac vice. To be in good standing, an attorney must comply with the requirements of [LR 83.6](#), including the timely payment of the re-registration fee due every third year during the court’s re-registration. If you do not re-register with the court, your admission status will become inactive and you will need to re-register with the court to return to good standing and have filing privileges reactivated. After being admitted, attorneys must file a notice of appearance in the case(s) they wish to appear as attorney of record.

## STEP-BY-STEP FILING GUIDE

Below is a step-by-step guide for accessing the ECF system, preparing a document for filing, filing a motion or application, and displaying a docket sheet. Before actually filing for the first time, it is recommended to practice filing in the [training database](#).

## LOG IN TO ECF/PACER THROUGH CSO (CENTRAL SIGN-ON)

1. Click on the U.S. District Court of Minnesota – Document Filing System link. To access this link either:
  - o Navigate to [PACER](#) and click on File a Case.



OR

- o Navigate to the District of Minnesota’s [website](#) and click on the **E-Filing (CM/ECF)** link on the left panel.



2. Enter your **PACER/CSO Username** and **Password** in the appropriate entry fields.


NOTE: The **Client Code** is an optional field that can be used for organizing your monthly bill to associate costs specific to clients.

3. Check the box confirming you will comply with the redaction rules. Click **Continue** and the main ECF screen will appear.

## ECF MENU OPTIONS

The following options are accessible from the menu bar at the top of the main window.



Option	Use this option to:
<b>Civil</b>	Electronically file all civil case pleadings, motions, and other court documents.
<b>Criminal</b>	Electronically file all criminal case pleadings, motions, and other court documents.
<b>Query</b>	Search by specific case number, party name, or nature of suit to retrieve documents relevant to the case. You will incur PACER search fees.
<b>Reports</b>	Retrieve docket sheets and case-filed reports. You will incur PACER search fees.
<b>Utilities</b>	View your personal ECF transaction log and maintain secondary email addresses for noticing purposes.
<b>Search</b>	Use to find and get to the menu option or docket event that you need. Type in a partial or full word and a complete list of menus and events containing the word is displayed. The items appearing are links to the filing of the event.
<b>Logout</b>	Sign out of ECF/PACER and prevent any filing with your password until the next time you log in.
	See a help file for the screen you are viewing.

## LOGOUT OF THE LIVE SYSTEM

After you have completed all transactions for a particular session in ECF, you should exit from the system.

1. Click **Log Out**.
2. A pop-up message will appear stating: “Although you have logged out from CM/ECF, data remains in the browser’s memory (and might be available to someone else using your PC.) Please close your browser now to clear this data.” **Click OK**.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Filer will use the **Civil** feature of ECF to electronically file a variety of pleadings and other documents for civil cases.



## GENERAL RULES AND MANIPULATIONS

### Correcting a Mistake

Up until the filing has been completed, users can click the **Back** button on the browser toolbar to go back and correct an entry made on a previous screen. Once the document is transmitted to the court, only the court can make changes or corrections.

### Signatures

A pleading or other document requiring a signature must be signed in the following manner:

s/Pat Attorney  
Pat Attorney  
Bar Number 12345  
Attorney for (Plaintiff/Defendant) XYZ Company  
ABC Law Firm  
123 South Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55415  
Telephone: (612) 555-5555  
Fax: (612) 555-5554  
[emailaddress@domain.com](mailto:emailaddress@domain.com)

### Stipulations

The following procedure applies when a stipulation or other document (e.g., a joint motion, joint exhibit list, and 26(f) report) requires two or more signatures:

1. The filer must initially confirm that the content of the document is acceptable to all signatories by obtaining their original signatures to the document.
2. The filer then must file the document electronically, indicating the signatories with an “s/signature” (e.g., “s/Jane Doe,” “s/John Smith,” etc.) for each signatory.

**By filing the document the attorney certifies that: (1) the document has been signed by all necessary people, including affiant and notary, if applicable, and (2) the ink signed originals exist and will be available in their offices for inspection.<sup>1</sup> Documents containing original signatures must be filed electronically with originally executed copies maintain by the filer until after final resolution of the action, including final disposition of all appeals.**

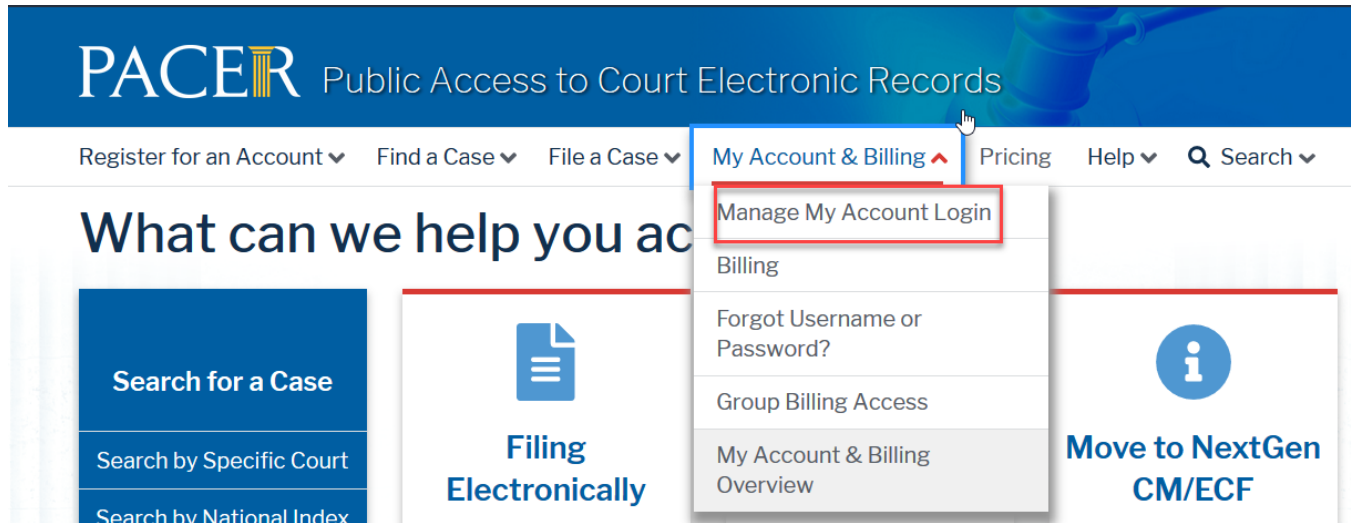
3. Any party who disputes the authenticity of an electronically filed document containing multiple signatures or the authenticity of the signatures themselves must file an objection to the document within 14 days of service of the document. Upon request, the document must be made available for review.

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<sup>1</sup> This procedure applies when the third-party document exists on the computer of the attorney or client. If so, after obtaining the ink signatures on a paper copy, the filer should affix “s/ signature(s)” to the word processing version, convert the document to PDF, and upload it in ECF. If the document is not available in electronic format, the ink signed paper version may be scanned and filed in ECF. Scanning, however, is not the preferred method.

## MAINTAINING YOUR ACCOUNT

All account information, other than secondary email addresses, is held in your CSO account and can be accessed through the **Manage My Account** option on PACER's [website](#) . It is each attorney's responsibility to keep the account information up to date.



## EMAIL INFORMATION

The primary email address is added and updated through PACER. Secondary email addresses are only added and updated through ECF. Email addresses are used for Notices of Electronic Filing (NEFs). It is recommended that all accounts include a primary email address and at least one secondary email address for the purpose of receiving NEFs.

**NOTE:** Filers access CM/ECF systems using a single PACER account. If attorneys share these account credentials with a third-party service provider, the provider will be able to access restricted documents (including sealed documents) to which the filer has access. If the third-party service providers place the restricted documents they obtain in internet repositories, other users of the third-party service or software may access the documents and/or make them publicly available. Once an attorney obtains ECF filing access, the attorney is responsible for all documents filed using the attorney's username and password and is subject to Rule 11 sanctions ([Fed. R. Civ. P. 11](#)).

### Updating Primary Email

1. Navigate to [PACER](#). Note that this can also be accessed through ECF by clicking on **Utilities>Manage your PACER Account**.
2. Click on **Manage My Account** and Login.
3. Click the **Maintenance** tab.
4. Click **Update E-Filer Noticing and Frequency**.
5. **Check the box** to apply your changes to the District of MN.
6. Enter and confirm the **Primary Email Address**, select frequency and format preferences and click **Submit**.

7. You will get a confirmation screen. Click **Close**.

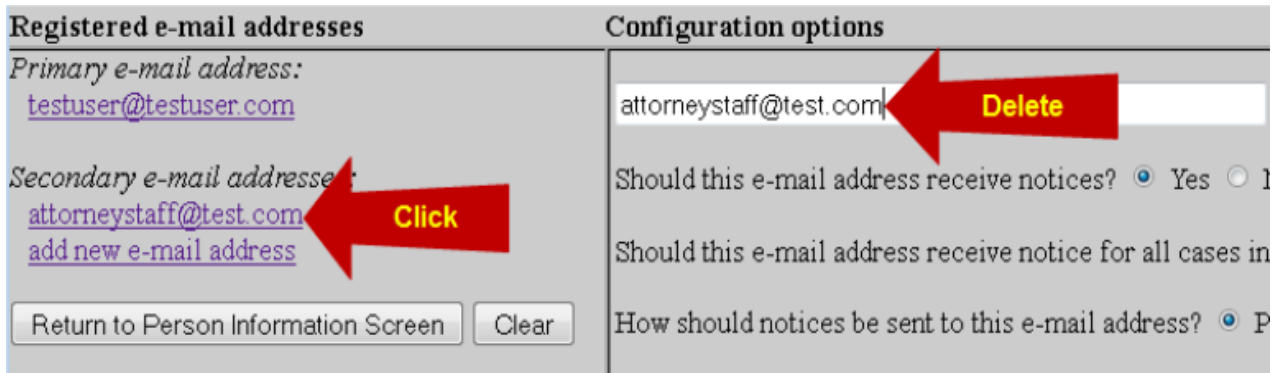
**Updating/Adding Secondary Emails**

1. Click **Utilities>Your Account>Maintain Your Account**.
2. Click **Email information** at the bottom of the screen.
3. If a primary email address is listed, skip to step 5. If no primary email address is listed, click **add new e-mail address**. **Although primary email addresses are maintained through PACER, there must be one listed in ECF in order to add secondary addresses.** Enter the account’s PRIMARY email address. Once an address is entered, the secondary email address options will appear on the left.
4. Click **add new e-mail address** under **Secondary e-mail addresses**.
5. Enter the **secondary email address** and change the configuration options if desired. Note that multiple secondary email addresses can be added by clicking on **add new email address**.

**Configuration Options**

Option	Description
<b>Should this email address receive notices?</b>	For the primary email address, the default is Yes. If set to No, the primary email address will not receive NEFs – this is NOT recommended.
<b>How should notices be sent to this email address?</b>	<p><u>Per Filing</u>: Email sent for each individual filing.</p> <p><u>Summary Report</u>: One daily email listing all transactions for that day, sent on the following day.</p> <p>NOTE: If the Summary Report is selected, an additional prompt appears, “Should this email address receive a ‘no activity’ notice when no summary noticing occurs?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Yes: an email will be sent with the message, “no transactions found for this time period” when no activity occurs in the cases for which the user is configured to receive summary notices.</li> <li>● No: no email will be sent unless there were filings.</li> </ul>
<b>In what format should notices be sent to this email address?</b>	Controls the format of the emails – HTML is generally preferred.
<b>Should this email address receive general announcement notices from this court?</b>	The court prefers that users select <b>Yes</b> so they will receive email notifications regarding important ECF system information such as down-times and upgrades.

6. To **remove a secondary email address**, click on the address on the left and delete it in the text box on the right.

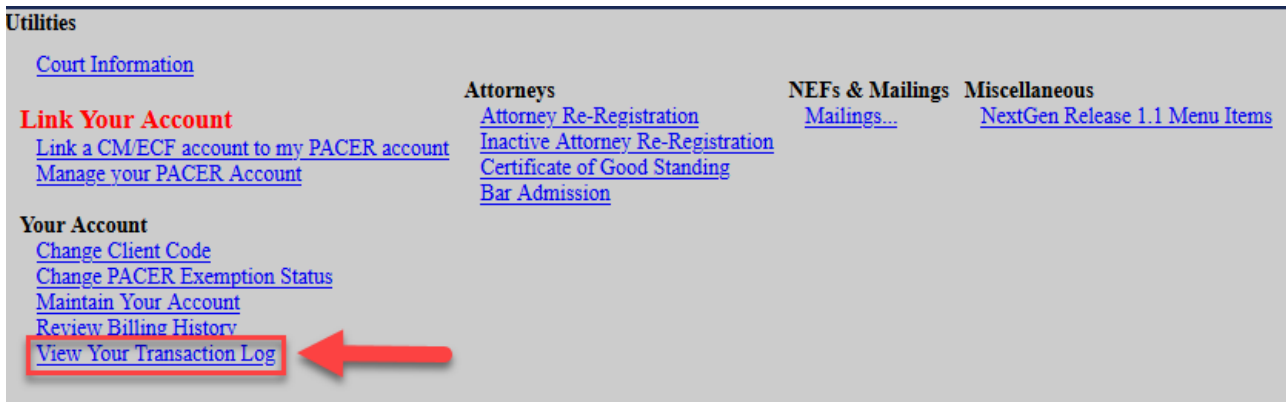


7. After all changes have been made, click **Return to Person Information Screen**. DO NOT use the Back button in your browser-information will not be saved if you click Back.
8. You will return to the main account maintenance screen. Click **Submit** to save changes. A confirmation screen will appear.
9. If the Clerk’s Office receives a “bounce back” (i.e., an undeliverable e-mail) notice from a Registered User’s primary or secondary e-mail account, no follow up will occur by Court staff. It is the Registered User’s responsibility to update all information as it pertains to the user’s account.
10. Continue working in ECF by clicking on any menu item at the top.

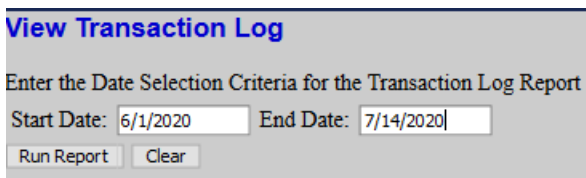
## VIEW YOUR TRANSACTION LOG

As a free service, ECF filers may view their transaction logs. This may be helpful to verify all transactions entered are reflected in the system, and that no unauthorized individuals have entered transactions into ECF.

1. Click **Utilities>Your Account>View Your Transaction Log**.



2. Enter the **Date Parameters** and click **Run Report**.

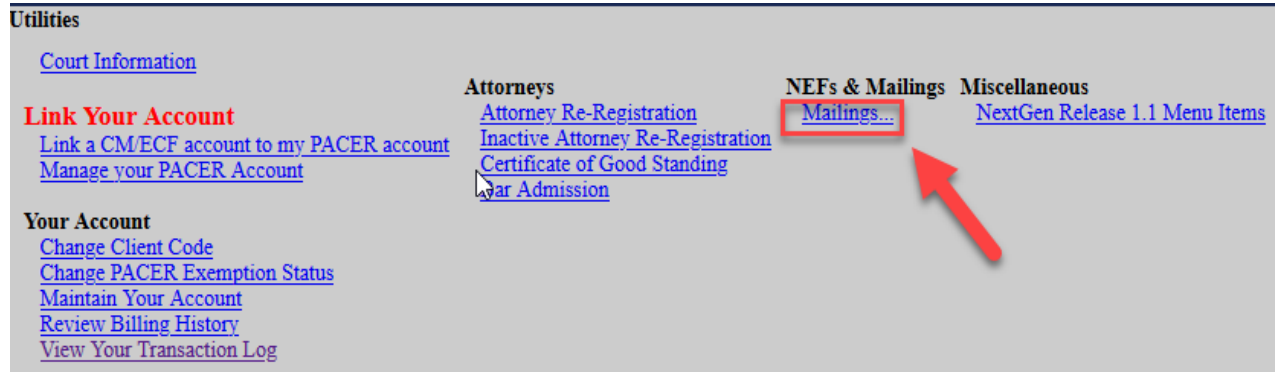


3. A list of transactions occurring during the designated dates will appear.

## MAILING INFORMATION FOR A CASE

Attorneys can check ECF to see if a party is registered to receive email noticing in ECF.

1. Select **Utilities>NEFs & Mailings>Mailings**.



2. Click **Mailing Info for a Case**.
3. Enter the desired **case number** and click **Submit**.
4. A window will appear listing mailing information for the case.
5. Note that any names listed under the **Manual Notice List** need to be **noticed conventionally**.

## FILING A NEW CIVIL CASE (E.G., COMPLAINTS, PETITIONS, NOTICES OF REMOVALS)

Initiating documents (e.g., complaints, petitions, notices of removal, etc.) along with civil cover sheets should be filed electronically in ECF. Filers are responsible for entering all case information including the Nature of Suit, Cause of Action and named parties. Sealed civil cases cannot be opened electronically by attorneys and will be opened by the Clerk's Office.

Electronic civil case opening is a two part process: 1) **enter the case data** and 2) **file the initiating documents**. For assistance during this process, please contact the CM/ECF Help Desk at 612-664-5155 or 866-325-4975.

### PART I: ENTER THE CASE DATA

1. After logging into CM/ECF with the filing attorney's CM/ECF account, select **Civil** from the menu bar at the top of the ECF screen.
2. Click **Civil Case** under Open a Case.
3. A window will appear with important instructions on the case opening process. Review this information, and then click **Next**.

**Please note: Only attorneys fully admitted to the District of Minnesota or MDL attorneys filing a new MDL case may open a new case.**

4. Bypass the next screen without making any changes. Do not change the code in the "Office" field. Click **Next**.
5. Enter the Case Data:

The Case Data Screen may be completed using the information provided on the Civil Cover Sheet. The [Civil Cover Sheet \(JS44\)](#) is available in fillable form on the court's website. A completed Civil Cover Sheet must be attached as a PDF file when filing the case initiating document in PART II of the Electronic Civil Case Opening process.

Selections made on the Case Data Screen are very important. If an error message appears on the screen, double-check the accuracy of the information entered, which must be corrected before case opening may continue.

**Open Civil Case**

**HELPFUL HINTS**

1. Please enter below the information as it appears on the completed *Civil Cover Sheet*.
2. Only when selecting *Diversity* as the basis for **Jurisdiction**, enter the citizenship of the principal plaintiff and principal defendant in the fields provided.
3. Change **Fee Status** to *pend (IFP Pending)* if filing an *Application to Proceed in District Court without Prepaying Fees or Costs*.
4. Change **Fee Status** to *wv (waived)* if filing on behalf of the United States of America.

**Jurisdiction** 3 (Federal Question)

**Cause of action**  Filter:

**Nature of suit** 0 (zero)  Filter:

**Origin** 1 (Original Proceeding)

**Citizenship plaintiff**

**Citizenship defendant**

**Jury demand** n (None)  **Class action** n (No Class Action Alleged)  **Demand (\$000)**

**Arbitration code** Leave Blank  **County** Aitkin

**Fee status** pd (paid)  **Fee date** 7/14/2020  **Date transfer** Leave Blank

Leave date defaulted

## Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction is a term that refers to whether a court has the power to hear a given case. “Federal Question” jurisdiction means federal courts will hear cases that involve issues regarding the Constitution or other federal laws. “Diversity Jurisdiction” is where the opposing parties are citizens of different states. “Diversity Jurisdiction” enables a federal court to hear cases where there is not a federal question. The federal law governing diversity jurisdiction states that a case must have an “amount-in-controversy” of \$75,000 or more before a federal court can hear a case.

Jurisdiction defaults to 3 (*Federal Question*). The drop-down list displays additional options for jurisdiction, including 1 (*U.S. Government Plaintiff*), 2 (*U.S. Government Defendant*), 4 (*Diversity*), 5 (*Local Question*).

## Cause of Action

Available statutes, which are also referred to as Cause of Action, are listed in numerical order. To enter the applicable Cause of Action, click the drop-down list and scroll down to find the appropriate selection. Or, use the Filter field by entering a full or partial statute number or text description. CM/ECF will narrow the drop-down list to only the items that match the statute number or description entered. If you cannot locate a specific Cause of Action, select a generic statute, e.g. 28:1332 Diversity, 28:1441 Petition for Removal.

## Nature of Suit

Nature of suit codes are listed in numerical order. To enter the Nature of Suit, click the drop-down list and scroll down to find the appropriate selection. Or, use the Filter field by entering a full or partial number or text description. CM/ECF will narrow the drop-down list to only the items that match the number or description entered.

## Origin

A Complaint originating in Federal Court is classified under origin code 1 (*Original Proceeding*). A Notice of Removal is classified under origin code 2 (*Removal from State Court*). Use the drop-down box to select the appropriate origin code for the case.

## Citizenship

The citizenship of the parties must be provided only for cases in which Diversity has been selected as the basis for jurisdiction. When filing a diversity case, select the appropriate citizenship statement for the plaintiff and the defendant.

## Jury Demand

Jury demand should be selected only if there is a jury demand contained within the case initiating document(s). The jury demand status may be entered by the plaintiff when filing a Complaint or the defendant when filing a Notice of Removal. *N (none)* should be selected if none of the parties have formally demanded a jury trial.

## Class Action

If the Complaint alleges a class action, select “y” in the **Class Action** field. To request class certification, a separate motion must be filed after the case has been opened.

## Demand

If a monetary demand is included in the Complaint, enter the amount to the nearest thousand dollars. For example, if the demand is \$1,500,000 enter *1500*, without a dollar sign, comma or decimal. The CM/ECF system will automatically add three zeroes to a number added in this field.

## Arbitration Code

Leave this field blank.

## County

Click the **County** drop-down list to display a list of all counties in the District of Minnesota. From the list, select the county of residence of the first listed plaintiff. If the U.S. Government is the plaintiff, select the county of residence of the first listed defendant.

## Fee Status

Unless filing on behalf of a U.S. governmental agency or if filing an *Application to Proceed in District Court without Prepaying Fees or Costs*, the fee status should be set to **pd (paid)**. If an *Application to Proceed in District Court without Prepaying Fees or Costs* is being filed, **pend (IFP pending)** should be selected. Attorneys for the United States or agencies of the United States government should select *wv (waived)* as the fee status.

## Fee Date

Leave this date defaulted. Do **NOT** modify.

## Date Transfer

Leave this field blank.

## 6. Enter Party Names:



Perhaps the most critical component of electronic civil case opening is the entry of party names. It is important that this be done correctly because it impacts not only the case being filed, but the general records of the Court. The [Party Name Guide](#) is available on the court's website to provide assistance in adding party names. **IMPORTANT:** Please consult the guide before entering a new party into the court's CM/ECF database. If filing a Notice of Removal, enter the parties from the Complaint.

### Searching for a Party

The Party Search screen is divided into two panels. The left panel contains controls to **Add New Party** and **Create Case**. The search filed in the right panel allows users to search the CM/ECF database for party names.

To enter a party name, first search existing names in the CM/ECF database by entering at least two letters of the party's last name in the **Last/Business Name** field. If the party is a business, enter the first two letters of the business name. Omit articles such as A, An, and The. **Please do NOT enter parties in all CAPS.**

Click the Search button to view a list of available party names.

As the system searches for a party name match, CM/ECF will display a list of existing party names. Scroll through the list to review the potential party name matches. If the name of the party appears in the list, click on the party name to highlight it, and then click the **Select Party** button. If there are multiple parties with the same name, double click on the party name to determine if there is address information entered. **Do not pick a party with address information.** If the name of a party does not appear in the list, consult the *Creating a New Party* instructions below.

### Creating a New Party

If the system does not find a match after performing a party name search, click the **Create New Party** button to create a new party record in the CM/ECF database.

CM/ECF will display the Party Information screen. Although several data entry boxes appear on the Party Information screen, only the following fields should be completed.

- Last name;
- First name;
- Middle name or initial (If applicable);
- Generation (If applicable);
- Title (If applicable);
- Role (If applicable); and
- Party text (If applicable)

Note: The **Corporation** and **Notice** fields do not need to be modified.

**Do NOT enter any additional information (address, phone, email, etc.).**

### Party Name

Party names must be entered as they appear on the case caption with no variations, including punctuation. For businesses, the entire company name must be entered in the **Last/Business Name** field. For individuals, the Last name, First name, and Middle name fields are used. The Generation field (e.g., Jr., Sr.) and Title field may also be completed, if applicable.

### Role



The Role type defaults to defendant. **Important: Modify this field to the correct party role from the drop-down list.**

### Party Text

The Party text field is optional and may be used to add descriptive information about the party as it appears in the caption of the case initiating document. Examples of party text are: A Minnesota Corporation, Individually, and in the Official Capacity, as Trustees of, etc.




When all required information is entered, click the **Add Party** button at the bottom of the screen to add the party to the case.

As each party is added, the party name will appear in the panel on the left side of the screen. The information in the left side panel is referred to as the Case Participant Tree.

An alias may be entered for a party only if the party alias appears in the caption of the complaint. For example, if the complaint reads: "COMPANY X, formerly known as BUSINESS Q." In this situation, BUSINESS Q should be entered as the alias for COMPANY X.

**Never enter a corporate parent or attorney for a party.** Instead, file a Rule 7.1 Disclosure Statement after filing the initiating documents.

The following chart provides a description of the icons and functions that are available in the left side panel of the Case Participant Tree.

Icon	Description
	Delete this party or alias from the case.
	Add a new alias in the case.
	Edit this party or alias in the case.
+ or -	Expands or collapses the party menu.

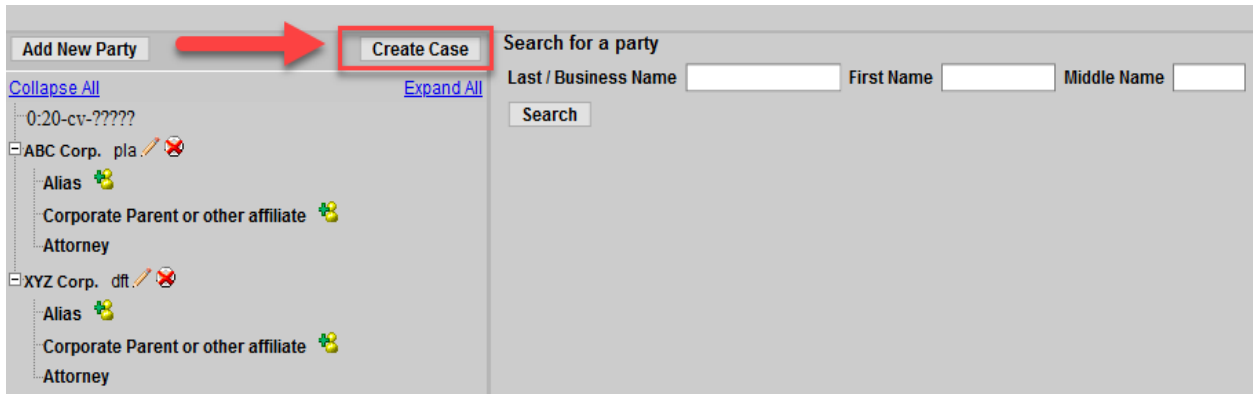
The Expand all hyperlink displays all party information in the case, including aliases. The Collapse all hyperlink displays only the names of the parties in the case, with all other information collapsed in the tree.

Each branch of the case participant tree may be expanded or collapsed individually by clicking on the + and – icons.

After entering all parties in the case, expand the Case Participant Tree to review the party names for accuracy. If necessary, click the appropriate icon in the Case Participant Tree to add or correct information. **Important: Do not click the back button when entering parties as you will lose any parties already entered on the case.**

## 7. Create Case

When all parties have been added and appear correctly in the Case Participant Tree, click **Create Case** on the left panel.



CM/ECF provides one last opportunity to make changes to case opening information. Clicking **No** will allow you to add, delete or modify parties. If the information is correct, click **Yes** to create the case and obtain a case number.

The case data is now entered in CM/ECF and a case number has been assigned. Please make a note of the case number.

Click on the hyperlink, [CLICK HERE NOW TO DOCKET THE COMPLAINT OR OTHER INITIATING DOCUMENT](#) to continue with PART II of the case opening process.

**All case initiating documents (e.g., Complaint, Notice of Removal, civil cover sheet) must be filed immediately after the case has been opened.**

**IMPORTANT: If a case has been opened incorrectly, STOP and contact the Clerk's Office for assistance at 612-664-5155 or 866-325-4975. Do NOT open the case a second time.**

NOTE: **After** the initiating documents (e.g., Complaint, Notice of Removal) have been filed, the Clerk's Office will randomly assign a district judge and magistrate judge to the case. A text only notice will be docketed and the judge information will be displayed on the Notice of Electronic Filing.

## PART II: FILING INITIATING DOCUMENTS

**IMPORTANT:** Filing a Complaint or Notice of Removal in CM/ECF requires the electronic payment of the filing fee. Before filing the initiating document(s), it is important to obtain relevant financial account information in the form of either:

- The routing number and account number for a savings or checking account; or

- The account number, expiration date, and 3-digit security code for a credit card.

NOTE: When filing a new case on behalf of the USA or with an *Application to Proceed in District Court Without Prepaying Fees or Costs*, it is not necessary to submit a filing fee payment with the initiating document(s).

To complete **PART II** of the electronic civil case opening process, click on the hyperlink to docket the complaint or other initiating document after obtaining the case number, or click on the *Complaints and Other Initiating Documents* menu on the Civil Events screen.

1. The civil case number will populate, click **Next**.
2. A window will appear stating, "You are not an attorney of record on this case. Please verify that you have entered the correct case number," click **Next**.
3. Make the appropriate selection of the case initiating document, e.g., *Complaint or Notice of Removal* from the list of available events, click **Next**.
4. Select the **filing party** from the list of parties in the case and click **Next**. When filing a Complaint, select the plaintiff(s). **When filing a Notice of Removal, select the filing defendant(s).**

NOTE: If a party was not added on Part 1 of the case opening process, select the **New Filer** button and add additional parties listed in the initiating document.

5. ECF will prompt the filing attorney to add himself/herself as counsel for the filing party. Check the box(es) to the left of the party name(s) to create an attorney/party association. Click **Next**.
6. Select the Parties that the filing is **against** and click **Next**. If selecting individual parties under **Select the Party**, each party name will carry over in the final docket text. If there are more than ten parties select *All Defendants* under **Select a Group**. If selecting a group, the final docket text will display "filed against all Defendants."
7. Attach the initiating document (e.g., Complaint or Notice of Removal) in the **Main Document** field using the **Browse** button to locate the PDF file.

**For Removals, select the filer(s) of the state court Complaint, e.g., plaintiff(s).**

### When Filing a Complaint

Upload the *Complaint* as the Main Document. Any exhibits to the *Complaint* must be filed as attachments. Exhibits can be attached as one PDF or separately, up to 35 MB in size. Following any exhibits, the *Civil Cover Sheet* must be filed as an attachment to the Complaint. File all other documents separately, including a *Notice of Appearance* or an *Application to Proceed in District Court Without Prepaying Fees or Costs*.

**ECF Filing Tips**

**For Non-Confidential Complaints:**

1. Attach the **Complaint** as the **Main Document**.
2. Attach **Exhibits** starting at **Attachment 1**.
  - \* **Non-Confidential Exhibits** may be attached as one pdf or separately up to 35 mb in size.
  - \* **Redacted Exhibits** MUST be attached as separate pdfs.
  - \* Select **Exhibit(s)** from the **Category** drop-down list and/or list the Exhibit Identifier(s) in the **Description**, e.g., *A-B, Redacted Exhibit C*.
3. **SEALED Exhibits** MUST be filed as a separate entry using the **SEALED Exhibit** event under *Other Filings > SEALED & Ex Parte Non-Motion Documents*.
4. Attach the **Civil Cover Sheet** as the last **Attachment**. Select **Civil Cover Sheet** from the **Category** drop-down list.
5. File all other documents separately, including a **Notice of Appearance**.

Select the PDF document and any attachments.

**Main Document**

Browse... No file selected.

Attachments	Category	Description
1. Browse... TEST Document1.pdf	Exhibit(s)	<input type="text"/> Remove
2. Browse... TEST Document2.pdf	Civil Cover Sheet	<input type="text"/> Remove
3. Browse... No file selected.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Next Clear

**When Filing a Notice of Removal**

Upload the *Notice of Removal* as the Main Document. Attach the *State Court Summons and Complaint* as Attachment 1. Attach any other pertinent State Court documents as **individual** attachments starting at Attachment 2, e.g., *Motion for Temporary Restraining Order*. Next, attach as a separate document the *Notice of Filing of Removal in State Court*, and then attach the *Civil Cover Sheet*.

NOTE: All other documents, including the *Answer to Complaint*, may not be attached to the initiating document and must be filed separately.

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

### Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB ABC Corp. v. XYZ Inc.](#)

CV

**ECF Filing Tips**

**For SEALED or Non-Confidential Notice of Removals:**

- \* Attach the **Summons and Complaint as Attachment 1.**
- \* Upload the **Attachments** in this order:
  1. Attach any other pertinent STATE COURT documents as individual attachments starting at **Attachment 2.**
  2. Attach the **Notice of Filing of Notice of Removal** filed in State Court.
  3. Each **SEALED Exhibit** or **SEALED Declaration** MUST be filed as a **Attachment.**
  4. Attach the **Civil Cover Sheet** as the last attachment.
  5. File the **Answer to Complaint** separately.

Select the PDF document and any attachments.

**Main Document**  
 TEST Document1.pdf

Attachments	Category	Description
1. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> TEST Document2.pdf	Summons and Complaint	<input type="text"/> Remove
2. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> TEST Document3.pdf	<input type="text"/>	Motion for TRO Remove
3. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> TEST Document4.pdf	<input type="text"/>	norandum in Support of TRO Remove
4. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> TEST Document5.pdf	<input type="text"/>	tice of Filing Notice of Motion Remove
5. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> TEST Document6.pdf	Notice of Filing of Notice of Removal	<input type="text"/> Remove
6. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> TEST Document6.pdf	Civil Cover Sheet	<input type="text"/> Remove
7. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> No file selected.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Only when filing a Notice of Removal, the following window will appear. Enter the name and court number from state court.

**Complaints and Other Initiating Documents**

[0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB ABC Corp. v. XYZ Inc.](#)

CV

Name of other court

---

Case number in other court

---

Do you request the Clerk's Office to issue a summons?

Yes

No

8. Select yes or no to the question, “Do you request the Clerk’s Office to issue a summons?” and click **Next**.
9. ECF will inquire about the payment of fees. Select **No** and click **Next** unless the case is being filed in combination with an Application to Proceed Without Prepayment of Fees OR if the case is being filed on behalf of the United States. If either of these, select **Yes** to bypass the fee payment screen.
10. Click **Next** at the informational window after reviewing the fee, receipt, and processing information. ECF will temporarily route the filer to PACER’s website for collection of fees.

**IMPORTANT: Do not use the internet browser’s back button from this point forward in the transaction.**

11. Select either credit card or ACH account as **payment method** and click **Next**. If you have a credit card on file in your PACER account you can select that card.
12. Enter all required **credit card** or **ACH** account information.
13. If desired, enter the email address(es) to which PACER should send a receipt for the transaction. **Check the box at the bottom of the screen to authorize payment of the filing fee** and click **Submit**.
14. Click **Next** at the informational window.
15. If necessary, edit the docket text by typing in the white text box and click **Next**.

**Complaints and Other Initiating Documents**  
0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB ABC  
Corp. v. XYZ Inc.  
CV  
Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate.  
NOTICE OF REMOVAL [Make additions to text here] ( filing fee \$ 400, receipt number AMNXDC-283939) filed by ABC Corp.. No summons requested. (Attachments: # (1) Summons & Complaint, # (2) Motion for TRO, # (3) Memorandum in Support of TRO, # (4) Notice of Filing Notice of Motion, # (5) Civil Cover Sheet) (Nineteen, Attorney)  
Next Clear

16. Verify that the correct documents are attached and click **Next** to commit the filing to ECF.
17. The **Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF)** screen will appear. This is confirmation that the initiating document has been submitted to ECF. The docket text will indicate if a summons was requested.

**IMPORTANT: If a case has been opened incorrectly or if you have further questions, contact the CM/ECF Help Desk at 612-664-5155 or 866-325-4975.**

**Complaints and Other Initiating Documents**  
[0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB ABC Corp. v. XYZ Inc.](#)

CV

U.S. District Court  
U.S. District of Minnesota

**Notice of Electronic Filing**

The following transaction was entered by Nineteen, Attorney on 7/15/2020 at 1:10 PM CDT and filed on 7/15/2020


Case Name: ABC Corp. v. XYZ Inc.  
Case Number: [0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB](#)  
Filer: ABC Corp.  
Document Number: [17](#)

Docket Text:  
**NOTICE OF REMOVAL** Make additions to text here ( filing fee \$ 400, receipt number AMNXDC-283939) filed by ABC Corp.. No summons requested. (Attachments: # (1) Summons & Complaint, # (2) Motion for TRO, # (3) Memorandum in Support of TRO, # (4) Notice of Filing Notice of Motion, # (5) Civil Cover Sheet) (Nineteen, Attorney)

0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB Notice has been electronically mailed to:  
Attorney Mndtest Nineteen attymnd+19@gmail.com

## Judge Assignment

After initiating documents are filed in a civil case, the Clerk’s Office will make a random judge assignment in ECF. A text only notice will be docketed, and the judge information will be displayed on the **Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF)**. Please make a note of the district and magistrate judge assignments for future reference. Subsequent filings should include the judges’ initials in the case number within the document caption.

 **Activity in Case 0:12-cv-00216-DWF-JJG Ellingson v. ABC Corporation**  
ecf-test-notice to: ecfTest-notice 10/11/2012 12:29 PM  
[Show Details](#)

**This is an automatic e-mail message generated by the CM/ECF system. Please DO NOT RESPOND to this e-mail because the mail box is unattended.**

**\*\*\*NOTE TO PUBLIC ACCESS USERS\*\*\*** Judicial Conference of the United States policy permits attorneys of record and parties in a case (including pro se litigants) to receive one free electronic copy of all documents filed electronically, if receipt is required by law or directed by the filer. PACER access fees apply to all other users. To avoid later charges, download a copy of each document during this first viewing. However, if the referenced document is a transcript, the free copy and 30 page limit do not apply.

U.S. District Court  
U.S. District Court Minnesota

**Notice of Electronic Filing**

The following transaction was entered on 10/11/2012 at 12:29 PM CDT and filed on 10/11/2012

Case Name: Ellingson v. ABC Corporation  
Case Number: [0:12-cv-00216-DWF-JJG](#)  
Filer:  
Document Number: 2(No document attached)

Docket Text:  
**TEXT-ONLY ENTRY. CLERK'S NOTICE OF INITIAL CASE ASSIGNMENT. Case assigned to Judge Donovan W. Frank per Master deck referred to Magistrate Judge Magistrate Judge Jeanne J. Graham. Please use case number 12cv216 DWF/JJG. (JME)**

## Summonses

If the filer requested a summons be issued while docketing the initiating document, the Clerk’s Office will issue the summons electronically through ECF. The summons can be accessed by the filer via the NEF email hyperlink. The filing attorney must serve the summons and complaint in accordance with [Fed. R. Civ. P. 4](#).

If a summons was not initially requested during the filing of the initiating document, file the event **Request to Clerk's Office to Issue Summons**.

NOTE: After filing the initiating documents, submit any additional filings separately, using the appropriate filing events, such as an *Application to Proceed in District Court Without Prepaying Fees or Costs*, *Answer to Complaint*, or a *Rule 7.1-Disclosure Statement*.

## FILING DOCUMENTS FOR CIVIL CASES

There are eight basic steps involved in filing a document. These are essentially the same for each event filed in ECF:

1. Select the type of document to file.
2. Enter the case number in which the document is to be filed.
3. Designate the party(s) filing the document.
4. Specify the PDF file name and location for the document to be filed.
5. Add attachments, if any, to the document being filed.
6. Modify the docket text as necessary.
7. Submit the pleading to ECF.
8. Receive notification of electronic filing (NEF).

## FILING AN ANSWER

The process for filing an **Answer** is similar for filing other pleadings in ECF.

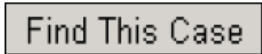
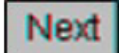


Select the appropriate menu from the ECF Menu Bar for filing:

1. Click **Civil>Initial Pleadings and Service>Answers to Complaints**.



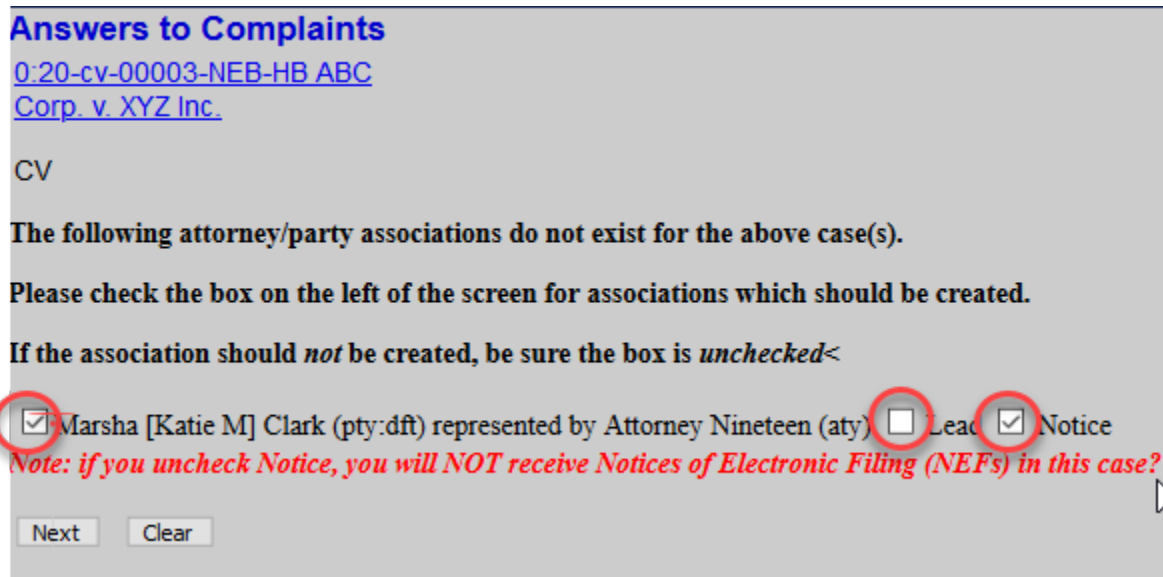
2. Enter the case number then:



If...	Action	Then
Number is entered correctly, click		Click Next 
Number is entered incorrectly, click		Re-enter number, click Find This Case
Invalid case number message appears, click		Re-enter number, click Find This Case
Multiple case numbers match the one entered	Another window appears	Click on the specific case number you are filing in, click Next

3. Click on the **filer** to select the appropriate party, click **Next**.

NOTE: If this is the first time the attorney is filing in the case, the following attorney-party association window will appear.



(Necessary)

4. **Check** the box in front of the **party's name** to associate the attorney to the filing party.  
(Optional)
5. **Check** the box in front of **Lead** if attorney is lead attorney.  
(Strongly Recommended)
6. **Check** the box in front of **Notice** to receive notification when any documents are filed in this case. If this box is unchecked, the attorney will not receive notices of electronic filing.
7. Click **Next**.

8. Click the box next to the pleading you are answering.
9. The screen below will appear. Click the appropriate radio button, click **Next**.

10. Review the ECF Filing Tips. Click **Browse**, to attach the appropriate Main Document.
11. Click on the file and click **Open** (or double-click on the file) to attach it to the filing.
12. If necessary, attach any **Attachments** to the Answer and click **Next**.

NOTE: It is recommended for the user to verify the correct document has been selected before linking it to the filing. To do so, right-mouse click on the selected file. A short-cut menu will appear. Click Open. Adobe Acrobat Read (or other loaded .pdf software) will open the PDF document. View and confirm the document to be filed. Close the .pdf program window. From this point forward, this informative note will not be included in the documentation.

13. If applicable, check the box next to any **additional claims or complaints** to the Answer and click **Next**.
14. Click the radio button (Yes) or (No) regarding a **jury demand** and click **Next**.
15. If necessary, click in the white **Docket Text fields** to type additional text and click **Next**. Note that modifying docket text is optional; examples may include: “First” Answer, “Amended” Answer.

16. Confirm information in window is correct and click **Next** to submit the Answer. **Note that clicking Next finalizes the filing.** If corrections need to be made, click the Back button in your browser before clicking Next. To abort the filing, click any item on the menu bar.

The following Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) window will appear confirming the filing:

## Answers to Complaints

[0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB ABC Corp. v. XYZ Inc.](#)

CV

U.S. District Court  
U.S. District of Minnesota

### Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was entered by Nineteen, Attorney on 7/17/2020 at 2:14 PM CDT and filed on 7/17/2020

**Case Name:** ABC Corp. v. XYZ Inc.  
**Case Number:** [0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB](#)  
**Filer:** Marsha [Katie M] Clark  
**Document Number:** [22](#)

#### Docket Text:

**ANSWER to Complaint filed by Marsha [Katie M] Clark. (Nineteen, Attorney)**

#### 0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB Notice has been electronically mailed to:

Attorney Mndtest Nineteen attymnd+19@gmail.com

Jeffrey Amy H Paulsen mary\_grzybek@mnd.uscourts.gov

Richard Newberry leah\_gilgenbach@mnd.uscourts.gov

#### 0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB Notice has been delivered by other means to:

The following document(s) are associated with this transaction:

**Document description:**Main Document

**Original filename:**n/a

**Electronic document Stamp:**

[STAMP dcecfStamp\_ID=1051215216 [Date=7/17/2020] [FileNumber=231688-0]  
[a9fdaffb668a29367ebe42d15e655e05612d1c285eba4949e320133542a594465fa6  
7eedcba4ce809485a416ff294e28c0cd879ab6a74081447f92e812722570]]

## KEY REMINDERS ABOUT THE NOTICE OF ELECTRONIC FILING

- It is strongly recommended to copy and save the NEF to your computer or to print and retain a hard copy in your files.
- The NEF will be emailed to the attorneys and parties, associated with the case, who have supplied their e-mail addresses to the Court. The NEF also displays the names and addresses of individuals who will not be electronically notified of the filing.
- It is the filer's responsibility to serve hard copies of the pleading and the NEF to attorneys and parties who are not set up for electronic notification. These names are identified in the NEF.
- Individuals who receive the NEF via email are permitted one "free look" at the document by clicking on the associated hyperlinked document numbers listed in the NEF.
- Pursuant to the guidelines set by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, **the free look is only available for 15 days from the date of the filing.**
- Subsequent retrieval of the case docket sheet and pleading from ECF must be made through your

CSO account and is subject to regular PACER fees.

- Pursuant to [Fed. R. Civ. P. 5\(b\)\(2\)\(E\)](#), service is constituted by filing in ECF to a registered user.
- If service is **not** made through ECF, the filing party must file a certificate of service in ECF. The certificate must state how service or notice was accomplished on each party so entitled. Filers are required to service copies of any electronically filed pleading, document, or proposed order to parties **not** served electronically by ECF according to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

## DOCUMENT AND ATTACHMENT NUMBERING

The document selection screen includes the main document number, and the attachments are numbered beginning with 1. This way, the attachment numbers are consistent everywhere they appear (e.g., docket text, the document selection screen).

Also, the filing sizes and the total size of all the documents for a docket entry are displayed on the document selection screen when viewing a document via the docket report.

The cumulative limit when viewing all or downloading all documents in a single entry is 60 MB.

## FILING A MOTION

The process for filing a **Motion** is similar for filing other pleadings in ECF. Pursuant to [Local Rule 7.1](#), before filing a motion, a party must contact the judge's courtroom deputy to schedule a hearing.

1. Click **Civil>Motions and Related Filings>Motions**



2. Read the **ECF Filing Tips** and click **Next**.
3. Enter the **case number** and click **Next**.
4. A screen will appear with the case name and number. Confirm the information is correct and click **Next**.
5. Select the **type of motion** being filed. The selected event will appear on the right side of the window. Click **Next**.
6. Click on the party(s) filing the document, click **Next**.
7. Click **Browse** to attach the appropriate Main Document.
8. If applicable, add **Attachments**, click **Next**.

NOTE: If there are attachments, Click the second Browse and link the attachment to the filing, select the category or enter in a document description, then click Next.

**CM ECF** Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

**Motions**  
[0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB ABC Corp. v. XYZ Inc.](#)  
 CV

Note: if you uncheck *Notice*, you will NOT receive *Notices of Electronic Filing (NEFs)* in this case?

Select the PDF document and any attachments.

**Main Document**  
 Browse... TEST Document1.pdf

Attachments	Category	Description
1. Browse... TEST Document2.pdf	Exhibit(s)	
2. Browse... TEST Document3.pdf	Exhibit(s)	
3. Browse... No file selected.		

Next Clear

- If necessary, click the drop-down arrow or in the white Docket Text field to **modify the docket text**, click **Next**.

**Motions**  
[0:20-cv-00003-NEB-HB ABC Corp. v. XYZ Inc.](#)  
 CV

Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate.

Next Clear

- Confirm the information in window, click **Next** to submit the Motion.
- The NEF window will appear confirming the filing.

## FILING A NOTICE OF HEARING ON MOTION

Pursuant to [Local Rule 7.1](#), before filing a motion, a party must contact the judge's courtroom deputy to schedule a hearing. Select the appropriate menu from the ECF Menu Bar for filing a Notice of Hearing on Motion:

1. Click **Civil>Other Filings>Notices**



2. Enter the case number, click **Next**.
3. A screen will appear with the case name and number. Confirm the information is correct, click **Next**.
4. Select the **Notice of Hearing on Motion** event. It will appear on the right side of the window. Click **Next**.
5. A warning message will appear as a reminder to file the Motion before the Notice of Hearing on Motion. If applicable, check the box noting that no hearing has been scheduled and click **Next**.
6. Click **Browse** to attach the appropriate Main Document.
7. If applicable, attach any **Attachments** and click **Next**.
8. If no hearing has been scheduled, skip to step 9. If a hearing has been scheduled, complete **ALL hearing information**. Please be sure to list the Judge's Courtroom, not chambers when selecting the location.
9. Click the box next to the **Motion** to which the **Notice of Hearing** relates and click **Next**.
10. If necessary, click the drop-down arrow or in the white Docket Text field to **modify the docket text**, click **Next**.
11. Confirm the information in the window and click **Next** to submit the Notice of Hearing on Motion.
12. The NEF window will appear confirming the filing.

## FILING A MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF A MOTION

1. Click **Civil>Motions and Related Filing>Supporting Documents and Responses**.



2. Review the ECF Filing Tips and click **Next**.
3. Enter the **case number** and click **Next**.
4. A screen will appear with the case name and number. Confirm the information is correct, click **Next**.
5. Click the **type of document** being filed. It will appear on the right side of the window, click **Next**.
6. Click on the **party(s)** filing the document, click **Next**.
7. Indicate whether the document should be sealed by clicking the appropriate radio button, click **Next**.
8. Click **Browse** to attach the desired Main Document.
9. Click **Browse** to attach the **Attachment(s)** to the Memorandum.

NOTE: The only attachment allowed to the Memorandum is LR 7.1/LR 72.2 Word Count Compliance Certificate. Attachments filed electronically must be less than 35 MB (35,840 KB) in size after being converted to .pdf.

10. Click the drop-down arrow to select the **Category type** of attachment. When finished, click **Next**.
11. Click the box to link the Memorandum to the related motions(s), click **Next**.
12. If necessary, click in the white **Docket Text field** to modify the docket text, click **Next**.
13. Confirm information in window, click **Next** to submit the Memorandum.
14. The NEF window will appear.

## FILING AN AFFIDAVIT WITH ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS IN SUPPORT OF A MOTION

1. Click **Civil>Motions and Related Filings> Supporting Documents and Responses**.



2. Review the ECF Filing Tips and click **Next**
3. Enter the **case number** and click **Next**.
4. A screen will appear with the case name and number. Confirm the information is correct and click **Next**.
5. Click the **type of document** being filed (e.g., Affidavit in Support of a Motion), click **Next**.
6. Click on the **party(s)** filing the document, click **Next**.
7. Indicate whether the document should be sealed by clicking the appropriate radio button, click **Next**.
8. Click **Browse** to attach the appropriate Main Document.
9. If applicable, click **Browse** to attach any **Attachment(s)** to the Affidavit and click **Next**.

NOTE: Remember to add a clear explanation of each attachment into the Description field; one that matches either the document title or label. For Exhibits, select the Category "Exhibit(s)", then tab to the Description field and enter the title or label. (Do not re-type the word Exhibit or any abbreviation of the word.)

10. Enter in the Name of the Affiant, click **Next**.
11. Click in the box **to link** the Affidavit to the related document(s) already filed, click **Next**.
12. If necessary, click in the white **Docket Text field** to modify the docket text, click **Next**.
13. Confirm the information in the information window, click **Next** to submit the Affidavit.
14. The NEF window will appear confirming the filing.

## FILING EXHIBITS

If the exhibit is one PDF document, follow the steps outlined in previous sections to locate and open the document to attach to this event.

Depending upon how exhibits are filed, there are three menus available in which to file exhibits when they are not attached to other documents or filings.

- **Motions and Related Filings>Supporting Documents and Responses**
- **Other Filings>Trial Documents**
- **Other Filings>Other Documents**

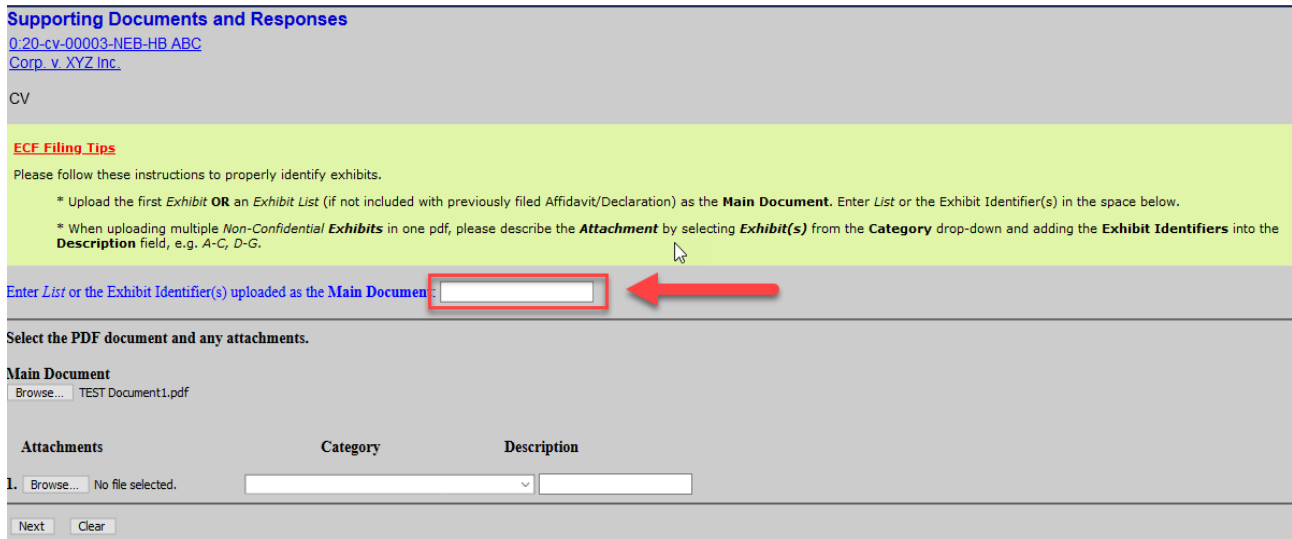
The example outlined below includes attaching more than one exhibit to the Exhibit Event.

1. Click **Civil>Motions and Related Filings>Supporting Documents and Responses**.





2. Review the ECF Filing Tips and click **Next**.
3. Enter the **case number** and click **Next**.
4. A screen will appear with the case name and number. Confirm the information is correct and click **Next**.
5. Select **Exhibit (Motions and Related Filings)** and click **Next**.
6. Select the filing **party(s)** and click **Next**.
7. Indicate whether the document should be sealed by clicking the appropriate radio button, click **Next**.
8. Enter List or the Exhibit Identifier(s) uploaded as the **Main Document**. Click **Browse** to attach the appropriate Main Document.



9. Click **Browse** to attach any **Attachment(s)** to the Main Document.
10. Select a **Category** and/or Enter a **description** of the Attachment and click **Next**.
11. Click the **box to link** the attachment to another document and click **Next**.
12. If necessary, click in the white **Docket Text field** to modify the docket text, click **Next**.
13. Confirm information in window, click **Next** to submit the Exhibit(s).
14. The NEF window will appear confirming the filing.

## FILING A MEET AND CONFER STATEMENT

1. Select **Civil>Motions and Related Filings>Supporting Documents and Responses**.



2. Review the ECF Filing Tips and click **Next**.
3. Enter the **case number** and click **Next**.
4. A screen will appear with the case name and number. Confirm the information is correct and click **Next**.
5. Select **Meet & Confer Statement** and click **Next**.
6. Click on the **party(s)** filing the document, click **Next**.
7. Indicate whether the document should be sealed by clicking the appropriate radio button, click **Next**.
8. Click **Browse** to attach the appropriate Main Document.
9. Select the appropriate event/motion to which your even relates and click **Next**.
10. Click **Next**.
11. Confirm the information in the window, click **Next** to submit the filing.
12. The NEF window will appear confirming the filing.

## FILING A PROPOSED ORDER

In addition to filing the Proposed Order in ECF, a copy of the Proposed Order must be emailed to chambers in word processing format. Please see the Proposed Orders section of the [Electronic Case Filing Procedures Guide – Civil Cases](#) for further information.

1. Select **Civil>Motions, Related Filings, and Sealed Filings>Supporting Documents and Responses**.

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

Civil Events

Open a Case  
[Civil Case](#)  
[Miscellaneous Case](#)

Initial Pleadings, Service, and Sealed Filings  
[Complaints and Other Initiating Documents](#)  
[Service of Process](#)  
[Answers to Complaints or Counter/Cross/3rd Party Claims](#)  
[Other Answers](#)

Motions, Related Filings, and Sealed Filings  
[Motions](#)  
[Supporting Documents and Responses](#)

Other Filings  
[Discovery Documents](#)  
[Notices](#)  
[Trial Documents](#)  
[Appeal Documents](#)  
[Other Documents](#)  
[SEALED & Ex Parte Non-Motion Documents](#)  
[MDL Attorney Time](#)

Letters  
[Letters](#)

Patent Cases  
[Patent Filings](#)

Pro Se Early Settlement Conference  
[ESCP Events](#)

2. Review the **ECF Filing Tips** and click **Next**.
3. Enter the **case number** and click **Next**.
4. A screen will appear with the case name and number. Confirm the information is correct and click **Next**.
5. Select **Proposed Order to Judge re Motion** and click **Next**.
6. Click on the **party(s)** filing the document, click **Next**.
7. Select whether the document is sealed or not, click **Next**.
8. Click **Browse** to attach the appropriate Main Document, click **Next**.
9. Select the appropriate motion to which your proposed order relates, click **Next**.
10. Click **Next**.
11. Confirm the information in the window, click **Next** to submit the filing.
12. The NEF window will appear confirming the filing.

## FILING A STIPULATION

When filing a stipulation in ECF, be sure the pleading does not include a signature line for the Judge or a proposed order. Proposed orders are to be filed as a separate filing on ECF and emailed to the Judge's chambers e-mail box.

1. Click **Civil>Other Filings>Other Documents**

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

Civil Events

Open a Case  
[Civil Case](#)  
[Miscellaneous Case](#)

Initial Pleadings, Service, and Sealed Filings  
[Complaints and Other Initiating Documents](#)  
[Service of Process](#)  
[Answers to Complaints or Counter/Cross/3rd Party Claims](#)  
[Claims](#)  
[Other Answers](#)

Motions, Related Filings, and Sealed Filings  
[Motions](#)  
[Supporting Documents and Responses](#)

Other Filings  
[Discovery Documents](#)  
[Notices](#)  
[Trial Documents](#)  
[Appeal Documents](#)  
[Other Documents](#)  
[SEALED & Ex Parte Non-Motion Documents](#)  
[MDL Attorney Time](#)

Letters  
[Letters](#)

Patent Cases  
[Patent Filings](#)

Pro Se Early Settlement Conference  
[ESCP Events](#)

2. Enter the **case number** and click **Next**.
3. A screen will appear with the case name and number. Confirm the information is correct and click **Next**.
4. Select the **filing party(s)**.
5. Select **Stipulation** or **Stipulation of Dismissal** and click **Next**.
6. Read the ECF Filing Tips and click **Next**.
7. Click **Browse** to attach the appropriate document and click **Next**.
8. Check the box if the document you are filing should **link** to another document in the case. If not, click **Next** and skip to step 9.

If the checkbox is selected, click on the **Next** button and a list of documents will appear for selection. Select the appropriate document and click **Next**.

9. Enter the name(s) of all **other parties** who have jointly signed the document and click **Next**.
10. If necessary, add additional names and click **Next**.
11. The Docket Text window appears. If necessary, type additional text in the box provided to describe the stipulation. Click **Next**.
12. Review the filing and click **Next** to submit.
13. The NEF window will appear confirming the filing.

## **FILING A CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

Pursuant to [Fed. R. Civ. P. 5\(b\)\(2\)\(E\)](#), service is completed by filing a document in ECF to a registered user.

If service is **not** made through ECF, the filing party must file a certificate of service in ECF. The certificate must state how service or notice was accomplished on each party so entitled.

Filers are required to serve copies of any electronically filed pleading, document, or proposed order to parties not served electronically by ECF according to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

To determine the party mailing information for a specific case, click **Utilities>Mailings>Mailing Info for a Case**.

Certificates of Service can either be filed as an attachment in ECF during a filing or as a separate filing. When filing multiple events at the same time, a separate certificate service can be filed and linked to the relevant documents as outlined below:

1. Click **Civil>Initial Pleadings, Service, and Sealed Filings>Service of Process**.

The screenshot shows the CM ECF website navigation menu. The menu is organized into several categories:

- Open a Case**
  - Civil Case
  - Miscellaneous Case
- Initial Pleadings, Service, and Sealed Filings**
  - Complaints and Other Initiating Documents
  - Service of Process** (highlighted with a red box and a red arrow)
  - Answers to Complaints of Counter/Cross/3rd Party
  - Claims
  - Other Answers
- Motions, Related Filings, and Sealed Filings**
  - Motions
  - Supporting Documents and Responses
- Other Filings**
  - Discovery Documents
  - Notices
  - Trial Documents
  - Appeal Documents
  - Other Documents
  - SEALED & Ex Parte Non-Motion Documents
  - MDL Attorney Time
- Letters**
  - Letters
- Patent Cases**
  - Patent Filings
- Pro Se Early Settlement Conference**
  - ESCP Events

2. Read the ECF Filing Tips and click **Next**.
3. Enter the **case number** and click **Next**.
4. A screen will appear with the case name and number. Confirm the information is correct and click **Next**.
5. Select **Certificate of Service**, click **Next**.
6. Click **Browse** to attach the appropriate document and click **Next**.
7. Select the filing **party(s)** and click **Next**.
8. Click the **box to link** the attachment to the appropriate document and click **Next**.
9. If necessary, click in the white **Docket Text field** to modify the docket text, click **Next**.
10. Confirm the information in the window and click **Next** to submit the Certificate of Service.
11. The NEF window will appear confirming the filing.

## VIEWING RESTRICTED CASES & FILINGS IN ECF

### SOCIAL SECURITY & IMMIGRATION

Case-level restrictions will apply to civil cases involving social security and immigration matters. Pursuant to [Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2](#), parties and their attorneys of record may have internet access to all documents filed in social security and immigration cases. The public will have internet access only to docket sheets, opinions, orders, judgments, and dispositions of the court.

### RESTRICTED FILING IN ECF

Documents electronically filed in ECF may have different restriction levels, i.e. sealed, court only, applicable party, or ex parte. When both the document and the docket entry are restricted, the docket report will have skipped document numbers.

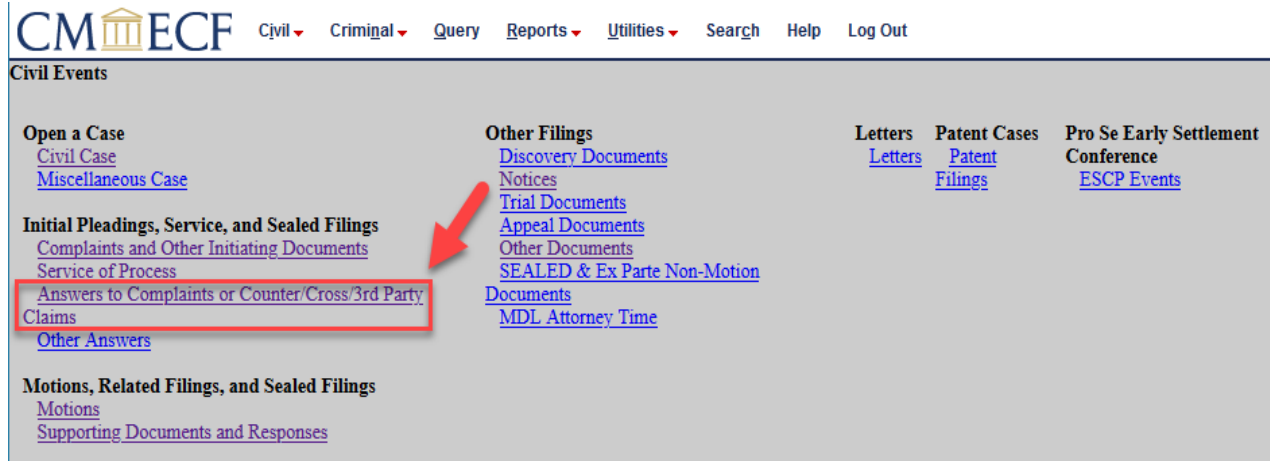
If a user does not have appropriate access to view a restricted document, when clicking on the document number the user will be prompted with a message stating the document is not available or you do not have permission to view this document.

If a document is restricted and the user has appropriate access to it, when clicking on the document number the user will be prompted for his/her CSO login. This is simply a security measure to ensure that the user has proper access to view the document(s).

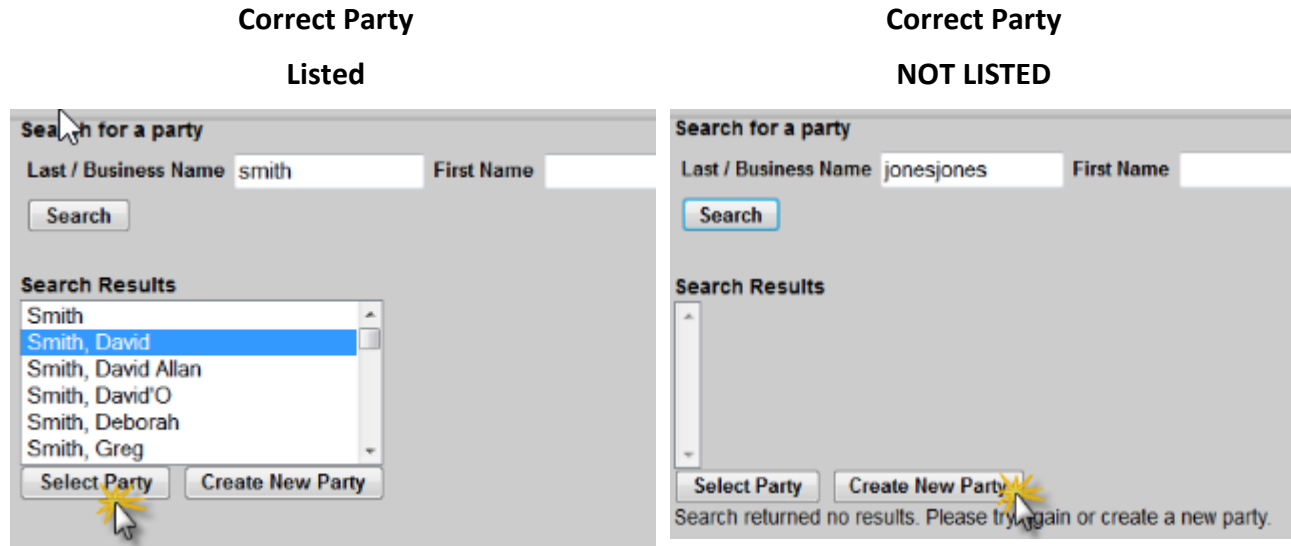
NOTE: If the “free look” has been used/is expired, login first to ECF (for identification as a case participant), then user will be prompted for PACER login.

## ADD/CREATE PARTY FOR THIRD-PARTY COMPLAINT

1. Click **Civil>Initial Pleadings, Service, and Sealed Filings>Answers to Complain or Counter/Cross/3<sup>rd</sup> Party Claims**.



2. Enter the **case number** and click **Next**.
3. Select the filing **party(s)** and click **Next**.
4. Click the **box to link** the attachment to the appropriate document and click **Next**.
5. Indicate whether the document should be sealed by clicking the appropriate radio button, click **Next**.
6. Click **Browse** to attach the appropriate document and click **Next**.
7. Indicate whether the filing includes a counterclaim, crossclaim, or third-party complaint and click **Next**.
8. In the **Select the Party** window click **New Party**.
9. Enter in full or partial values for **Name fields**, click **Search** to determine whether party already exists in ECF.
10. If the **correct party** is listed, click to highlight the name and click **Select Party**. If the correct party is **not listed**, click **Create New Party**.



11. **Modify** the **Role** if necessary (the Role defaults to Defendant) and click **Add Party**.
12. Continue with the filing.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING ECF

### SELECTING FILER IN A LARGE CASE

When a civil case has a large number of participants, the participants are sorted in alphabetical order by last name and are grouped in chapters. Each chapter is displayed in the participant tree as a hyperlink. If the user clicks a chapter hyperlink, the participants in the chapter are listed in the tree.

### COMMON ERRORS WITH ECF FILING

#### Documents Filed in Error

A document incorrectly filed in a case may result from a) attaching the wrong PDF file to a docket entry; b) entering the wrong case number and not discovering the error before completing the transaction; or c) selecting the wrong document type from the menu.

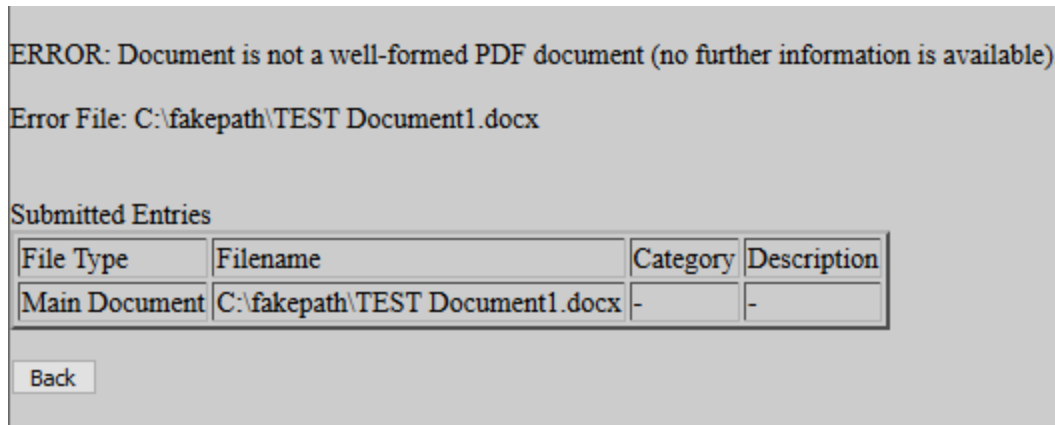
After a document is filed electronically, corrections to the docket must only be made by the Clerk's Office. ECF will not permit the filer to make changes to the document(s) or docket entry once the transaction has been submitted. **Upon discovery of an error, the filer must call the ECF Help Desk at 612-664-5155 or 866-325-4975.**

If a document has been incorrectly filed in the correct case, Clerk's Office staff will edit the docket text of the incorrect entry indicating "DOCUMENT FILED IN ERROR" at the beginning of the docket entry. The user should immediately file the correct document in ECF and modify the title of the pleading as appropriate (e.g., "Amended", "Substituted", "Corrected").

If a document is filed in the wrong case Clerk's Office staff will edit the docket text of the incorrect entry indicating, "DOCUMENT FILED IN ERROR" at the beginning of the docket entry. The user should then file the document in the correct case.

#### Selecting the Wrong Document Type

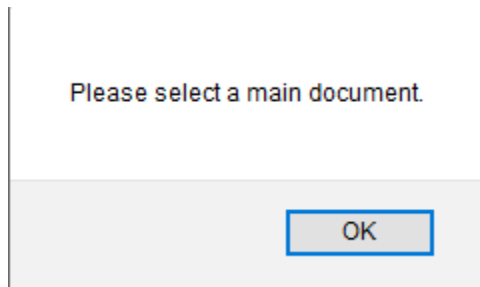
In the event you attempt to attach a file that is *not* in PDF format, ECF will display the following error message after you click on the **Next** button:



1. Click the **Back** button and ECF will return to the previous screen.
2. Select the PDF file of your pleading and proceed as before.

### Failure to Select a Document to File

If you fail to select a document to file with your pleading, ECF will display the following error message:



If you click **OK** ECF will return you to the **Attachments** screen. You cannot proceed without attaching a PDF document.

### ATTACHMENTS AND ATTACHMENT SIZE

The maximum file size limit for uploading individual documents (including exhibits) filed in ECF is 35 MB (35,840 KB) per PDF document. The combined file size of PDFs being uploaded technically does not have a limit and will be determined by your internet speed. However, the court recommends limiting the combined file size to a total of 350 MB (358,400 KB), i.e., 10 PDFs at 35 MB each, which is the maximum file size that is possible to be downloaded at one time.

### PACER FEES WINDOW

When accessing or printing a document that incurs PACER fees, a **Transaction Receipt** table appears at the bottom of the window. This table provides the total charges billed.

### SEALED DOCUMENTS

For more details about filing under seal, please refer to the [Sealed Civil User's Manual](#) and the Filing Documents Under Seal section of the [Electronic Case Filing Procedures Guide – Civil Cases](#).



## PERSONAL IDENTIFIERS

Under [Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2\(a\)](#), unless the court orders otherwise, 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, the filing party or nonparty may include only:

- The last four digits of the social-security number and taxpayer-identification number;
- The year of the individual's birth;
- The minor's initials; and
- The last four digits of the financial-account number.

In addition, exercise caution when filing documents that contain the following:

- Personal Identifying Number (e.g., driver's license number);
- Medical Records, Treatment, and Diagnosis;
- Employment History;
- Individual Financial Information;
- Propriety or Trade Secret Information.

Under [Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2\(b\)](#), the redaction requirements do not apply to the following:

- A financial-account number that identifies the property allegedly subject to forfeiture in a forfeiture proceeding;
- The record of an administrative or agency proceeding;
- The official record of a state-court proceeding;
- The record of a court or tribunal, if that record was not subject to the redaction requirement when originally filed;
- A filing covered by [Rule 5.2\(c\) or \(d\)](#); and
- A pro se filing in an action brought under [28 U.S.C. §§ 2241, 2254, or 2255](#).

### Waiver of Protection of Identifiers

A person waives the protection of [Rule 5.2\(a\)](#) as to the person's own information by filing it without redaction and not under seal. [Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2\(h\)](#).

### Enforcement

It is the sole responsibility of counsel and the parties to be sure that all pleadings comply with the rules of this court requiring redaction of personal identifiers. The Clerk will not screen documents for redaction and will not reject documents solely on the basis that the documents contain personal identifiers.

### Filing Unredacted Documents Under Seal

1. Under [Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2\(f\)-\(g\)](#), a person making a redacted filing may also file:
  - An unredacted copy of the document under seal without seeking leave of the court in accordance with the Filing Documents Under Seal section of the [Electronic Case Filing Procedures Guide – Civil Cases](#) regarding filing documents under seal; or

- A reference list under seal without seeking leave of the court in accordance with the Filing Documents Under Seal section of the [Electronic Case Filing Procedures Guide – Civil Cases](#) regarding filing document under seal. The reference list must contain the complete personal identifier(s) and the redacted identifier(s) used in its place in the filing.
2. The redacted version of the document must be filed electronically in ECF.
  3. File the sealed version or list in accordance with the Filing Documents Under Seal section of the [Electronic Case Filing Procedures Guide – Civil Cases](#).

**Sample of Reference List of Personal Identifiers Redacted**

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA**

*[Plaintiff's Name]*

Plaintiff(s)

Case Number: *[Case Number]*

v.

*[Defendant's Name]*

Defendant(s)

**REFERENCE LIST OF  
PERSONAL IDENTIFIERS  
FILED UNDER SEAL PURSUANT TO THE  
FED. R. CIV. P. 5.2 AND  
FED. R. CRIM. P. 49.1**

---

The following personal identifiers have been redacted pursuant to the Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2 and Fed. R. Crim. P. 49.1. Below is a listing of the complete personal identifier and its corresponding partially redacted version. The redacted version will be used in lieu of, and shall be construed to refer to, the corresponding complete identifier in filings in the above referenced case.

Description of Identifiers Redacted	Complete Identifier	Partially Redacted Identifier
Social Security Number	123-45-6789	XXX-XX-6789
Financial Account Number	987-66-54-321	XXX-XX-X4-321
Name of Minor Child	Jane Doe	J.D.
Date of Birth	07-04-2004	2004
Home Address <small>(criminal cases only)</small>	123 Main St Smithville, MN 12345	Smithville, MN

**CREATING AN APPENDIX WITH DOCUMENT LINKS**

A set of radio button options labeled “Include documents in Appendix” and “Include document hyperlinks in Appendix” appear at the bottom of the Docket Report. These options allow users to indicate if the PDF documents they selected for inclusion in the appendix docket sheet should be appended to the docket sheet or if hyperlinks to those documents should be included instead.

## Options for Creating an Appendix

When the Docket Report is run with the Create Appendix option selected, two radio buttons are included at the bottom of the report: Include documents in Appendix and Include document hyperlinks in Appendix.

### Creating an Appendix with the “Include documents in Appendix” Option

If the Include documents in Appendix option is selected when the appendix is generated, the application produces a PDF version of the docket sheet with the selected documents appended.

### Creating an Appendix with the “Include document hyperlinks in Appendix” Option

If the Include document hyperlinks in Appendix option is selected when the appendix is generated, the application produces a PDF version of the docket sheet that does not include the documents from the case record.

Instead, this PDF includes document hyperlinks which direct the user clicking on them back to the District Court’s CM/ECF application to view the document(s).

## ACCESSING THE NEW CASES REPORT

The New Cases Report lists new civil and criminal cases filed in the U.S. District Court, District of Minnesota each day. It indicates the date and time (within the hour) the case was assigned, case number, case name, the District Judge assigned to the case, and the Magistrate Judge assigned to the case. The information will be available on the New Cases Report for 30 days. This report is designed to assist the public with viewing new case filings in the U.S. District Court. The judge assignments in the New Cases Report are listed with their initials. Click on the Judge Initials link to view a listing of the Judge’s initials and corresponding full names.

1. Navigate to the District of Minnesota’s [website](#).
2. Click on the **Case Information** tab.
3. Click **New Cases**.
4. Click **Access To The New Cases Report**.

## MDL CASE REPORT

The MDL Case Report lists all cases associated with a Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation (JMPL) action pending in the District of Minnesota. The report is sorted by case number and case type (the main MDL case is always listed first). The user can choose whether all MDL-related cases or only pending MDL-related cases should display.

This report is accessed through [PACER](#), which is an electronic public access service that allows users to obtain case and docket information.

Follow the steps below to access the MDL Case Report through PACER:

1. Log into the ECF system with your CSO login and password.
2. Click on **Query** on the menu bar.
3. Enter a master MDL case number or an associated case number for a JPML case pending in the District of Minnesota.
4. Click **Run Query**.

5. Click the link, **MDL Case Report**.
6. Select the applicable radio button to display all cases or pending cases only then click **Run Query**.
7. The output will then display accordingly.

## MOBILE QUERY

The mobile query interface offers a simplified user experience optimized for display on mobile devices. This interface incorporates the following functions:

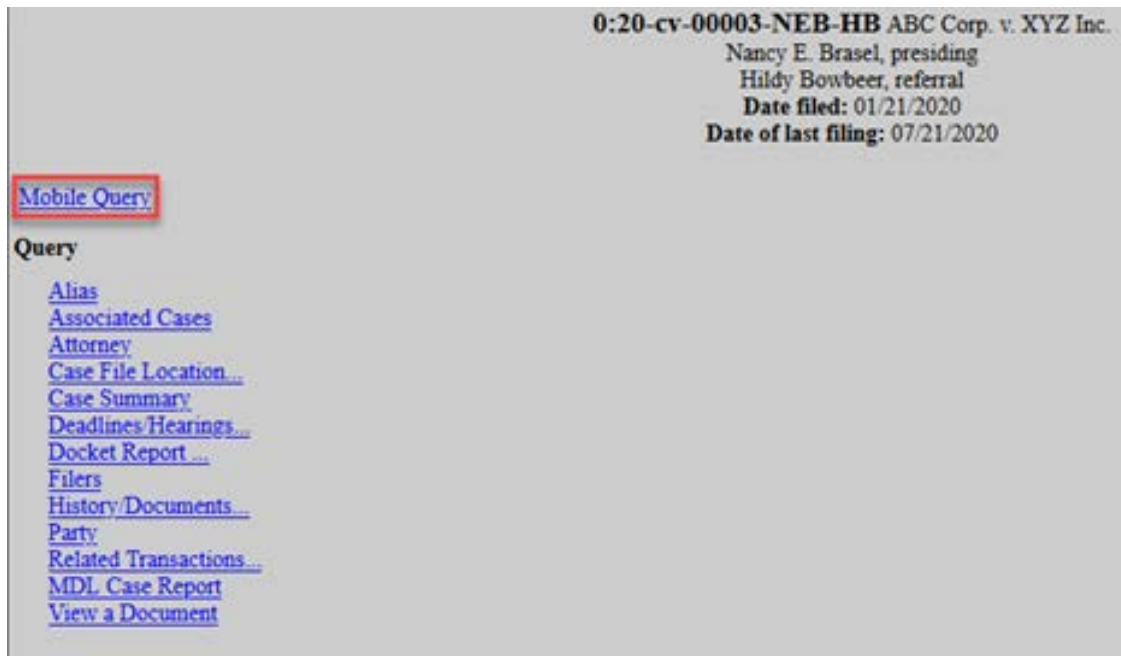
- Search interface
- Party selection from party name search result list
- Case selection from case search result list based on case or party name search
- Attorney information for selected case
- Deadlines/Hearing for selected case
- Docket entries for selected case

### Accessing the Mobile Query

Users can access the mobile query via one of the following:




- The **Mobile Query** link on the **Query** selection criteria page.
- The **Mobile Query** link on the **Query** results page.

The screenshot displays the PACER Query interface. At the top, a warning box states: "WARNING: Search results from this screen are NOT subject to the 30 page limit on PACER charges. Please be as specific as possible with your search criteria." Below this, the "Search Clues" section is highlighted in yellow. It includes a "Case Number" input field, a "Mobile Query" link, and "or search by" options for Case Status (Open, Closed, All), Filed Date, and Last Entry Date. There are also dropdown menus for Nature of Suit and Cause of Action. At the bottom, there are input fields for Last/Business Name, First Name, Middle Name, and Type, along with "Run Query" and "Clear" buttons.



### Mobile Query User Interface

All interfaces in the mobile query include these five elements:

1. Back button 
2. Title CM/ECF Mobile – MND
3. Logout button 
4. Court home page button 
5. Search field for party name or case searched

The default search screen contains one text field that allows users to search by case number, party name, or attorney.

At the bottom of each page, a **Full Site** button provides access to the standard-formatted application interface page. If the user clicks the **Full Site** button, the full site is set as the default for approximately twelve hours. If any specific page generates a PACER billing receipt, a summary form of the billing information is displayed in the black bar along the bottom of the page.

### Name Searches

For name searches, the required format is Last Name, First Name, where a comma separates the two parts. The first name is optional. When searching by name, the user must enter at least two letters of the last name. If only one letter is entered, the search will only find parties or attorney whose last names are exactly that letter. If a party name search returns more than one possible match based on the criteria provided, the mobile interface presents the user with a list of all matching names and requires the user to select a specific name.

If more than eight results are returned on any query page (excluding the docket entries page), above the list, an on-page filter allows the user to search the results already downloaded to the browser. This does not affect PACER billing.

If only one case is linked to a specific name, the case results for that case is returned.

If one name matches the initial search but is linked to multiple cases, or if a user selects a name from the result list of a multi-response search, a list of cases associated with that party is displayed. When a case is selected from this list, the case query result page is displayed.

### **Case Searches**

Entering a numeric search term triggers a case number search. If an alphanumeric search term is entered, it triggers a party or attorney name search. If a case number search returns no results, the system automatically runs a name search using the same terms. Spaces can be used in case numbers instead of dashes or other punctuation. The case number search does not generate a PACER billing receipt, since the standard query application does not bill for the case number lookup.

If a case search returns more than one possible match based on the criteria provided, the mobile interface presents the user with a list of all matching cases and requires the user to select a specific case before proceeding to the case query results screen. When a case is selected from this list, the case query result for that specific case is displayed.

If only one case matches the case criteria provided, the case query result page is displayed.

### **Case Query Results**

When a search is run, the Mobile Query displays results in the case query result page. This screen presents the following information:

- case number, short title, and date filed;
- link to see attorney information in the case;
- link to see party information in the case;
- link to see deadline/hearing information in the case;
- link to show all docket entries, and the number of docket entries that will be shown;
- search icon that brings up a search box to find docket entry information that matches the text entered.

The Case Query Results screen is similar to the full site Query result page, which does not produce a PACER billing receipt. Billing will occur based on additional selections from this page.

### **Detailed Case Information Displays**

Attorneys, parties, deadlines, and docket entries are listed in similarly formatted lists that wrap to fit on small screens.

Each list header shows the case number, item listed, and the number of the matches. If more than eight items appear in the list, a Filter Items search box at the top of the list allows the user to narrow down the list. This Filter Items search box is available on all case details except for the docket entries. The user is billed for receiving the total data, not for using this filter to hide data already received.

The docket entry information includes document numbers, the filed date, and the docket text. For documents, the document number appears in its own cell on the left. The entire cell is clickable to make clicking the link easier on small screens. Clicking on a document takes the user to familiar ECF screens to view the document.

The mobile query ignores PACER billing display preferences and displays PACER receipts via the standard ECF PACER interface.