

United States District Court
Western District of Washington

Attorney's Guide:
Opening a Civil Case



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WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON ATTORNEY CIVIL CASE OPENING GUIDE

I. Introduction

This guide will assist you in electronically opening an original proceeding civil case using this Court's [Case Management/Electronic Case Filing \(CM/ECF\) system](#).

II. Electronic Filing Support

For assistance with specific rules and guidance for electronic filing at this Court, review the following documentation:

- [ECF User Manual](#)
- [CM/ECF Filing Procedures](#)
- [Chambers Procedures](#)
- [Local Civil and Criminal Rules and General Orders](#)
- [Federal Rules of Civil Procedure](#)

If you run into any issues throughout this process, you can contact the following:

Technical Assistance:

ECF Support

Available between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Local: 206-370-8440, option "2"

Toll free: 1-866-323-9293 (1-866-ECF-WAWD) option "2"

Email: cmecf@wawd.uscourts.gov

Case Opening Process Assistance:

Attorney Case Opening Help Desk

Available between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Phone: 206-370-8787

III. Getting Started

3.1 Prepare your Documents

Pay close attention when preparing your documents. Ensure all attorneys who plan to appear in the case have properly signed the initiating document and that you follow all filing requirements, including format and size restrictions (see [CM/ECF FAQs: Technical](#) page and [How to Prepare Your PDF](#)). See our [Local Civil Rules](#) and the [ECF Filing Procedures \(PDF\)](#) on the [Court's website](#) for further guidance.

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3.2 Required Documents

Main documents (examples below):

- a. Complaint
- b. Motion to Proceed In Forma Pauperis (IFP)
- c. Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus
- d. Petition (Other)

Note: If multiple plaintiffs, each plaintiff must provide a completed IFP application.

[Civil Cover Sheet](#) (required for all cases except Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, prisoner civil rights complaints, and cases brought under 28 USC 2255)

3.3 Other Possible Attachments

Other possible attachments to your main document are:

- [Summons](#)
- [Report on Filing or Determination of an Action Regarding a Patent or Trademark](#) (Patent or Trademark cases)
- [Report on Filing or Determination of an Action or Appeal Regarding a Copyright](#) (Copyright cases)

Note: Most of these forms can be found on the [Court Forms page](#).

IV. Filing Fee

4.1 Fee Requirements

For information about filing fees in this Court, review the **Fee Schedule** on the [Paying Fees](#) page. You must pay the filing fee through PACER using one of the following options:

- Bank Account (ACH): Similar to an online check; the funds are withdrawn from your bank account.
- Debit/Credit Card.

Note: Have your card/banking information ready. The system prompts you for payment during the case opening process. CM/ECF can timeout if you delay too long when entering account information.

4.2 Requesting a Waiver of Filing Fee (Motion for Leave to Proceed In Forma Pauperis)

If you decide to request a waiver of the filing fee, have your signed [Declaration and Application to Proceed In Forma Pauperis and Written Consent for Payment of Costs](#) prepared to file as your main document. See [Filing a Motion for Leave to Proceed In Forma Pauperis](#) for further instructions.

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V. Initiate Your Civil Case

Ensure that your initiating document and attachment(s) are ready to file prior to starting to open your case. See Sections [3.2](#) and [3.3](#). You must convert all documents to PDF and save them on your computer for easy retrieval. See [How to Prepare Your PDF](#).

Have a copy of the Civil Cover Sheet and initiating document available to refer to during the filing process.

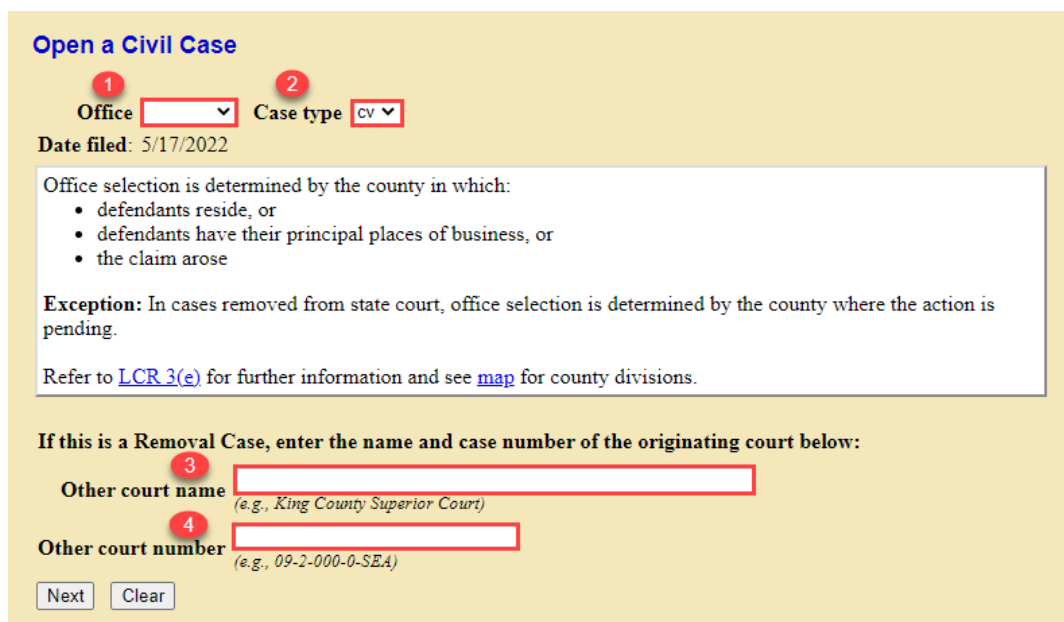
5.1 Enter Case Information

The following screen asks for information found on the Civil Cover Sheet and initiating document. Have them available to refer to during this process.

1. After logging into CM/ECF, select **Civil** > **Open A Case** > **Attorney Case Opening**.



2. The next screen provides information on how to find help throughout the filing process. To continue, click **Next**.
3. Enter your case-specific information in the numbered fields. Use [Table A](#) as a reference.
 - a. If you need to start over on this page, click **Clear** to erase all of your entries.



Open a Civil Case

Office Case type

Date filed: 5/17/2022

Office selection is determined by the county in which:

- defendants reside, or
- defendants have their principal places of business, or
- the claim arose

Exception: In cases removed from state court, office selection is determined by the county where the action is pending.

Refer to [LCR 3\(e\)](#) for further information and see [map](#) for county divisions.

If this is a Removal Case, enter the name and case number of the originating court below:

Other court name
(e.g., King County Superior Court)

Other court number
(e.g., 09-2-000-0-SEA)

Next Clear

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TABLE A		
	Field	Description
1	Office	<p>Either Seattle or Tacoma.</p> <p>Determined by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where the claim arose, or • where the <i>defendant(s)</i> reside or have their principal places of business. <p>Exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Security and Naturalization Applications (Nature of Suit 462) cases should be filed based on where the plaintiff(s) resides • Habeas cases with the Nature of Suit 463 (Alien Detainee) should be filed in Seattle even if petitioner is detained at the Tacoma Northwest Detention Center <p>See our Local Rules to determine which counties pertain to each office.</p>
2	Case Type	Leave cv (civil case) selected.
3	Other court name	Leave blank - this field is only used for removal cases.
4	Other court number	Leave blank - this field is only used for removal cases.

4. When you finish entering your case information, click **Next** to continue.

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5.2 Enter Statistical Case Data

The next screen asks for information that is found on the case’s Civil Cover Sheet. Have it available so you can refer to it during this process. Use [Table B](#) as a reference. If you need to start over on this page, click **Clear** to erase all of your entries.

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

County Clallam ▼ 8

County is determined by the residence of the *first listed plaintiff* in all actions except for U.S. plaintiff and land condemnation cases.

- If the U.S. government is the plaintiff, use the county of residence of the *first listed defendant*
- In land condemnation cases, use the location of the tract of land involved

Fee status pd (paid) ▼ 9 **Fee date** 9/9/2019 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

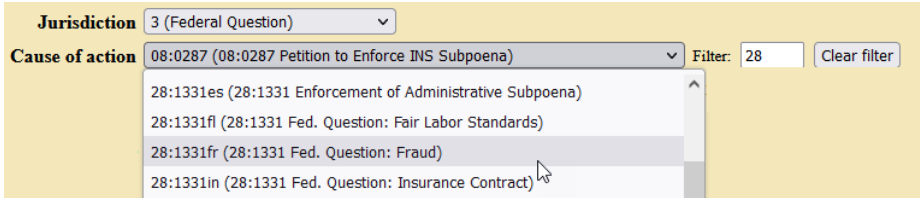
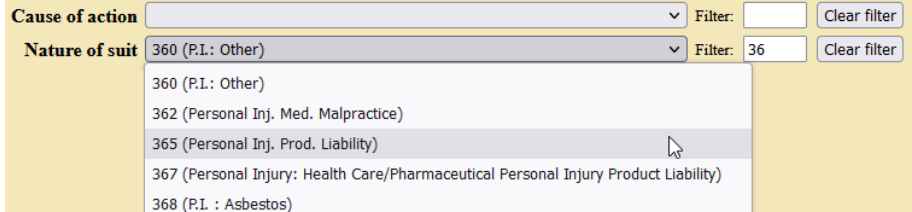
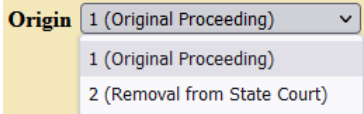
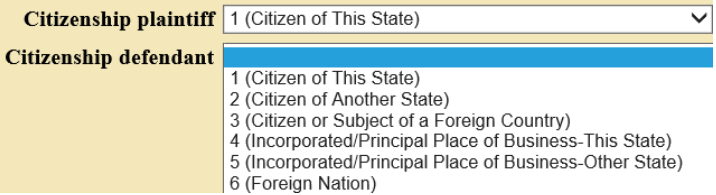
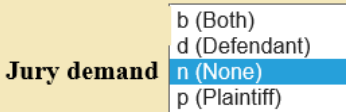
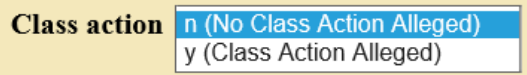
TABLE B		
	Field	Description
1	Jurisdiction	Select the basis of jurisdiction. This field defaults to 3 (Federal Question) . If more than one jurisdiction code applies, the preference should be in the numerical order listed (i.e., U.S. Government Plaintiff as highest priority and Local Question as lowest).

Open a Civil Case

Jurisdiction

- 1 (U.S. Government Plaintiff)
- 2 (U.S. Government Defendant)
- 3 (Federal Question)
- 4 (Diversity)
- 5 (Local Question)

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TABLE B		
	Field	Description
2	Cause of action	<p>Select the cause of action or filter by statute number.</p>  <p>If you do not see a specific cause of action that matches your case, use a more generic one (e.g., Fed. Question).</p>
3	Nature of suit	<p>Select the nature of suit or filter by the nature of suit code.</p>  <p>See the Nature of Suit Code Descriptions for more details on each code.</p>
4	Origin	<p>Select 1 (Original Proceeding).</p> 
5	Citizenship plaintiff and Citizenship defendant	<p>These fields are only used if you select (4) Diversity as the Jurisdiction. See LCR 8. Otherwise, leave these fields blank.</p> 
6	Jury Demand	<p>Only select plaintiff if the words “Jury Demand” are on the Complaint caption. See LCR 38.</p> 
7	Class action	<p>Select whether class action is alleged under FRCP 23.</p> 

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TABLE B		
	Field	Description
8	County	Select the county wherein the <i>Plaintiff</i> resides, or where <i>Plaintiff's Place of Business</i> is located unless the plaintiff is the U.S government. In U.S. government plaintiff cases, select the county wherein the <i>Defendant</i> resides, or where <i>Defendant's Place of Business</i> is located.
9	Fee status	<p>This field defaults to pd (paid). Leave as paid, unless you are filing a case or motion that does not require a fee or qualifies for waiving of the filing fee e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a US Attorney or filing a case under 28 USC 2255: none (no fee required) filing the case in forma pauperis: pend (IFP pending) filing a Jones Act case: wv (waived)
10	Fee date	This field populates automatically and should not be altered.

When you finish entering your case information, click **Next** twice to continue.

5.3 Emergency Matters

CM/ECF asks if your initial filing includes a Temporary Restraining Order, Motion for Vessel Arrest, or any other emergency motion requiring immediate action by the Court. For questions and instructions on how to file emergency matters, see the [Emergency Filings page](#).

- If you answer **Yes**, the next screen provides further instructions.
- Contact the appropriate Clerk's Office (during regular business hours) *after* posting the **Motion for Temporary Restraining Order** and have your case number ready to provide to the Clerk.
 - Seattle cases, call 206-370-8400 option 0.
 - Tacoma cases, call 253-882-3800.
 - Outside of Business hours (5:00 pm to 8:00 am), call 206-370-8406.
- The Clerk's Office will perform a quality control review of the case, assign a judge, and notify Chambers 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)**.

- If your initial filing does not include an emergency motion requiring immediate action by the Court, select **No**.
- Click **Next** to continue.

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VI. Add Parties

This screen allows you to add parties to your case. You must add all parties listed on the caption of your initiating document, even parties whose names are unknown (e.g., John/Jane Doe parties).

The screen is divided into two sections. The left section is the **Participant Tree**, and the right section is the **Party Information Screen** (see image below).

The screenshot shows the 'Open a Civil Case' interface. On the left is the 'Participant Tree' with buttons for 'Add New Party', 'Create Case', 'Collapse All', and 'Expand All'. A case entry '2:19-cv-?????' is visible. On the right is the 'Party Information Screen' with search fields for 'Last / Business Name', 'First Name', and 'Middle Name', and a 'Search' button.



Do not use the browser's Back button while adding parties to your case. The system deletes all previously entered parties and party information. If you need to make changes or corrections to a party, see [Icons in the Participant Tree](#) for navigation instructions.

6.1 Search for a Party

1. Enter the last name, first name, and middle name (if available) of the first party in their respective fields or the company name in the **Last/Business Name** field and click **Search**.

The screenshot shows the search form with 'Widget Company' entered in the 'Last / Business Name' field. Other fields for 'First Name', 'Middle Name', and 'Prisoner ID' are empty. A 'Search' button is at the bottom.

Note: You should never add a party description, text, or alias in these fields. These should be added in the **Party Text** or **Party Alias** fields later. See [Table C](#) (5).

2. The system displays any matching names in the **Search Results** box.
3. If you find an exact match in the **Search Results** box, highlight the name and then click **Select Party**.

The screenshot shows the search results box with 'Widget Company' highlighted. Below the results are buttons for 'Select Party' and 'Create New Party'. A note at the bottom states: 'If a name matching your party's name appears in the Search Results, do NOT create a new party.'

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4. If you *do not* find an exact match, or your search returns no results, click **Create New Party**.

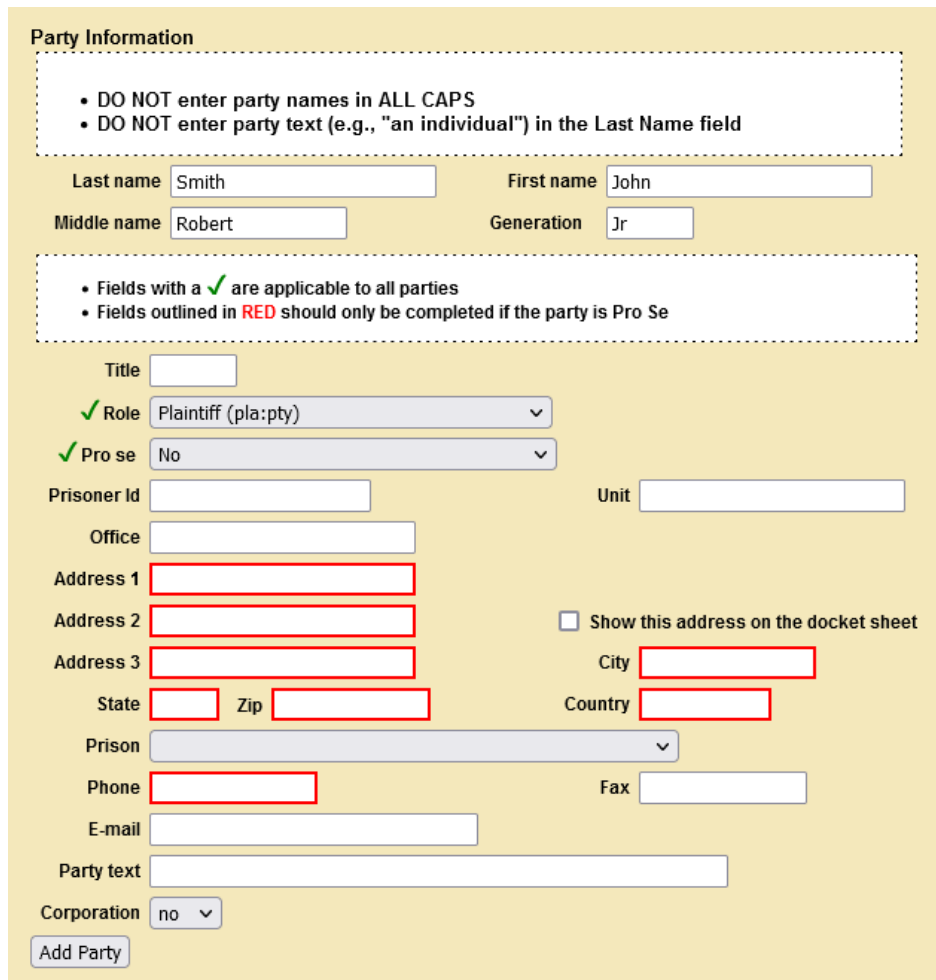


Search Results

Select Party Create New Party

Search returned no results. Please try again or create a new party.

- a. Enter the Last name, First name, Middle name, and Generation if provided and not already entered.



Party Information

- DO NOT enter party names in ALL CAPS
- DO NOT enter party text (e.g., "an individual") in the Last Name field

Last name First name

Middle name Generation

- Fields with a ✓ are applicable to all parties
- Fields outlined in RED should only be completed if the party is Pro Se

Title

✓ Role

✓ Pro se

Prisoner Id Unit

Office

Address 1

Address 2 Show this address on the docket sheet

Address 3 City

State Zip Country

Prison

Phone Fax

E-mail

Party text

Corporation

Add Party

- b. Complete the rest of the screen as directed in [Entering Party Information](#).

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6.2 Enter Party Information

After selecting **Select Party/Create New Party**, you must enter the information for the party on the **Party Information Screen**. Enter parties in compliance with the [Standards for Entering Party Names in CM/ECF](#).

Note: Enter information as instructed in the fields indicated below

- Fields with a **green** checkmark are applicable to all parties.
- Fields outlined in **red** should only be completed if the party is Pro Se.

Party Information
Karen R Smith

• Fields with a ✓ are applicable to all parties
• Fields outlined in RED should only be completed if the party is Pro Se

1 Title

2 ✓ Role

2 ✓ Pro se

Prisoner Id Unit

Office

3 Address 1

3 Address 2 Show this address on the docket sheet

3 Address 3 City

State Zip Country

Prison

Phone Fax

4 E-mail

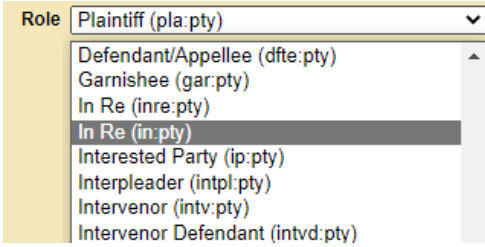
5 Party text

Start date End date

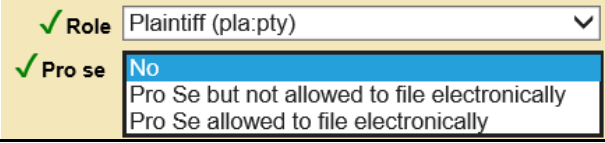
Corporation Notice

[Start a New Search](#)

TABLE C

Field	Description
1 Role	<p>This field lists the available party roles. The system automatically defaults to Plaintiff for all parties; remember to change the role when entering parties with different roles (e.g., Defendant or Petitioner).</p> 

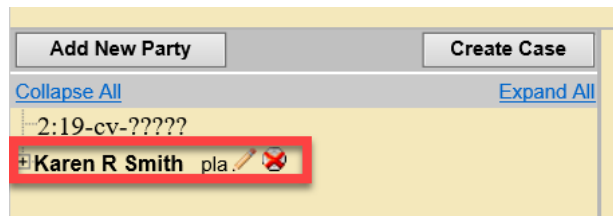
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TABLE C	
Field	Description
2 Pro Se	<p>Select whether the party is representing themselves (pro se). Only select Pro Se but not allowed to file electronically for parties who you know plan to represent themselves. Never select Pro Se allowed to file electronically.</p> 
3 Address and Phone	Only enter this information if the party is pro se. (See Standards for Entering Party Names in CM/ECF)
4 E-mail	Always leave this field blank.
<p><i>You must enter Party Text exactly as it appears on the complaint caption.</i></p> <p>Party Text includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive information about the parties. For example, a company described as “a Washington corporation.” • Ranks or Titles such as military ranks (exclude generic Mr. or Mrs./Ms. Titles). 	
5 Party text	<p>If there is no such information in the caption, <i>leave this field blank</i> (see Standards for Entering Party Names in CM/ECF).</p> <p>Do not use the Last Name or Title fields for this information.</p> <p>Do not enter aliases in the Party text field (see Add Alias section for more information)</p>

1. Review this screen carefully before proceeding. Once you are confident that your party information is correct and complete, click **Add Party**.

2. After clicking on **Add Party**, the newly added party name appears in the **Participant Tree**.

- a. You may make changes/additions here. See [Icons in the Participant Tree](#).







3. The **Search for a party** screen displays again. Repeat Steps 1-4 above to search for the next party (follow the order in which they are listed in the caption of the initiating document).

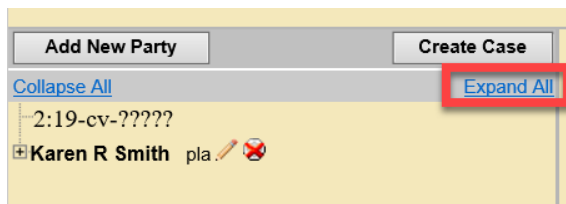
4. Repeat this process until you have added *all* parties and they appear in the **Participant Tree**.

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6.3 Icons in the Participant Tree

You may use the icons located next to the party names in the **Participant Tree** to make modifications to the parties you previously added to the case. Refer to [Table D](#) for a description of each icon.

TABLE D	
Icon	Description
	Remove this party from the case.
	Edit the party, alias, or attorney.
	Copy attorney(s) from other parties in the case to this party.
	Add new alias, corporate parent, or attorney.



If you do not see these icons, use the **Expand All** link to expand the **Participant Tree**.

6.4 Add Attorneys


You must enter *all* attorneys who are appearing in this case, with the following exceptions:

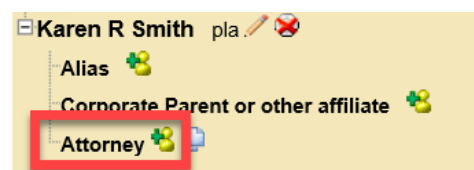
- Yourself: The attorney whose CM/ECF account you use to file the case. CM/ECF allows you to create this association when you file the appearance document (i.e., the Complaint/Petition).
- Pro Hac Vice attorneys. Pro Hac Vice attorneys can only be admitted by order of the Court (see [Pro Hac Vice Admissions](#) webpage).
- If no results return after searching by bar number *and* name under **Search for an attorney**.
- Do not* add attorneys for the opposing party or parties. All attorneys must appear in the case prior to being added to the docket.

If any of the exceptions apply:

1. Do not add the attorney.
2. Set the Pro Se status for any unrepresented party to **No**.

To add an attorney to a party:

1. Select the  icon next to **Attorney** under the name of the represented party in the **Participant Tree**.



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2. On the **Search for an attorney** screen, search for the attorney by bar number or name, then click **Search**.

Search for an attorney for Karen R Smith

Bar Id

Last Name First Name Middle Name

Search

3. Only attorneys admitted in this district return in the search results.

Note: Be sure to search by both bar number and last name to confirm whether the attorney is admitted in this district.

4. If the system returns no results, the attorney is not admitted in this district and will need to complete the [admission process](#) to be added to the case.

5. If the system returns results, highlight the attorney's name in the **Search Results** box and click **Select Attorney** to display the **Attorney Information** screen.

Attorney Information
Janet L. Smith (Bar Id : 12345, Bar Status : Active)

DO NOT edit the attorney's contact information.
If this information is incorrect, the attorney may file a Notice of Change of Address and submit the address change via PACER.

Title

Office Unit

Address 1 Address 2

Address 3 City

State Zip

Country Phone

Fax E-mail

Pro Hac Vice Lead attorney

Designation

Notice

Start date End date

Add Attorney
[Start a New Search](#)

6. Do not alter any contact information on this screen; instead, compare Bar ID (or address, if there is no Bar ID) to ensure you are selecting the correct attorney's name.

Attorney Information
John Doe (Bar Id : 12345, Bar Status : Active)

DO NOT edit the attorney's contact information.
If this information is incorrect, the attorney may file a Notice of Change of Address and submit the address change via PACER.

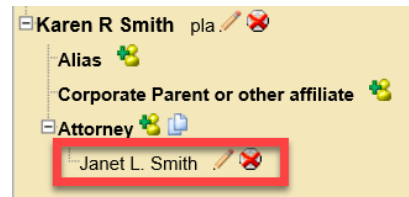
- a. If the Bar ID (or address, if there is no Bar ID) does not match, click **Start a New Search**, search again for the attorney's name, and select an additional matching name. Repeat as necessary to find the correct attorney.

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7. If necessary, select the correct **Designation** and **Lead attorney** statuses. The default values are Retained (**Designation**) and yes (**Lead attorney**).


8. Click **Add Attorney** to add the attorney to the case.

- a. The system adds the attorney to the **Participant Tree** under the previously selected party.



9. Repeat this process until you have added all attorneys.


10. If the same attorney is representing multiple parties, use the copy attorney tool  to add an attorney to the additional parties.

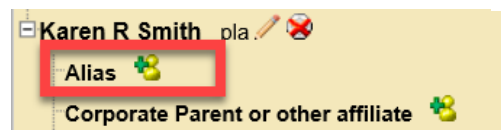
- a. To use the copy attorney tool:
 - i. Go to the party in the **Participant Tree** to whom you need to add the attorney.
 - ii. Click on the copy attorney tool  next to **Attorney**.
 - iii. Select the attorney(s) to copy from the list of attorneys already added to the case, then click **Copy Attorneys**.



6.5 Add Aliases

If your initiating document caption lists an alias, i.e. another name by which a person or business is known:

- 1. Click on the  icon next to **Alias** for the appropriate party in the **Participant Tree**.



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- On the **Search for an alias** screen, enter the alias in **Last/Business Name** (see [Standards for Entering Party Names in CM/ECF](#)), then click **Search**.

Note: Do not include the alias type (e.g. dba, aka) when entering the alias name.

- If a match is found, highlight the name in the **Search Results** box and click **Select Alias**.
 - If a match is not found, click **Create New Alias**.
- In both scenarios, the next screen is the **Alias Information** screen. If not already entered, enter the full alias name and select an alias **Type** from the dropdown menu. Refer to [Table E](#) for a description of the alias types.

TABLE E

Type	Description	Type	Description
agent	Agent of	mnr	Minor
aka	Also known as	nee	Born (usually refers to maiden name)
assign	As assignee of	nka	Now known as
dba	Doing business as	obo	On behalf of
div	A division of	other	Other
est	Estate of	pro	Personal representative of
exrel	Ex Rel	rpi	Real party interest
fdba	Formally doing business as	suc	Successor in interest
fka	Formally known as	ta	Trading as

- Once you finish entering the alias information, select **Add Alias**.
- The system adds the alias to the **Participant Tree** under the previously selected party.
- Repeat this process until you have entered all aliases.

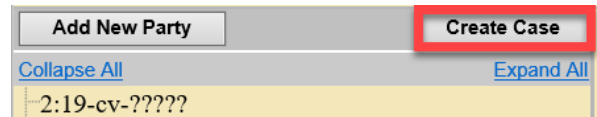
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6.6 Add Corporate Parents/Other Affiliates

Do not add corporate parents at this stage. You should add corporate parents/other affiliates when filing a Corporate Disclosure Statement, which you must file as a separate docket entry after initial case opening. See [Follow-up Filings](#).

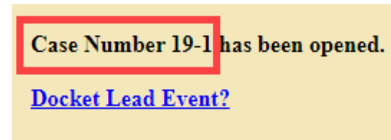
6.7 Create your Civil Case

1. When you are certain your case information is accurate and complete, click **Create Case** at the top of the **Participant Tree**.
2. Next, you must confirm that you wish to create a new case.
 - a. If you did not finish adding all parties, select **No** to resume entering parties; otherwise, select **Yes** to create the case.



Note: Although the case is created, it will *not* proceed until you file the initiating document and pay the filing fee (if required).

3. The next screen lists your case number and instructs you to click on **Docket Lead Event** to file your initiating document and attachments and to pay the filing fee (if required).
 - a. Before proceeding, take note of your case number, should you need assistance with this case.

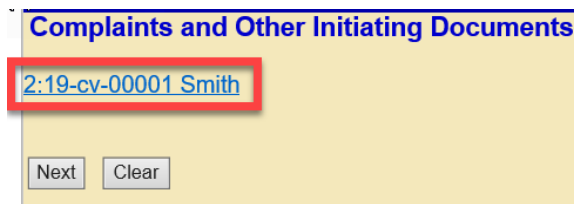
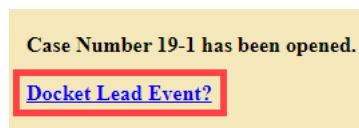


VII. Docket the Lead Event

7.1 Select an Initiating Document

Once the system creates the case, you must file the Lead Event in the case.

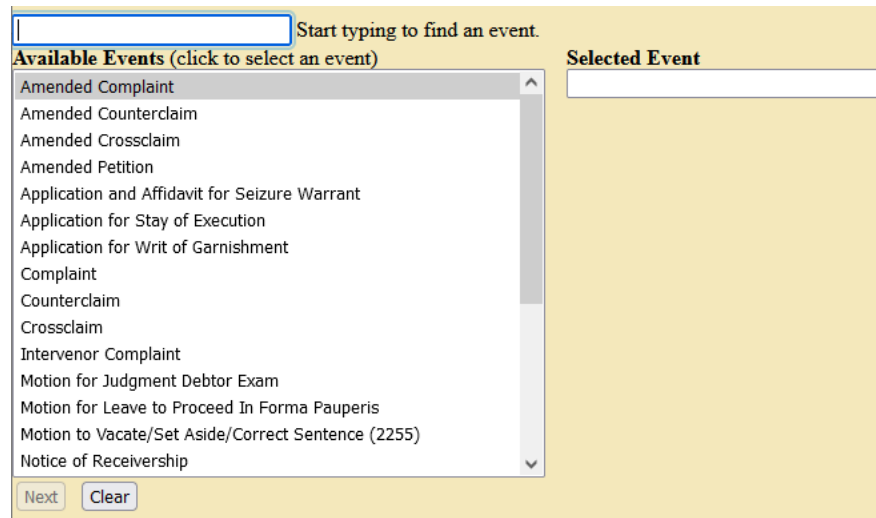
1. Click on **Docket Lead Event** to proceed to the **Complaints and Other Initiating Documents** civil event category.
2. The next screen provides information on the items required to complete the filing. To continue, click **Next**.
3. CM/ECF populates your case number automatically. Click **Next** to continue.
4. On the next screen, CM/ECF generates the full case number and case short title, click **Next**.



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Note: Do **not** click on the case number. This will take you out of the case opening process to the PACER menu (Reports).

5. Select the event you wish to file from the **Available Events** menu (see [section 3.2](#) for selection options).

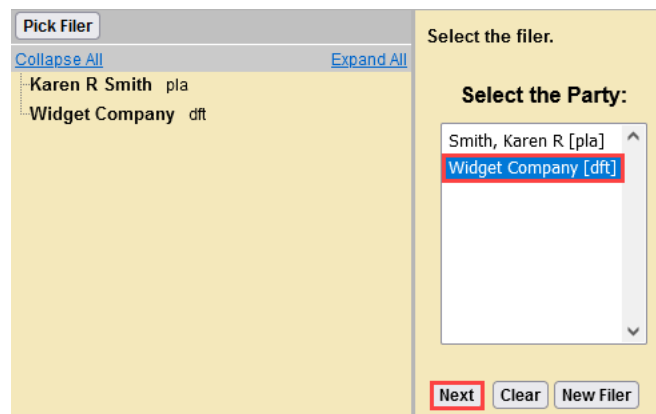


6. Your selection displays in the **Selected Event** field. Click **Next** to continue.

7.2 Select the Parties

1. Select the party filing the document (the party you represent), then click **Next**.

Note: If you represent multiple parties, you can select them by holding down Ctrl (Windows) or Command/⌘ (Mac) while selecting each party you represent in the **Select the Party** box.



2. The next screen advises you to ensure that the CM/ECF account you are using matches at least one signature on the document(s) or belongs to the attorney who is appearing. To continue, click **Next**.

Note: If the CM/ECF account you are using does **not** match at least one signature on the document(s) or belong to the attorney who is appearing, select **Log Out** from the menu bar and then log in using the correct CM/ECF account credentials. You can navigate back to this point by selecting **Civil** from the menu bar, selecting **Complaints and Other Initiating Documents** (under **Initial Pleadings and Service**), and following Steps 2-6 under [Select Initiating Document](#).

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3. Leave all fields checked, then click **Next**.

The following attorney/party associations do not exist for the above case(s).
Please check the box on the left of the screen for associations which should be created.
If the association should *not* be created, be sure the box is *unchecked*.

Widget Company (pty:dft) represented by Attorney Wawdone (aty) Notice

Next Clear

- a. CM/ECF links your name to the name of the party you represent (the party you selected in Step 1) and activates electronic notice for this case.
4. Select the party the filing is against (i.e., the opposing party), then click **Next**.

Note: If there are multiple parties, you may use the **Select a Group** radio buttons to select an entire group (e.g., **All Plaintiffs**), or select each party individually by holding down Ctrl (Windows) or Command/⌘ (Mac) then selecting each party in the **Select the Party** box.

Please select the party that this filing is **against**.

Select the Party: OR Select a Group:

Widget Company [dft]
Smith, Karen R [pla]

No Group
 All Defendants
 All Plaintiffs
 All Parties

Next Clear New Party

5. CM/ECF asks if you added all parties named in the filing.
 - a. If you did not add *all* parties during the initial case opening process, select **No** and then **Next**.
 - i. This returns you to the **Search for a party** screen. Add any remaining parties using the instructions in [Adding Parties](#).

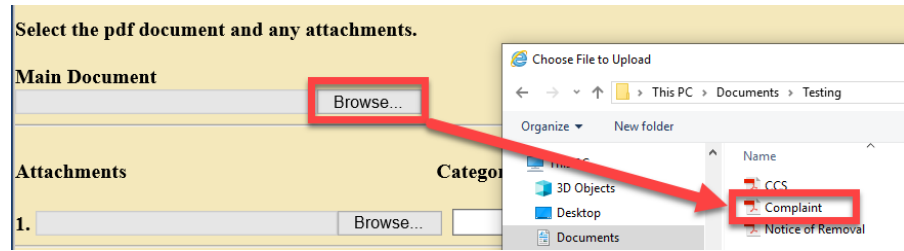
Note: You are not able to edit any parties already added to the case. If you need to edit any parties, contact [ECF Support](#) for assistance.
 - b. If you are confident that you added all parties named in the filing, select **Yes** and then **Next**.

7.3 Upload Documents

When docketing your lead event, you must upload the main document and all attachments. All documents must conform to the requirements as stated in the [CM/ECF Filing Procedures](#) and the [CM/ECF FAQs: Technical](#) page.

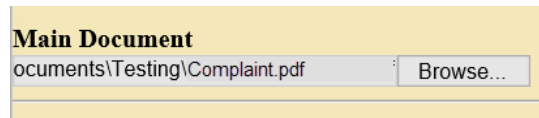
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON ATTORNEY CIVIL CASE OPENING GUIDE

1. To upload your main document, click **Browse** next to **Main Document**.



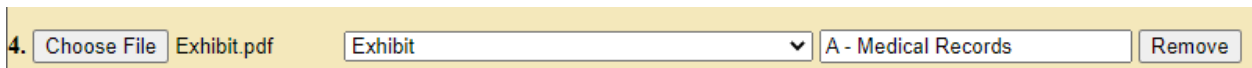
- a. Navigate to the appropriate directory on your computer, then select the file you wish to upload: attach the **Complaint/Petition** or the **Motion for Leave to Proceed In Forma Pauperis** as the main document.

2. The location and name of your document appears in the **Main Document** field.



3. To upload all additional attachments, click **Browse** next to **Attachments**, navigate to the appropriate directory on your computer, then select the file you wish to upload.
 - a. Possible attachments include:
 - Civil Cover Sheet (required for all cases except Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus and Motion to Vacate/Set Aside/Correct Sentence (2255))
 - Complaint (if your main document is a Motion for Leave to Proceed In Forma Pauperis)
 - Summons (optional, see [Filing a Summons](#) for more detailed information)
 - Report on Filing or Determination of an Action Regarding a Patent or Trademark (Patent or Trademark cases)
 - Report on Filing or Determination of an Action or Appeal Regarding a Copyright (Copyright cases)

4. Label each attachment by selecting a **Category** and/or by entering text in the **Description** field. Either a **Category** or a **Description** is required.
 - a. When filing Exhibits, we strongly recommend choosing **Exhibit** from the **Category** menu and entering a **Description** of each exhibit (e.g., **Category: Exhibit; Description: A – Medical Records**). Do not repeat the word “exhibit” in the **Description** field.



- b. When filing a summons:
 - Use the fillable form found on the [Court's website](#).
 - Attach each summons as a separate attachment.
 - Select **Summons** from the **Category** field.

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- It is highly recommended to also add a description in the **Description** field to include the name of the party to whom the summons will be issued.

4. Once you have uploaded all documents, click **Next**.

a. Example:

The screenshot shows a web interface for document upload. At the top, there is a section for the 'Main Document' with a 'Browse...' button and the filename 'NewCaseComplaint.pdf'. Below this is a table of 'Attachments'. The table has three columns: 'Attachments', 'Category', and 'Description'. Each row represents an attachment with a 'Browse...' button, the filename, a dropdown menu for the category, a text input for the description, and a 'Remove' button. At the bottom of the table are 'Next' and 'Clear' buttons.

Attachments	Category	Description
1. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> NewCaseCivilCoverSheet.pdf	Civil Cover Sheet	
2. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> Exhibit.pdf	Exhibit	A - Medical Records
3. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> Summons.pdf	Summons	for Widget Company
4. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> Summons.pdf	Summons	for John Smith
5. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> No file selected.		

7.4 Pay the Filing Fee

- CM/ECF verifies the amount of the required filing fee (IFP filings will not request payment at time of filing if you selected the correct Fee status).
- Review the [Filing Fee Requirements](#) for more details.

1. To accept the filing fee amount, click **Next**.

a. CM/ECF redirects you to your PACER account to pay the filing fee.



Do not use the browser's back button while navigating PACER. This may result in duplicate billing of the filing fee as well as an incomplete transaction. Use the navigation hyperlinks on the PACER screens whenever possible.

b. If prompted, enter your PACER **Password**, then click **Login** to continue.

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2. Select your payment method.
 - a. You can select the payment method already linked to your account by PACER, or
 - b. You can add an additional payment method (ACH or credit/debit card).
 - i. Enter your ACH or credit/debit card information, completing all fields with * denoting a required field.

Pay Filing Fee for Washington Western District Court - NextGen

* Required Information

Payment Amount

Amount Due * \$

Select a Payment Method

Attorney Wawdone

 XXXXXXXXXXXXX4747

 04/2023

Enter a credit card

 Enter an ACH account

3. When you finish selecting/entering your payment information, click **Next**.
4. Review the **Payment Summary** information for accuracy.

Pay Filing Fee for Washington Western District Court - NextGen

Payment Summary

Payment Method	Payment Details				
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> XXXXXXXXXXXX4747 04/2023 </div> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">Attorney Wawdone 700 Stewart St, #2310 Seattle, WA 98101 USA</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Payment Amount</td> <td style="width: 40%;">\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fee Type</td> <td>Filing Fee</td> </tr> </table>	Payment Amount	\$	Fee Type	Filing Fee
Payment Amount	\$				
Fee Type	Filing Fee				

5. PACER automatically adds your primary email address to the **Email Address** and **Confirm Email Address** fields to send a confirmation to you upon completion of this transaction (if desired, you may enter **Additional Email Addresses**).

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6. Check the **Authorization Agreement** and click **Submit**.

The screenshot shows a web form with two main sections: "Email Receipt" and "Authorization".

Email Receipt

- Email: userwawdatty01@gmail.com
- Confirm Email: userwawdatty01@gmail.com
- Additional Email Addresses: (empty text area)

Authorization

- I authorize a charge to my credit card for the amount above in accordance with my card issuer agreement. *

Note: We protect the security of your information during transmission using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) software, which encrypts information you submit.

Buttons: Submit, Back, Cancel

7. PACER automatically redirects you back to CM/ECF to finish opening your case.



Your case is not considered opened until you return to CM/ECF and complete the case opening process.

8. If you run into issues in PACER:
 - a. Charged in error: call the Clerk's Office Financial Department at (206) 370-8415 or send an email to SeaFin@wawd.uscourts.gov.
 - b. Payment not accepted: contact your financial institution. *Do not contact the Court.*

7.5 Complete the Case Opening Process

After completing the payment process in PACER, the system redirects you back to CM/ECF to finish opening your case.

1. If asked if the complaint includes a Jury Demand, respond **Yes** or **No** depending on whether the complaint caption meets the requirements laid out in [LCR 38](#), then select **Next**.
2. The next screen displays a reminder about filing the Corporate Disclosure Statement (for more information, see [Follow up Filings: Required](#)). Click **Next** to continue.
3. You are now given the opportunity to add additional details to the docket text if desired. This is not a requirement.

Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate.

COMPLAINT [] against defendant(s) Widget Company (Receipt # AWAWXDC-2840763) Attorney Attorney Wawdone added to party Karen R Smith(pty:pla) , filed by Karen R Smith. (Attachments: # (1) Civil Cover Sheet, # (2) Summons) (Wawdone, Attorney)

Buttons: Next, Clear

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4. Click **Next** to display the final text as it will appear on the docket.

Docket Text: Final Text

COMPLAINT against defendant(s) **Widget Company (Receipt # AWAWXDC-2840763)**
Attorney Attorney Wawdone added to party Karen R Smith(pty:pla), filed by Karen R Smith.
(Attachments: # (1) Civil Cover Sheet, # (2) Summons)(Wawdone, Attorney)

Attention!! Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue.
Have you redacted?

Source Document Path (for confirmation only):
C:\fakepath\Complaint.pdf pages: 1
C:\fakepath\CCS.pdf pages: 2
C:\fakepath\Summons.pdf pages: 1

Note: If the docket text is incorrect, *do not use the browser back button*. Instead, click **Next** and then call [ECF Support](#) to correct.

5. Click **Next** to complete the filing.

7.6 Notice of Electronic Filing

CM/ECF displays the **Notice of Electronic Filing** screen once you complete the filing. This screen confirms:

- who has been electronically notified of your new case,
- who was *not* electronically notified of your new case and should be served by traditional means, and

WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON ATTORNEY CIVIL CASE OPENING GUIDE

- that your documents have been filed.

U.S. District Court
Western District of Washington

Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was entered by Wawdone, Attorney on 1/10/2020 at 4:28 PM PST and filed on 1/10/2020

Case Name: Smith v. Widget Company
Case Number: [2:19-cv-00001](#)
Filer: Karen R Smith
Document Number: [1](#)

Docket Text:
COMPLAINT against defendant(s) Widget Company (Receipt # AWAWXDC-2840763) Attorney Attorney Wawdone added to party Karen R Smith(pty:pla), filed by Karen R Smith. (Attachments: # (1) Civil Cover Sheet, # (2) Summons)(Wawdone, Attorney)

2:19-cv-00059 Notice has been electronically mailed to:

Attorney Wawdone userwawdatty01@gmail.com

2:19-cv-00059 Notice will not be electronically mailed to:

Janet L. Smith
KEESAL, YOUNG & LOGAN
1301 5TH AVE
STE 1515
SEATTLE, WA 98101

Note: If this is an emergency matter, follow the [emergency filing steps](#) and contact the Clerk's Office.

VIII. Follow-up filings

8.1 Required if applicable

- Corporate Disclosure Statement.
 - Must be filed by any nongovernmental party, other than an individual or sole proprietorship ([see LCR 7.1](#)).
 - File separately from your initiating documents using the **Corporate Disclosure Statement** event.
 - Add all corporate parents/affiliates identified in the disclosure statement.
- Related Case(s).
 - List the case(s) on the Civil Cover Sheet, *and*
 - File a **Notice of Related Case** (see [LCR 3\(g\)](#)).
- Pendency of Other Action(s) in Another Jurisdiction or Forum.
 - List the case(s) on the Civil Cover Sheet, *and*
 - File a **Notice of Pendency of Other Action** (see [LCR 3\(h\)](#)).