



Western District of Washington Newsletter

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COVID-19 and Court Operations

The U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington continues to closely monitor the national, state, and local responses to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) and is following guidance provided by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts (AO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and state and local health officials. For the most up-to-date information on court operations during this time, you can review the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and Court Operations page. This page includes:

- Links to all COVID related General Orders.
- Information on how to make payments to the Court.
- CVB matters.
- Hearings.
- Information on public access to the Courthouse.

Intake Drop box

During the COVID-19 outbreak, the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington has implemented a secured drop box in both the Tacoma and Seattle Courthouses for filings or payments to be submitted in person without requiring person-to-person contact. These boxes can only be accessed by Court staff and they are checked daily. To file using our drop boxes:

- Bring your filings to the Courthouse.
- Proceed through the Security Checkpoint after being cleared by Courthouse Security.
- Fill out a transaction form provided next to the U.S. District drop box.
- Date stamp all documents and transaction form with the date you are dropping the documents in the box.
- Place your stamped payment or documents along with the Form, into one of the provided envelopes.
- Seal the envelope with tape and place it in the U.S. District drop box.
- If you have oversized documents, place them in the provided oversize drop boxes.

Attorneys should continue to file as normal in CM/ECF and should only use the drop boxes for filings that must be filed by paper.

If you have any questions regarding this process contact the Clerk's Office at 206-370-8400 or questions@wawd.uscourts.gov.

E-Filing News

New Nature of Suit codes:

Make sure you download the most up-to-date [JS 44 Civil Cover Sheet](#) when opening new cases as two new Nature of Suit codes (NOS) were added this year.

- NOS 880: Defend Trade Secret Act of 2016
- NOS 485: Telephone Consumer Protection Act

You can read more about these new codes on the [United States Courts Services & Forms](#) page under Civil Forms > Civil Cover Sheet > Download Nature of Suit Code Descriptions.

It's always good practice to ensure that you have the most recent forms before filing by downloading directly from the [U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington forms](#) page or from the [United States Courts Services & Forms](#) page.

Pro Se Corner

Are you a pro se (someone representing themselves) filer and need help getting started with your case? Check out our [Representing Yourself](#) page to find information on:

- How to open a case in this District
- How to file in this District after the case is opened
- Information on the civil lawsuit process
- Fee and payment requirements
- Filing rules and procedures
- The Federal Bar Association's Legal Clinic
- How to register to e-file
- Filing forms and templates
- And other useful filing information for those representing themselves

CM/ECF Filing Tips

Uploading a Document: Category vs. Description:

One e-filing issue we frequently see in CM/ECF is the misuse of the **Category** and **Description** fields when uploading attachments. Follow the below steps to properly use these fields.

1. Upload your main document as a PDF.
2. Upload your first attachment as a PDF.
3. CM/ECF does not automatically name your attachment(s); instead, you must either choose from a pre-determined list under **Category**, or use the free text box under **Description**, or you can choose to use both.
4. For example, if you are filing an exhibit, you would choose **Exhibit** from the **Category** field and enter a description of each exhibit (e.g., “A-Medical Records”) in the **Description** field.

The screenshot shows the CM/ECF filing interface. The 'Main Document' section has a text box containing 'Motion.pdf' and a 'Browse...' button. The 'Attachments' section has a table with three columns: 'Attachments', 'Category', and 'Description'. The first row shows '1. Exhibit.pdf' in the Attachments column, 'Exhibit' in the Category column, and 'A-Medical Records' in the Description column. There are 'Browse...', 'Remove', and 'x' buttons associated with the attachment row.

Note: You do not need to repeat the word in the Category field (i.e. Exhibit or Summons) in the Description field (see example above).

5. If you choose both **Category** and **Description**, the docket text displays the **Category** first followed by the **Description**.
6. If filed correctly, the final docket entry looks like this:

The screenshot shows the docket text for a correctly filed exhibit. The text is: "DECLARATION by Plaintiff Robert Wright (Attachments: # (1) Exhibit A - Medical Records)(Wawdone, Attorney)".

7. If filed incorrectly and the **Category** is repeated in the **Description** field, the final docket entry looks like this:

The screenshot shows the docket text for an incorrectly filed exhibit. The text is: "DECLARATION by Plaintiff Robert Wright (Attachments: # (1) Exhibit Exhibit A - Medical Records)(Wawdone, Attorney)".

For more information on how to upload documents or the basics of CM/ECF, check out the [ECF User Manual](#) on our [How to E-File page](#).

Want to receive this newsletter by email? Subscribe by emailing cmecf@wawd.uscourts.gov
Receive the newsletter already and want to unsubscribe? Send an email to cmecf@wawd.uscourts.gov

Filing a Declaration:

Are you filing a declaration in either a civil or criminal case? Make sure you file it as a separate event using either **Declaration** (used in support of or part of motions, reply to motions, or response to motions) or **Declaration (non motion)** (used for all other non-motion events).

For example, if you were filing a Motion to Dismiss and had a Declaration in support of, or as a part of, the Motion, you would need to file the following:

1. The **Motion to Dismiss**:

- a. Select the **Motion** category under **Motions and Related Filings**.
- b. Select **Dismiss** under the **Available Events**.
- c. Upload the **Motion to Dismiss** as the **Main Document**.
- d. Upload the **Proposed Order** under **Attachments** and select a **Category** and/or **Description**.

Select the PDF document and any attachments.

Main Document
 Motion.pdf

Attachments	Category	Description
1. <input type="button" value="Browse..."/> Proposed Order.pdf	Proposed Order	

2. The **Declaration**:

- a. Select the **Responses, Replies, and Supporting Documents** category under **Motions and Related Filings**.
- b. Select **Declaration** under the **Available Events**.
- c. Upload the **Declaration** as the **Main Document**.
- d. Link the **Declaration** to the **Motion to Dismiss**.

Select the appropriate event(s) to which your event relates:

10/15/2015 [9](#) MOTION for Payment of Compensation from the Biomet Common Benefit MDL Assessment Fund. (Attachments: # [1](#) Exhibit Invoice)Associated Cases: 3:12-md-02391-RLM-CAN et al.(jld) (*NOTE: This is re-filing of DE 2990 to spread it to all cases.) [Transferred from innnd on 5/8/2019.] (Entered: 10/16/2015) (Terminated)

10/21/2020 [142](#) MOTION to Dismiss filed by Defendant Biomet Inc. (Attachments: # [1](#) Proposed Order) Noting Date 10/30/2020, (Wawdone, Attorney)

3. If filed correctly, the docket sheet should look like this:

10/21/2020	142	MOTION to Dismiss filed by Defendant Biomet Inc. (Attachments: # 1 Proposed Order) Noting Date 10/30/2020, (Wawdone, Attorney) (Entered: 10/21/2020)
10/21/2020	143	DECLARATION of John Smith filed by Defendant Biomet Inc re 142 MOTION to Dismiss (Wawdone, Attorney) (Entered: 10/21/2020)

For more details on how to file declarations, check out our [Filing a Declaration How-To Guide](#).

ECF Training Sessions

Due to concerns related to the Coronavirus, training classes will be offered online only for the foreseeable future. Classes will be recorded and may be posted to the Court's public website.

The Western District of Washington Clerk's Office trainers have regularly scheduled Introduction to Electronic Case Filing Training Sessions. These sessions will cover the following information:

- Changes to CM/ECF after the NextGen CM/ECF upgrade
- CM/ECF filing resources and instructions
- Navigating CM/ECF
- How to file a motion and other document
- Completing a civil case opening

Classes are held the **first** Thursday of each month from 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Classes will be offered online during the Coronavirus pandemic. During this time, participants must meet the following technical requirements to attend (trainers cannot provide in-depth technical support):

- Access to a laptop/desktop computer
- Access to a microphone and headphones/speakers that can connect to your computer/laptop
- Access to the internet & email
- Access to an internet browser such as: Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, or Apple Safari

Please note that if you have a group of 5 or larger, special accommodations may be made for alternate training dates. Submit your request by email to cmecf@wawd.uscourts.gov

There is no cost to attend these classes, but registration is required for attendance. To register, please send an email to: cmecf@wawd.uscourts.gov

Please include the following information in your email:

- Name(s) of attendees
- Bar number if you are an attorney*
- Firm Name
- Phone number(s)
- Attendee(s) email address (if different from sender)
- Date of the training session you wish to attend
- Any specific topics of interest you would like to discuss

**The two hour ECF Training Session has been approved by the WSBA for 2 CLE credits.*

Have a CM/ECF training topic suggestion?

Send topic suggestions to cmecf@wawd.uscourts.gov

Tools/Resources Spotlight

If you haven't already, check out these helpful e-filing tools/resources:

Written Guides:

- [Attorney's Guide to Opening a Notice of Removal Civil Case](#) and [Checklist](#):
Use this guide to learn how to open a notice of removal civil case with step-by-step instructions and screenshots. Or use the two-page checklist to remind yourself of the major notice of removal case opening steps to help you successfully file a removal case.

Training Videos:

- [Adding Parties Video](#) and [section videos](#):
Watch the full Adding Parties video to walk through the process of how to properly add parties when opening a case in this District. Or watch a shorter video on a particular topic(s) of the adding parties process.