

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**ECF FILING POINTERS**

From our experience using the Electronic Case Filing System (ECF), we have assembled the following pointers to make your filing experience more successful.

- 1) **NEW CASES** - When filing a new case, in addition to filing a paper copy of the complaint/notice of removal and any accompanying papers, litigants are hereby required to provide those filings in PDF format on a floppy disk or CD-ROM compact disk. The disk should be clearly labeled with the case number (if known) and the name of the document. If you are unable to deliver your filings on disk at the time of filing, you must e-mail the complaint and accompanying papers to [www.dcd\\_cmecf@dcd.uscourts.gov](mailto:www.dcd_cmecf@dcd.uscourts.gov) **by the close of business the day the complaint was filed.** Failure to supply electronic copies of your complaint/notice of removal in a timely manner, will result in your name being added to the attorney non-compliant list and shared with the Court's ECF Judge Committee. Regardless of which option you choose, the complaint and accompanying papers must come to the Court as PDF documents. Each exhibit to the complaint shall be a separate PDF file. Failure to submit PDF versions of the complaint and other documents will delay the opening of the case in ECF.
  
  - 2) **SEALED MATERIAL** - Sealed material must be submitted in paper format at the Intake section of the Clerk's Office during normal business hours. Your submittal should include an original, one paper copy for the Court, and PDF files of the sealed documents on a floppy or compact disk that is clearly labeled with the Case Number and the name of the document. **Do not deposit these materials in the overnight drop box or e-mail them to the generic e-mail box.**
  
  - 3) **PROTOCOL FOR SENDING EMAILS TO GENERIC ECF EMAIL BOX** - When sending filings to the generic ECF email box, include the case number and the judge's initials on the subject line.
  
  - 4) **ITEMS THAT SHOULD BE SENT TO THE GENERIC EMAIL BOX** - The following items should **not** be filed electronically in ECF and **must** be sent to the generic email address ([dcd\\_cmecf@dcd.uscourts.gov](mailto:dcd_cmecf@dcd.uscourts.gov)):
    - a) Amended Complaint
    - b) Third Party Complaints
    - c) Intervenor Complaints
    - d) Cross-Claims and Counter-Claims standing alone
    - e) Motion to Intervene
    - f) Motion to file an Amicus Brief
    - g) Returns of Service
    - h) Defaults
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Counsel who have not registered as ECF filers should send their filings in PDF format to the generic email address.

- 5) **KEEP EMAIL ADDRESS UP-TO-DATE** - Please remember to change your email address as you would your normal address. Otherwise, you will not receive ECF Notifications. Please remember to delete the additional email addresses for those persons no longer associated with your firm.
- 6) **FILING MOTION, POINTS AND AUTHORITIES, ETC. AS ONE PDF FILE** - The motion, memorandum in support of the motion, and other documents directly pertinent to the motion should reside in a single PDF file. Proposed orders, affidavits and exhibits should reside in separate PDF files to be included as attachments to the motion.
- 7) **PASSWORDS** - ECF Passwords are used exclusively for filing pleadings in ECF. Use a PACER password to view, print, and save documents in ECF. If you are not an attorney of record in a case, **do not** use another attorney's login and password to file documents. Upon receiving your ECF password from the Clerk's office, we recommend you change it to one you easily remember. Change your password from within the Utilities function of ECF. If you forget your login name or password, contact the Clerk's office.
- 8) **PROBLEM RELATING TO MICROSOFT OUTLOOK 2002** - Documentation from Microsoft Knowledgebase regarding the Junk Sender's Rule in Outlook 2002 may filter ECF e-mail notifications as junk mail. Periodically check your junk mail folder for Court ECF notifications. If filtering occurs, contact your IT department for advice on how to eliminate this filtering problem.
- 9) **PROBLEMS RELATED TO UNCERTIFIED INTERNET BROWSERS** - Using uncertified internet browsers may cause certain problems when using ECF :1) Tool bar or pull down menus may disappear; 2) Documents may not open; 3) Problems with Email notifications; 4) Java script errors may appear at the bottom of the screen which could prevent the user from filing. The Administrative Office (AO) has certified Internet Explorer Version 5.5 and Netscape Versions 4.06, 4.07, or 4.08 . The AO is working to resolve these issues by making the software more compatible with Internet Explorer 6.0 or 6.2. Until other versions are certified, all users are advised to use Internet Explorer 5.5 and Netscape 4.06, 4.07, or 4.08. The listserv will notify you of any updates.
- 10) **MOTIONS AND OPPOSITIONS MUST BE FILED SEPARATELY** Filing a motion that includes an opposition creates significant docketing problems. If you combine a motion and opposition in the same pleading, you must file it twice- once as an opposition and again as a motion. Each filing should include the same document file.
- 11) **FILING A DOCUMENT IN RESPONSE TO A MISSING DOCUMENT** - If you cannot file a document that must be linked to another document which has not been posted, please send your filing to the generic email box.
- 12) **ATTORNEY APPEARANCE** - Each attorney who wishes to enter their appearance and receive email notifications must file a separate praecipe.

- 13) **ATTORNEY WITHDRAWALS** - Attorneys who do not withdraw from cases will continue to receive email notifications. Pursuant to the Local Rules, attorneys must file the appropriate withdrawal of appearance.
- 14) **OVERNIGHT DROP BOX** - If unable to electronically file because of computer or other technical difficulties, counsel should prepare a clearly labeled compact or floppy disk of your documents in PDF format and deposit it in the overnight drop box. As a last resort, you may deposit a paper copy in the overnight drop box and deliver PDF files of your documents to the Clerk's office on the next business day.
- 15) **NO DUAL FILINGS** - When counsel files a pleading in ECF or sends it to the generic email box, do not submit a paper duplicate.
- 16) **NO NOTICE OF MOTION** - A notice of motion is **not** filed in this Court. Motions are filed as a motion.
- 17) **LIST ALL MOTIONS WHEN FILING ONE MOTION THAT REQUESTS MULTIPLE FORMS OF RELIEF** - For example, a motion for summary judgment or alternatively to dismiss or to transfer requires the user to select all three forms of relief in the same filing from the motions drop down screen. To select more than one motion, press and hold down the control key and click on each of the desired forms of relief.
- 18) **UNABLE TO LOCATE AN EVENT** - Please call the Clerk's Office for assistance. Creativity undermines the system.
- 19) **NOTICE OF APPEAL** - A notice of appeal **shall not** be posted electronically. Because fees must be collected, a notice of appeal should be filed either in person or mailed to the Clerk's Office with the check or money order.
- 20) **DOCKETING TO CONSOLIDATED CASES** - When docketing in a lead consolidated case, a filer will be asked if they wish to **spread** the docketing text to other associated cases. **Spread** means to docket once in the lead case (lowest case number) and to spread the docket entry text automatically to the associated cases. Individual judges may issue orders regarding how to file in consolidated cases. If not, you should assume that your docket text should be spread to all associated cases. Consolidated cases are typically handled in two distinct manners. The first, and most preferable, is to have the Court dismiss the associated cases, if appropriate, and to direct the Clerk to add the parties from the various associated cases to the lead case. The parties then can be selected as filers. In the second method, docketing will occur in the lead case and docket entry text will be spread to all member cases. If your situation calls for spreading docket entry text, please refer to the items below.
  - a) **TO SPREAD DOCKET ENTRY TEXT:** Docketing must be done in the lead case. You will be asked if you wish to spread the docket entry text. If you answer Yes, the docket entry text will automatically spread to the member case(s).
  - b) **DOCKETING A PLEADING IN AN ASSOCIATED CASE:** If you must docket a pleading to an associated case, you will not receive an option to spread the docket entry text and will be filing in that case only.

- 21) **DISCOVERY MATERIAL** - Local Civil Rule 5.2(a) stipulates that, absent an Order from the Court, discovery materials are not to be filed. Also, **do not** file Certificates of Discovery. Filing these documents is not required by our Local Rules and adds unnecessary items to the docket. Also, it creates and sends unnecessary emails to all parties to the case.