



Western District of Washington Newsletter

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Court News

General Orders re Court Operations and COVID-19

You can review the latest General Orders relating to Court Operations during COVID-19 [here](#). New General Orders were recently released on June 30th regarding the resumption of court proceedings and continued encouraged precautions when visiting the courthouses.

2021 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest Winners

The 2021 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest winners were announced, and first place went to Isabella Widrow, a student in the Western District of Washington. You can view the full list of winners and runners up along with their essays and videos on the [Ninth Circuit's Civics Contest page](#).

Washington Western District Court Careers

Are you looking to change careers or for a new challenge? Check out the [job openings at our Court](#). We are always adding new positions in all areas of the Court.

Court Holiday Schedule

The Courthouse will be closed on the following days:

Thursday, November 11

Thursday, November 25

Friday, November 26

Friday, December 24

Friday, December 31

You can also check out our [Court Calendar](#) for Courthouse closures each week.

E-Filing News

CM/ECF Upgrade: E-Filing Unavailable October 22nd to 25th

Due to a required system upgrade, CM/ECF will be unavailable beginning 5 pm PDT, Friday, October 22, 2021 until 7 am PDT, Monday, October 25, 2021.

Filing procedures during CM/ECF outage/unavailability can be found [here](#).

CM/ECF Upgrade: Updated Technical Requirements

Due to the required system upgrade, there are some changes to the technical requirements to e-file. You can review the details of all technical requirements in the [CM/ECF User Manual Section II: Technical Requirements](#).

E-filers should take notice that this upgrade will result in changes to requirements for PDFs uploaded to CM/ECF. PDFs that do not meet these requirements will be rejected when attempting to upload to the system.

PDFs with the following content WILL BE REJECTED:

- Does not comply with PDF format standards
- Contains JavaScript
- Encrypted or password-protected
- Contains scripts which can launch an external application (e.g. Word, Excel, PDF Reader)
- Contains internal attachments
- Contains audio and video content
- Created with Mac OS X using a fillable form in the Safari browser
- Created with Mac OS X using MS Word and selecting the option, “Best for printing”

PDFs with the following content WILL BE ACCEPTED:

- Contains hyperlinks to external web sites
- Meets the PDF-A standard
- Contains optical character recognition (OCR) meta-data
- Comprised of scanned documents
- Created with Mac OS X using a fillable form in the Chrome or Firefox browser
- Created with Mac OS X using MS Word and selecting the option, “Best for Electronic Distribution”

For some basic instructions on how to avoid having your PDF rejected, review the [How to Prepare Your PDF 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
- Filing 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(es) (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.

Firm or Office Group Virtual Training

Would your firm or office like to set up a group training with our CM/ECF Trainer? We are happy to accommodate special group trainings on any topics you think your group would benefit from the most. Simply email your request to cmecf@wawd.uscourts.gov and our Trainer will reach out and coordinate.

Trainings can be hands-on filing exercises or presentations with Q&As. Some topics covered in past special group trainings:

- Filing sealed documents
- Local Rule updates
- Filing Notice of Removal tips
- Filing Corporate Disclosure Statements
- Proper attorney appearance and signatures
- CM/ECF upgrade updates (e.g. NextGen updated procedures)

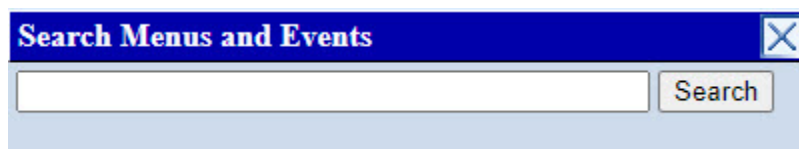
CM/ECF Filing Tips

Search Feature

Did you know that you can use the Search feature in CM/ECF to help locate the correct filing



event? In CM/ECF, select **Search** in the white menu across the top of the screen:



The **Search Menus and Events** box will open:

Enter your search term(s) and select **Search**. Some tips for searching successfully:

- To limit the search results, avoid using common words. For example, the word “motion” is in over 50 events. To locate the **Motion to Amend** event, just search for the word “amend.”
- Your search results will contain any event(s) whose names include **all** the search terms. For example, the search terms “response motion” will return the **Response to Motion, Reply to Response to Motion, and Response (non motion)** events. These search terms will **not** return the **Response to Habeas Petition** event, as that event name doesn’t include the word “motion.” Try using fewer search terms if your search returns no results.
- Try variations on your search terms. If the word “opposition” doesn’t return any results, for example, try searching for “objection” instead.

The search results show you the filing path for each matching event and provide a link to the filing event:



To access the **Motion to Amend**, you may either select **Civil > Motions** (under **Motions and Related Filings**) > **Amend** or you may just select the **Amend** hyperlink.

If you use the **Search** feature and still cannot find an event matching the title of your document, consider using a more generic event. When the specific type of motion you're filing doesn't exist, use the **Motion for Miscellaneous Relief**. If you can't locate the type of notice you're filing, use **Notice-Other**. For non-motion and non-notice documents, check out the **Other Documents** menu (located under **Other Filings**). **Letter, Request, Report, and Statement** are all examples of generic events that could be used for a filing if the more specific event type doesn't exist in CM/ECF.

Filing a Corporate Disclosure Statement

Pursuant to [Local Civil Rule 7.1](#), any nongovernmental party or any nongovernmental corporation that seeks to intervene, other than an individual or sole proprietorship, must file a corporate disclosure statement. This document must be filed separately – as its own docket entry – using the **Corporate Disclosure Statement** event located under **Other Filings > Other Documents**.

If any entities, including but not limited to corporate parents, affiliates, stockholders, or owners, are named in the disclosure statement, they **must** be added in CM/ECF so that their names can be run against a conflict check for the assigned judge(s). Adding all entities named in your disclosure statement helps prevent avoidable case delays. To add the names of corporate parents or affiliates in CM/ECF, you must answer **YES** to this question:

[Add ALL Corporate Parents and/or Affiliates pursuant to Fed.R.Civ.P 7.1.](#)

Do any Corporate Parents and/or Affiliates need to be added?

YES

NO

Next Clear

Only answer **NO** if there are no corporate parents, affiliates, stockholders, owners, or other entities named in your disclosure statement. Use the [Filing a Corporate Disclosure Statement guide](#) for additional instructions on how to add these entities in CM/ECF.

Did you know? – Correct Office Selection

In the Western District of Washington, new civil cases can be filed in either our Seattle or our Tacoma office. To determine which office you should choose, please review [Local Civil Rule 3\(e\)](#):

In all civil cases in which all defendants

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

in the counties of Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, and Wahkiakum, the case will usually be assigned to a judge in Tacoma.

In all civil cases in which all defendants

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

in the counties of Island, King, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, or Whatcom, the case will usually be assigned to a judge in Seattle.

A civil action arises where a substantial part of the events or omissions that give rise to the claim occurred or where a substantial part of the property that is the subject of the action is situated. Cases removed from state court will be initially assigned to the Seattle Division or Tacoma Division according to the county where the action is pending.

Please note that the correct venue is determined based on where the defendant(s) reside, or have their principal places of business, or where the claim(s) arose. Venue should **not** be determined based on where the plaintiff(s) reside.

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Pro Se Corner

E-File Registration Requirements

There are two types of registration for those who represent themselves (Pro Se filers):

E-Filer and E-Service registration

These filers must file directly in this Court's CM/ECF system (not by email) as well as receive service of court documents electronically via a specified email.

E-Service Only registration

These filers must file all case documents by mail or in person but will receive service of court documents electronically via a specified email.

Requirements:

Pro Se filers have the option of registering to file directly in this Court's CM/ECF system and/or receiving electronic service for individual cases in our Court if they meet the following requirements:

- Meet all [technical requirements \(Section II\)](#).
- Be a party to the case for which they are applying.
- The case filing fee is paid, or fee waiver granted by the Court (if applicable).
- Not currently represented by an attorney(s).

See the [Pro Se Registration Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions for e-file registration. Also, you can review the [Pro Se Filing in CM/ECF Quick Guide](#) for additional information on filing in CM/ECF.

Tools/Resources Spotlight

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

- **[Filing a Non-PDF Item:](#)**

If you need to file something other than a PDF document, review our How to Guide on Filing a Non-PDF Item to ensure you are filing correctly.

- **[Notice of Removal Checklist:](#)**

Cases removed from state court can be difficult to open as the requirements are different from opening a non-removal case. When you don't have time to read through the [Attorney's Guide to Opening a Notice of Removal](#), use the Checklist to ensure you don't forget any required steps when you are opening a removal case in this Court.