

# **ATTORNEY'S** GUIDE TO **OPENING A CIVIL CASE**

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OPENING YOUR CIVIL CASE

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## **BEFORE YOU BEGIN THE CASE OPENING PROCESS**

- ✓ Be prepared to file your initiating document and its attachment(s)
- ✓ Convert all documents to PDF and save them on your computer for easy retrieval
- ✓ Have a copy of the Civil Cover Sheet and Complaint (Federal or State Court if filing a Notice of Removal) available as you will need to refer to these during the process.



# LOG INTO CM/ECF

Now that you are prepared to open your case, log into [CM/ECF](#) as you would if you were going to file a document.

You do not need a client code, but you do need to check the box indicating you understand that you must comply with the redaction rules.

I understand that, if I file, I must comply with the redaction rules. I have read the notice below.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE OF REDACTION RESPONSIBILITY** - In compliance with [Fed. R. Civ. P. 5.2](#), [Fed. R. Crim. P. 49.1](#), and [WAWD Local Rule CR 5.2](#), all filers must redact:

1. Dates of Birth - redact to the year of birth;
2. Names of Minor Children - redact to the initials;
3. Social Security Numbers or Taxpayer Identification Numbers - redact in their entirety;
4. Financial Accounting Information - redact to the last four digits;
5. Passport Numbers and Driver License Numbers - redact in their entirety;
6. Home addresses in criminal cases - redact to the city and state.

This requirement applies to all documents, including attachments.

Once you have successfully logged in, select **CIVIL** on the blue tool bar.

Next, click on the **ATTORNEY CASE OPENING** link to begin the case opening process.



# ENTERING CASE INFORMATION

The first **OPEN A CIVIL CASE** screen asks you for some basic information about your case.

**Open a Civil Case**

① Office  Case type  ②

Date filed: 6/22/2015 ③

Other court name  ④

Other court number

**Note:** If this is a removal case, enter the name and case number of the originating court; otherwise, leave these fields blank.

Example

**Other court name:** King County Superior Court

**Other court number:** 09-2-000-0-SEA

Enter your case-specific information in the numbered fields. Use the table on the next screen as a reference.



# CASE INFORMATION FIELDS

Field	Description
① Office	Either <b>Seattle</b> or <b>Tacoma</b> . The correct office is determined by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• where the event took place, or</li><li>• where the defendant(s) resides</li></ul> <i>See our local rules to determine which counties pertain to each office.</i>
② Case type	Select <b>cv</b> for civil case.
③ Date filed	This field is populated automatically and cannot be altered.
④ Other court name and Other court number	These fields are left blank unless you are filing a Notice of Removal, in which case you will enter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the name of the originating court, and</li><li>• its case number</li></ul>



# ENTERING STATISTICAL CASE DATA

The next screen asks for information that can be taken directly from a properly filled out Civil Cover Sheet. Use the table on the next slide as a reference.

**Open a Civil Case**

1 **Jurisdiction** 3 (Federal Question) ▾

2 **Cause of action** ▾ Filter:  Clear filter

3 **Nature of suit** 0 (zero) ▾ Filter:  Clear filter

4 **Origin** 1 (Original Proceeding) ▾

**Citizenship plaintiff** ▾

**Citizenship defendant** ▾

**Jury demand** n (None) ▾ 6 **Class action** n (No Class Action Alleged) ▾ 7

8 **County** Clallam ▾

**Fee status** pd (paid) ▾ 9 **Fee date** 6/22/2015 10

**Please leave the fee status PAID unless this case relates to the Jones Act or includes filing an IFP.**

**If you are from a federal agency, no fee is required.**

Next Clear

When you are confident your case information is correct and complete, click **NEXT** to proceed.





# STATISTICAL CASE DATA FIELDS

Field	Description	Field	Description
1	<p>Jurisdiction</p> <p>Select the case jurisdiction. This field defaults to <b>3 (Federal Question)</b>.</p> <p><b>Jurisdiction</b> 3 (Federal Question)  <b>Cause of action</b> 1 (U.S. Government Plaintiff)  <b>Nature of suit</b> 3 (Federal Question)  <b>Origin</b> 4 (Diversity)  <b>Origin</b> 5 (Local Question)</p>	6	<p>Jury Demand</p> <p>Select the party demanding the jury if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The words "Jury Demand" are on the caption page of the Complaint, or</li> <li>A jury demand has been previously requested in the State court.</li> </ul> <p>If there is no jury demand as described above, you are required to file a separate Demand for Jury per LCR 101(b)(3).</p> <p><b>Jury demand</b> n (None)  <b>County</b> b (Both)  <b>Fee status</b> pc (None)  <b>Fee status</b> p (Plaintiff)</p>
2	<p>Cause of action</p> <p>Select the cause of action. If your specific cause of action is not listed, you may choose to use a more generic one (e.g., Fed. Question), or look through the Jurisdiction Language of the Complaint/Notice of Removal for additional jurisdictional citations.</p> <p><b>Cause of action</b> 28:1331 (28:1331 Fed. Question)  <b>Nature of suit</b> 28:1331at (28:1331 Fed. Question: Airline Crash)  <b>Origin</b> 28:1331at (28:1331 Fed. Question: Anti-trust)</p>	7	<p>Class action</p> <p>This field defaults to <b>n (No Class Action Alleged)</b>, which is the only available option.</p> <p><b>Class action</b> n (No Class Action Alleged)  <b>Class action</b> n (No Class Action Alleged)</p>
3	<p>Nature of suit</p> <p>Select the nature of suit.</p> <p><b>Nature of suit</b> 330 (Federal Employer's Liability)  <b>Origin</b> 330 (Federal Employer's Liability)  <b>Origin</b> 340 (Marine)  <b>Origin</b> 345 (Marine Product Liability)</p>	8	<p>County</p> <p>Select the county wherein the <u>Plaintiff</u> resides, or <u>Plaintiff's Place of Business</u> is located.</p> <p><b>County</b> Clallam  <b>County</b> Clallam  <b>County</b> Clark  <b>County</b> Cowlitz  <b>County</b> Grays Harbor  <b>County</b> Island  <b>County</b> Jefferson  <b>County</b> King</p>
4	<p>Origin</p> <p>Select the case origin.</p> <p><b>Origin</b> 1 (Original Proceeding)  <b>Origin</b> 1 (Original Proceeding)  <b>Origin</b> 2 (Removal from State Court)</p>	9	<p>Fee status</p> <p>This field defaults to <b>pd (paid)</b>. Leave as paid, unless you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a US Attorney <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>none (no fee required)</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>filing the case in forma pauperis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>pend (IFP pending)</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>filing a Jones Act case <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>wv (waived)</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Fee status</b> pd (paid)  <b>Fee status</b> none (no fee required)  <b>Fee status</b> pd (paid)  <b>Fee status</b> pend (IFP pending)  <b>Fee status</b> wv (waived)</p>
5	<p>Citizenship plaintiff and Citizenship defendant</p> <p>These fields are only used if you have selected <b>(4) Diversity</b> as your Jurisdiction. If this is a diversity case, the information to select has been provided to you on the Civil Cover Sheet.</p> <p><b>Citizenship plaintiff</b> 1 (Citizen of This State)  <b>Citizenship defendant</b> 1 (Citizen of This State)  <b>Jury demand</b> n (None)  <b>County</b> Clallam  <b>County</b> 3 (Citizen of Another State)  <b>County</b> 3 (Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country)  <b>County</b> 4 (Incorporated/Principal Place of Business-This State)  <b>County</b> 5 (Incorporated/Principal Place of Business-Other State)  <b>County</b> 6 (Foreign Nation)  <b>Fee status</b> pd (paid)</p>	10	<p>Fee date</p> <p>This field is populated automatically and should not be altered.</p> <p><b>Fee date</b> 6/22/2015</p>



# EMERGENCY MATTERS

The ECF system will ask if your initial filing includes a Temporary Restraining Order, Motion for Vessel Arrest, or any other emergency motion requiring immediate action by the court.

If you answer **YES**, you will receive the further instructions on the next screen.

Be sure to contact the appropriate Clerk's Office **AFTER** posting the Emergency Motion/Temporary Restraining Order.

Use the contact information provided on the screen and have your case number ready to provide the Clerk.

The Clerk's Office will QC the case, assign a judge, and notify him/her of the emergency matter.



To ensure that your case receives the immediate attention requested, please file your case and its emergency motion prior to 4:30pm (or as early in the day as possible).

