



Western Washington District Court Newsletter

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Court News

Relocation of Court from Bellingham to Mount Vernon: General Order 13-23

Beginning January 2, 2024, Central Violations Bureau proceedings will now be held in Mount Vernon, Washington. You can review [General Order 13-23](#) for more details.

Western District of Washington Updated Fee Schedule

Effective December 1, 2023, the Court's fee schedule is now updated. To view all fee changes, check out our [Updated Fee Schedule for the Western District of Washington announcement](#).

2024 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest: 70 Years Later – The Legacy of Brown v. Board of Education

The Western District of Washington requests submissions from high school students for the Ninth Circuit Civics Contest. Read more in the [Western District of Washington Civics Contest announcement](#). You can learn more about the contest, topics, and prizes on the [Ninth Circuit's Civics Contest page](#).

CM/ECF Filing News

New Compassionate Release Event (U.S.S.G Amendment 821): General Order: 09-23

The Court created a new **Motion to Reduce Sentence re USSC Amendment 821** event in compliance with [Amendment 821](#) of the United States Sentencing Commission and with the Court's [General Order 09-23](#). Filers should use this specific event when applicable to ensure appropriate notifications are sent.

The USSC's amendment was effective as of November 1, 2023. Those eligible for filing a motion to reduce their sentence pursuant to this amendment may do so as a pro se filer or through counsel. The filing event allows the selection of a noting date pursuant to [LCrR 12](#) or [LCrR 35](#), as appropriate. These motions will be ruled upon by the sentencing Judge, and orders which reduce the term of imprisonment are to have an effective date of February 1, 2024 or later.

CM/ECF Filing News cont.

Virtual CM/ECF Attorney Training: February 2024

After a long hiatus, we are bringing back the virtual CM/ECF attorney training. Classes will be held on the first Thursday of each month beginning on February 1, 2024. Due to the high interest, the February 1st class is now full, but we've added an additional class date on Thursday, February 8, 2024.

Feel free to register now for the February class or any other class moving forward. For more information about the class content, see our [CM/ECF Training Sessions page](#).

If there are specific topics not covered in the regular class, reach out to [Sam Potter](#) directly to set up a special group training for your organization.

CM/ECF Filing Tips

Filing Proposed Orders

Per [LCR 7\(b\)\(1\)](#) and the [ECF Filing Procedures](#) Section M: Orders and Proposed Orders, when filing a motion with this Court, filers must always provide a proposed order for the Judge. A PDF version of the proposed order should be filed in CM/ECF as an attachment to the motion, but filers must also email a Word or WordPerfect version of the proposed order to the presiding Judge's proposed orders inbox. You can find the specific email for your Judge by viewing your Judge's section on the [Judges page](#).

Reminder: How to link your CM/ECF account with your PACER account

Do I need to link my accounts?

Yes. To file after the January 2020 upgrade to NextGen CM/ECF, you must link your local CM/ECF account with your PACER account.

How do I know if my accounts are already linked?

When logging into CM/ECF you should see the **Civil** and **Criminal** filing menus. If not, you need to link your accounts.



How do I link my accounts?

Note: if your contact information has changed, we recommend updating your contact information via PACER and then submitting the e-filing request.

- * If you were registered for e-filing in the Western District of Washington prior to January 2020 and:
 - ◇ You know your old CM/ECF username and password (it's different from your PACER account!):
 - ◆ Log into CM/ECF with your PACER credentials first.
 - ◆ Then follow the [instructions](#) to link your accounts using your old CM/ECF login and password when prompted.
 - ◇ You don't remember your old CM/ECF login information:
 - ◆ Submit your *E-filing only* request via PACER. Follow the [instructions](#) starting at #2.
- * If you were admitted prior to January 2020 and never registered in CM/ECF:
 - ◇ Follow these step-by-step [instructions](#), including submitting your [Attorney E-Filing Registration form](#).

If you need additional assistance, call the ECF Help Desk at 206-370-8440, x2 for assistance.

CM/ECF Filing Tips cont.

What are CM/ECF and PACER?

CM/ECF (Case Management/Electronic Case Files)

What is it?

CM/ECF is the Court's electronic filing application. Each federal court has its own separate CM/ECF application.

How do you access it?

You can access the CM/ECF application for the Western District of Washington via the [CM/ECF page](#).



What can you do with it?

- ◇ File something in a case in federal court.
- ◇ Update your secondary email addresses.

PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records)

What is it?

PACER is a nationwide application that allows users to run reports and view docket sheets and documents that have been filed in cases in federal court.

How do you access it?

PACER reporting functionally for *this District only* is accessible through **Reports** in the CM/ECF menu bar:



To access cases nationwide, use <https://pacer.uscourts.gov/>. From this link, you can access:

- ◇ The docket sheets for cases filed in any of the federal courts under **Search for a Case**.
- ◇ Account maintenance options, including e-filing registration and attorney admissions requests, under **Manage Your Account**.

What can you do with it?

- ◇ View a docket sheet or access a document filed in your case.
- ◇ Update information on your CM/ECF account such as your name, address and firm information, primary email address, and noticing settings.
 - ◆ Note: attorneys should update their *secondary* email addresses through CM/ECF, not PACER.

CM/ECF Filing Tips cont.

CM/ECF and PACER: Who can help with my issue?

One common area of confusion is whether to contact CM/ECF Support or PACER Support for assistance. Review the information below to determine who to contact in what scenario.

CM/ECF Support

Available between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM PT, 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

- ◇ Technical assistance with e-filing (e.g., selecting the appropriate filing event, correcting a filing error, bypassing any error messages).
- ◇ Troubleshooting Notices of Electronic Filing/document access issues.
- ◇ Login/password assistance for your legacy CM/ECF account if your accounts are not linked.

- ◇ Unlinking your CM/ECF account from a PACER account/linking to a different PACER account.
- ◇ Verifying the status of a request (e.g., admission, address update) you've submitted to the Court via your PACER account.
- ◇ Questions about the secondary email address(es) on your CM/ECF account.

PACER Support

Available between the hours of 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM CT, Monday through Friday.

Phone: 800-676-6856

Email: pacer@psc.uscourts.gov

- ◇ Login/password assistance for your PACER account.
- ◇ Billing questions.
- ◇ Assistance with navigating the PACER application (you're using this when you're on the <https://pacer.uscourts.gov> website).

Quick Tip

Civil Case Opening and Removal Checklists

Do you open a lot of new civil cases in this District or frequently remove cases from State Court to this District? Check out the [Civil Case Opening](#) and [Notice of Removal Checklists](#) on our [Civil Case Opening page](#). You can use these resources to make sure you meet all requirements without needing to read the longer, step-by-step instruction manuals in their entirety

Preparing to File: Civil Case Opening

[Case Opening Checklist](#) (PDF; revised 2/2022) 

[Attorney's Guide to Opening a Civil Case](#) (PDF; revised 12/2023)

Including how to: complete and enter Civil Cover Sheet information, add case participants from the initiating document (i.e. Complaint), upload initial pleadings and all required documents, pay the filing fee, and a list of possible follow-up filings

[Standards for Entering Party Names in CM/ECF](#) (PDF; revised 3/2022)

Preparing to File: Notice of Removal

[Notice of Removal Checklist](#) (PDF; revised 2/2022) 

[Attorney's Guide to Opening a Notice of Removal Civil Case](#) (PDF; revised 12/2023)

Pro Se Corner

Top Filing Issue for Pro Ses: Noting Date

One of the main purposes of our Court's data quality program is to be able to identify issue trends for our external filers. This allows us to target our training and process improvement conversations to the areas in which filers are having the most difficulty. Over the last six months, the following issue was the second most common issue for our e-filing pro ses:

Incorrect noting date selected during filing.

Let's review this issue and go over some tips to avoid errors.

Why it's important: The noting date places a motion on the court calendar. The noting date is the date on which the motion will be ready for consideration and does not necessarily reflect the date on which an order will be issued. The noting date also sets the deadline for opposing parties to respond to the motion.

Note: not all judges use a noting date. Double check your Judge's [Chambers Procedures](#) to see if they use a noting date or not.

Tips: When selecting a noting date, you should follow the below tips:

1. Go to your assigned [Judge's page](#) and review their Chambers Procedures, if they have them, and determine if they use noting dates.
2. If your Judge uses noting dates, do not select a random date as your noting date.

3. Review the [Local Civil Rule](#) 7(d) and determine which noting date to use for your motion (same day, second Friday, third Friday, or fourth Friday from the date of the filing of the motion).
 - a. If a same day motion, select the day you are filing the motion as the noting date.
 - b. If a second Friday motion, select the date of the second Friday after the date you are filing the motion. For example, if you are filing your motion on Thursday, January 4th, select Friday, January 12th as the noting date.
 - c. If a third Friday motion, select the date of the third Friday after the date you are filing the motion. For example, if you are filing your motion on Thursday, January 4th, select Friday, January 19th as the noting date.
 - d. If a fourth Friday motion, select the date of the fourth Friday after the date you are filing the motion. For example, if you are filing your motion on Thursday, January 4th, select Friday, January 26th as the noting date.

If an incorrect noting date is selected, the Court may update the date to the correct noting date as determined by the local rules.

Tools/Resources Spotlight

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

[CM/ECF: How to E-File](#)

Are you filing in this District or in Federal Court for the first time? Has it been awhile since the last time you filed in our Court? Check out our How to E-File page and learn how to file in our Court through step-by-step instructions, videos, checklists, and other resources.

Want to know what to do if there is a CM/ECF system outage? How about how to open a miscellaneous action? How to file a cross motion or how to file documents under seal? All that and more can be found on our How to E-File page.