

COURT NEWS



United States District Court - Eastern District of Washington

March 2015

Attorney Civil Case Opening Update

Congratulations! Since we implemented attorney case opening in March 2014, attorneys have opened over 500 cases electronically in our CM/ECF system.

To make your filing experience easy and uneventful we offer these:

Tips for Streamlined Case Opening

- ◆ Don't forget to file your Civil Cover Sheet as an attachment to the Complaint.
- ◆ When submitting proposed summonses for issuance, be sure to complete the attorney name and address portion of the form.
- ◆ When adding parties to the case, add party text if applicable. Examples of party text: "an individual", "a foreign corporation", "and the marital community".
- ◆ At the filing fee payment screen, press the Pay.gov button only once to avoid multiple charges to your credit card.
- ◆ When you get to the point where you receive your case number, make a note of it. If you need to exit ECF at this time, do not start over again at the Case Opening Menu. Instead, use the drop-down menu to find the correct events to use for initial pleadings and service.
- ◆ As always, feel free to call us if you have any questions when opening a case. Toll-free: 1-866-236-5100.

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[Click here for a link to our Case Opening instructions.](#)



E-filing Reminders From Chambers

We asked the Court's Judicial Assistants for suggestions to make your filing experience even more successful. Here's what they told us:

"When submitting a proposed order in ECF, don't forget to also e-mail a copy of the order to the chambers' orders mailbox."

The mailbox address for each judge can be found on the ECF Filing Menu under Motions at "Email Proposed Orders" and are also located in the right hand column on this page. When e-mailing your proposed order to chambers, please ensure that it is in MS Word format. Include the case name and number in the e-mail subject line.

"If you want the court to take action on something, you need to move the court by way of a motion, not a notice or a stipulation."

When in doubt, please contact the ECF Help Desk before filing your document.

"It is so helpful when counsel put the hearing date and time in the caption of their motion."

This information is entered into ECF when you electronically file your document, but must also be in the caption of your document (pursuant to LR 7.1(h)(1)).

Applications to Proceed In Forma Pauperis

If you are submitting an application to proceed *in forma pauperis* be sure to fill it out completely. We have a form designed specifically for use in our district.

[Click here for a link to our forms.](#) Note: Before filing a form in ECF, it is a good idea to flatten the PDF.

See [Page 6](#) for directions on how to flatten forms.

E-mail ONLY proposed orders to:

Judge Peterson

petersonorders@waed.uscourts.gov

Judge Rice

riceorders@waed.uscourts.gov

Judge Bastian

bastianorders@waed.uscourts.gov

Judge Mendoza

mendozaorders@waed.uscourts.gov

Judge Quackenbush

quackenbushorders@waed.uscourts.gov

Judge Nielsen

nielsenorders@waed.uscourts.gov

Judge Van Sickle

vansickleorders@waed.uscourts.gov

Judge Whaley

whaleyorders@waed.uscourts.gov

Judge Shea

sheaorders@waed.uscourts.gov

Judge Suko

sukoorders@waed.uscourts.gov

Magistrate Judge Rodgers

rodgersorders@waed.uscourts.gov

Magistrate Judge Hutton

huttonorders@waed.uscourts.gov



Courtroom Schedules Subject to Change

Courtroom schedules are subject to last-minute changes. To ensure courtroom availability for all judges within the district, the courtroom assigned on the actual date of your hearing/trial may be different from the courtroom indicated on the hearing notice. Please check the Court Calendar prior to your scheduled hearing/trial to make sure you have the correct courtroom number.

A daily view of the Court Calendar is available on our web site at www.waed.uscourts.gov/court-calendars

If you need to verify the courtroom for a hearing/trial, please contact the presiding judge's courtroom deputy. Phone numbers are available on the [Court Calendar](#) site.

Notice of Request for Discontinuation of Electronic Noticing

If you represent a party who has been dismissed ("terminated") from a case and no longer wish to receive notices of electronic filing for that case, you may call the Clerk's Office or you can use the new event: "Notice of Request for Discontinuation of Electronic Noticing". This event is located under "Notices" on the ECF filing menu.

ECF Help Desk

If you have procedural questions related to filing in the Eastern District- please call us toll-free:

1-866-236-5100

Visit us on the web at www.waed.uscourts.gov to view announcements and updated information about rules, requirements and electronic filing.



CM/ECF vs PACER Access

The court uses a single case management system (CM/ECF) for both attorney e-filers and for public (PACER) access to case information. We receive a lot of calls on the Help Desk from users who get stuck navigating between the two. Here are some tips to assist you:

- ◆ When accessing the system to **file documents** or to **access restricted documents**, users must login with their ECF login and password.
- ◆ When accessing the system to **view docket sheets and/or unrestricted documents** or to query party names, users must login with a PACER account (fees apply). **To learn more about PACER, please click here to visit the PACER Service Center.**
- ◆ E-filers receive e-mail Notices of Electronic Filing (NEFs) for documents filed in their cases. Clicking on the **document number link** in the NEF provides one “free look” at the document. However, clicking on the **case number link** prompts the user for a PACER login, since it links to the docket sheet (fees apply).
- ◆ Access to certain case documents is restricted to authorized users (e.g., sealed documents or documents filed in social security appeals cases). When accessing these documents through a link in the NEF, the user is prompted for his/her ECF login in order to verify access privileges, but still receives the free look. Free looks must be used with 15 days of receipt, or the user will be prompted for a PACER login (fees apply) to view the document.

In general, CM/ECF is for *filing* and PACER is for *viewing*.

Here is an easy way to tell if you are in ECF:

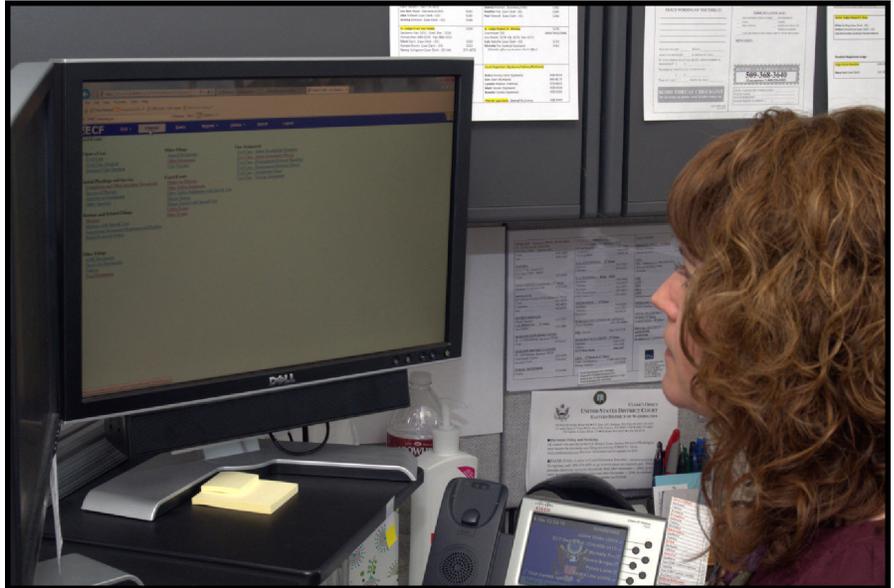


Do you see the **Civil** and **Criminal** options on the blue menu bar (above)? If you do, you are in ECF.

If your menu bar starts with **Query**, you are in PACER and may need to logout, refresh your browser and log back in to ECF, using your ECF login and password.

CM/ECF NextGen - Testing to Begin

One of the benefits of NextGen will be a Central Sign-On which will allow all users of ECF to maintain one account access to all courts (appellate, bankruptcy and district).



“NextGen is perhaps the largest-scope project ever undertaken by the Administrative Office and the court community.”

Judge Julie Robinson (D. Kan.) - Past Chair: Judicial Committee on Court Administration and Case Management. The Third Branch—February 2012

Continuous enhancements have been made to the existing CM/ECF system since our district went live in 2004. Later this year the Eastern District of Washington will begin testing CM/ECF NextGen. We do not have an implementation date set yet.

One of the benefits of NextGen will be a Central Sign-On which will allow all users of ECF to maintain one account access to all courts (appellate, bankruptcy and district) and to sign in one time to access all the courts in which they have permission to e-file. Yes, this means you will need just one username and password to file in **all** federal courts!

For more information about Central Sign-On and to learn what you can do to be prepared for NextGen implementation, please [click here to review the “Get Ready for NextGen” information](#) at the PACER Service Center.

Tech Tips

How to Flatten PDF Forms

Notice: When using a PDF fillable form, you must lock or “flatten” the PDF document to ensure the document can be viewed on all devices and to prevent others from manipulating or editing the information. The document filed and stored in CM/ECF cannot be altered once it has been filed; however, flattening the form will prevent any user from saving the document and editing the form fields. There are several software programs out there that can flatten a fillable form. Here is an easy way to do it yourself:

1. Open fillable form and add appropriate data.
2. Select **File**.
3. Select **Print**.
4. Select the PDF printer. The Adobe PDF printer is installed automatically with Adobe Acrobat Standard and Pro. Numerous free PDF printer drivers are available for download from the Internet.
5. Select **Print**.
6. Specify location to save the printed, “flattened” version of the form.
7. Select **Save**.
8. File the “flattened” form in CM/ECF.

Local Criminal Rules Effective March 1, 2015

On September 8, 2014, this Court posted Proposed Local Criminal Rules for an extended public comment period. All comments received have been considered by the Court, and the Local Criminal Rules have been amended where appropriate.

[Click here to view the Local Criminal Rules.](#)



ELECTRONIC EVIDENCE DISPLAY

Just a reminder that if you have a hearing coming up, we offer hands-on training in all our court locations.

To arrange training call:

Spokane

509-458-3400

Yakima

509-573-6600

Richland

509-943-8170