

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF COURT**

**Electronic Case Filing (ECF)
Technical and Procedural Information**

1. What is ECF?

ECF is the new automated case management and electronic docketing system in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. ECF allows attorneys to file and view documents from anywhere they have access to the Internet, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

2. How does the ECF system work?

The electronic case files system accepts documents in a portable document format (PDF). PDF retains the way a document looks, so the pages, fonts and other formatting are preserved. The filer creates the document using word processing software and saves the document in PDF format. The filer logs onto the ECF system using a login and password and follows the set of prompts to provide information about the case, party and document to be filed. The filer attaches the PDF documents and submits the filing to the court. The filer receives an electronic receipt e-mailed from the court confirming that the document was filed.

3. What training will be available?

The Office of the Clerk of Court will conduct training seminars on electronic filing for all interested members of the bar. Also, a Users' Manual will be provided and there will be a tutorial located on the court's website.

4. What equipment is required for ECF?

A PC running a standard platform, such as Windows or Macintosh, word processing software, Internet access and a browser, software to convert documents into PDF and scanning equipment may be useful.

5. How are attachments and exhibits handled by ECF?

ECF Filing Users may submit all documents identified as exhibits or attachments in either hard copy filed in the traditional manner or electronic form. If using electronic form, an ECF Filing User must submit as exhibits or attachments only

those excerpts of the identified documents that are relevant to the matter under consideration by the court. Excerpted material must be clearly and prominently identified as such. ECF Filing Users who file excerpts of documents as exhibits or attachments electronically pursuant to this Procedural Order do so without prejudice to their right to file timely additional excerpts or the complete document, provided however, that the total number of pages of attachments and exhibits electronically filed shall not exceed 50 without prior approval of the judge. Pages of attachments and exhibits in excess of 50 may be filed as of right in hard copy filed in the traditional manner. Responding parties who choose to file exhibits and attachments electronically may also timely file additional excerpts or the complete document, subject to the same page limitations as set forth above.

6. How will documents filed under seal be handled by ECF?

Documents filed under seal are not eligible for electronic filing and are to be filed conventionally in paper format and not electronically.

7. How will fees be paid?

Existing document fees do apply and initially, fees will be handled under existing procedures by sending payment to the Clerk's Office or by credit card. In the future, ECF will be modified to accept payments of fees by credit card. There are no added fees for filing documents using the ECF system.

8. Will each person have a login and password or will each firm have a login and password?

Each attorney will be issued a separate login and password by the clerk of court. The combination of the user login and password will serve as the electronic signature of the attorney for purposes of the Federal Rules of Procedure.

9. Is Electronic Filing mandatory?

Electronic Filing is not mandatory but it is authorized by Local Rule and attorney's are encouraged to participate in the ECF program. The assigned district court judge shall determine any issues with respect to any Electronic Case Filings for cases assigned to their calendar.

10. What will constitute the entry date of Court Orders?

The filing date of all court orders, decrees, and judgments will constitute entry on the docket kept by the Clerk of Court.

11. What if the Internet site is unavailable or there are problems with the attorney's equipment?

A filing user whose filing is made untimely as the result of a technical failure may seek appropriate relief from the court.

12. When is a document filed electronically considered filed?

A document is filed as of the date and time the electronic filing is completed. A filing must be completed before midnight Eastern Time to be considered filed on that day.

13. What documents will be available on the ECF system?

Any person or organization, other than a registered Filing User may access documents on the ECF Filing System by obtaining a PACER log-in and password. Those who have PACER access but who are not Filing Users may retrieve, by remote access, docket sheets and those documents which the court makes available on the Internet for the fee normally charged for this service as set by the fee schedule authorized by the Administrative Office of United States Courts, but they may not file documents.

Consistent with Judicial Conference policy, documents in civil cases should be made available electronically to the same extent that they are available for personal inspection at the courthouse, with the exception of Social Security cases which are excluded from electronic access. Also, certain "personal data identifiers" in every type of case should be modified or partially redacted by the litigants who are electronically filing documents. These identifiers are Social Security numbers, dates of birth, financial account numbers and names of minor children.

Information posted on the System must not be downloaded for uses inconsistent with the privacy concerns of any person. If, after notice and a reasonable opportunity to respond, the court determines that this provision has been violated, the court may impose appropriate sanctions upon the attorneys, law firms or parties that have so violated this provision, either upon motion of a party or on the court's initiative under the process described in Rule 11(c) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

Public remote electronic access to documents in criminal cases is not currently available, except in cases where requests for documents impose extraordinary demands on a court's resources, upon consent of all parties and a finding by the judge that such access is warranted.