

US District Court
Western District of Washington

Standards for Entering Party Names
into CM/ECF



STANDARDS FOR ENTERING PARTY NAMES INTO CM/ECF

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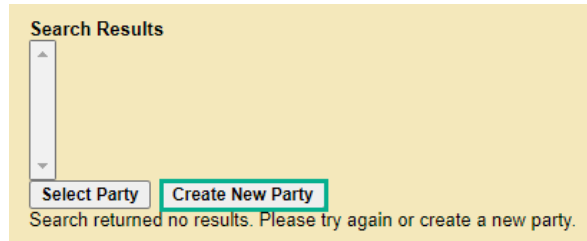
STANDARDS FOR ENTERING PARTY NAMES INTO CM/ECF

Overview

This guide includes a list of standards set by the Court for entering party names. Following these standards ensures uniform case dockets and prevents the creation of duplicate records in the CM/ECF system. For detailed information on how to add parties to a case, please see the [Attorney's Guide to Opening a Civil Case](#) (Section VI).

Create New Party

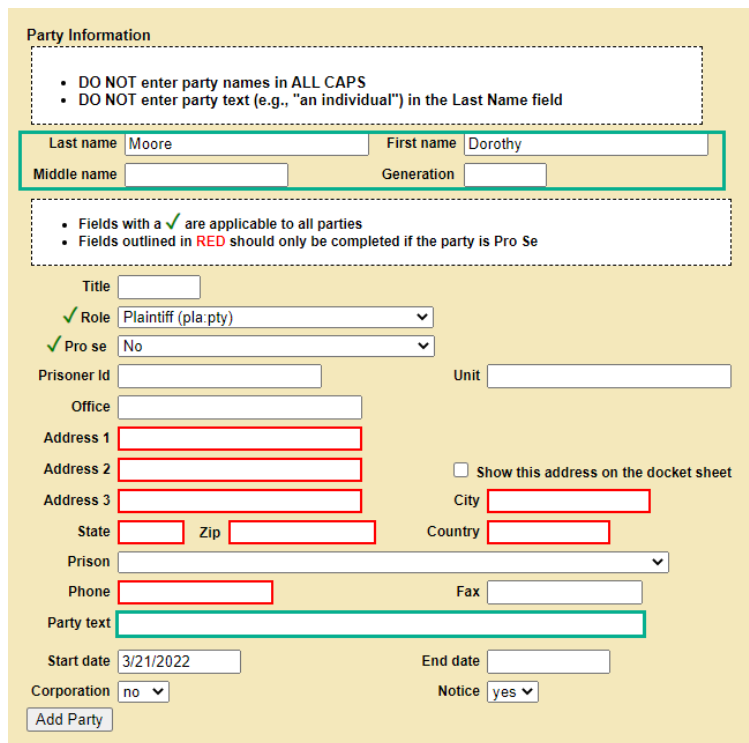
If no exact matches return in the **Search Results** when you **Search for a party**, select **Create New Party** (“exact match” means that the party’s first, middle, **and** last names **and** generation/suffix all match what is listed in the caption of initiating document). If there is an exact match, do not select **Create New Party**; follow the instructions in the [Select Party](#) section.



The screenshot shows a search results interface with a yellow background. At the top, it says "Search Results". Below that is a search bar with a dropdown arrow. Underneath the search bar are two buttons: "Select Party" and "Create New Party". The "Create New Party" button is highlighted with a red border. Below the buttons, it says "Search returned no results. Please try again or create a new party."

When entering the party’s name on the **Party Information** screen, follow these general standards:

- Do **not** enter party names in ALL CAPS
- Do **not** enter any party text or alias(es) in the **Last name** field (see the [Alias](#) section for more information)
- Only enter contact information if the party has already appeared pro se (otherwise, leave fields outlined in red blank)
- **Do** enter any party text in the **Party text** field

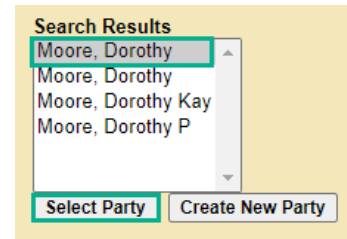


The screenshot shows the "Party Information" form. At the top, there is a dashed box containing instructions: "DO NOT enter party names in ALL CAPS" and "DO NOT enter party text (e.g., 'an individual') in the Last Name field". Below this is a form with several fields. The "Last name" field contains "Moore" and the "First name" field contains "Dorothy". The "Middle name" and "Generation" fields are empty. Below this is another dashed box with instructions: "Fields with a ✓ are applicable to all parties" and "Fields outlined in RED should only be completed if the party is Pro Se". The form includes fields for "Title", "Role" (Plaintiff (pla.pt)), "Pro se" (No), "Prisoner Id", "Unit", "Office", "Address 1", "Address 2", "Address 3", "City", "State", "Zip", "Country", "Prison", "Phone", "Fax", "Party text", "Start date" (3/21/2022), "End date", "Corporation" (no), and "Notice" (yes). The "Party text" field is highlighted in green, and the address fields are highlighted in red.

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Select Party

If an exact match to the party name listed in the caption returns in the **Search Results** when you **Search for a party**, select that name from the list and then select **Select Party**. Do not select **Create New Party** if there is an exact match in the Search Results. If there is not an exact match, follow the instructions in the [Create New Party](#) section.



You will not have the opportunity to modify the party's name on the **Party Information** screen if you **Select Party**. Follow these general standards when completing the other fields:

- Only enter contact information if the party has already appeared pro se (otherwise, leave fields outlined in red blank)
- **Do** enter any party text in the **Party text** field

General Party Quality Standards

Abbreviations

Public Institutions: Spell out words in party names for public institutions (i.e. federal or state departments or divisions) rather than abbreviating (e.g., use “Department” rather than “Dept”). Always use the most completed version of commonly known names for public institutions, even if the caption includes abbreviated versions.

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
DHS	Last name: Department of Homeland Security
US Department of Homeland Security	Last name: United States Department of Homeland Security
ICE	Last name: Immigration and Customs Enforcement
USCIS	Last name: United States Citizenship and Immigration Services

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Business Names: For business names, use the following commonly used abbreviations – without periods - if listed in the caption:

- Inc (do not use all caps)
- LLC
- PLLC
- Corp (do not use all caps)

If these words are spelled out in the caption, enter/use the spelled-out version of the name (i.e., select or enter the name to match the caption).

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
Microsoft Corp.	Last name: Microsoft Corp
Microsoft Corporation	Last name: Microsoft Corporation
XYZ Company, Inc.	Last name: XYZ Company Inc
XYZ Company Incorporated	Last name: XYZ Company Incorporated

Punctuation (Periods and Commas)

Do not include any **periods** or **commas** listed in the caption. This can create duplicate records for the same company or individual. **Apostrophes**, which indicate possession, should still be used (e.g., “Mother’s Cookies”).

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
Attention to Detail, Inc.	Last name: Attention to Detail Inc
Eleanor R. Brubaker	Last name: Brubaker First name: Eleanor Middle name: R

Exceptions:

- If the punctuation is an integral part of the name, it should still be used (e.g., “Amazon.com”).
- Parties identified only by initials (see [Minor’s Names](#) section).
- If the “&” symbol is included in the caption, use the symbol rather than spelling out the word “and.” If the word “and” is spelled out in the caption, do not use the “&” symbol (match the caption in either instance).

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
J&J Sports Productions, Inc.	Last name: J&J Sports Productions Inc
Johnson and Johnson, Inc	Last name: Johnson and Johnson Inc

Punctuation in Party Text: You may use all punctuation in the **Party text** field, as indicated in the caption.

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Business Name Standards

“A” and “The” in Party Names

Only add the words “The” or “A” to a party’s name if “The” or “A” is part of the official company name and identified as such in the caption (e.g., “The Boeing Corporation” is the verified name of the corporation).

Some examples of companies listed on a complaint and how you should enter them in CM/ECF:

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
The Shell Oil Company	Last Name: Shell Oil Company
Boeing Company	Last Name: The Boeing Company

Business Names Punctuation (Including Corporate Parents)

Do not use periods unless they are critical to the naming convention, such as Amazon.com or similar names where the period is pronounced as part of the name. If a business has initials in its name, do not add spaces between each initial.

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
Jackson & Jackson P.L.L.C.	Last name: Jackson & Jackson PLLC
Holland America N V L L C	Last name: Holland America NV LLC

See [Punctuation](#) section for additional information on business names.

Federal, State, County, Municipal Entities

City/County Names

City Names: Add “City of” prior to the name of the city, then list the name of the city (e.g., “City of Lynnwood,” “City of Des Moines,” etc). Do not add “City of” after the name of the city. Do not select parties entered without the “City of” language.

County Names: Enter names of counties in this format: “X County.” Do not select parties entered as “County of X.”

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
County of Pierce	Last name: Pierce County
King, County of	Last name: King County
Tacoma, City of	Last name: City of Tacoma
Seattle	Last name: City of Seattle

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Commissioner of Social Security as a Party

In Social Security cases, add the Social Security Administration Commissioner as “Commissioner of Social Security” (even if not named as such in the caption).

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
Kilolo Kijakazi	Last Name: Commissioner of Social Security

United States of America as a Party

Add all versions of United States of America as “United States of America.”

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
United States, USA, or America	Last name: United States of America

Exceptions:

- When US currency is listed as a party, enter the United States as “US” (do not use periods, see example).

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
\$16,014 in U.S. Currency and Any Accrued Interest	Last name: \$16,104 in US Currency and Any Accrued Interest

Alias

An alias is another name by which the party is or was previously known. This includes, but is not limited to, nicknames (aka, nka), legal representatives (assin, obo, est), and business relationships (dba, fdba, ta). Add all aliases listed in the caption to the appropriate party in the Participant Tree (**not** in the **Party text** or **First/Last name** fields) as indicated below.

The screenshot shows a software interface for managing legal cases. At the top, there are buttons for 'Add New Party' and 'Create Case'. Below these, there are links for 'Collapse All' and 'Expand All'. The main area displays a tree structure for case '2:20-cv-?????'. The tree has three main nodes: 'Dorothy Moore', 'Andre L Young', and 'Doctors Clinic Inc'. Each node has sub-nodes for 'Alias', 'Corporate Parent or other affiliate', and 'Attorney'. A red arrow points to the 'Alias' field under 'Dorothy Moore'. To the right of the tree is a search box titled 'Search for an alias for Doctors Clinic Inc' with a 'Last / Business Name' input field and a 'Search' button.

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See the [Attorney's Guide to Opening a Civil Case](#) (section VI) for detailed instructions on adding an alias.

The following is a complete list of available alias types:

Listed in CM/ECF	Alias Type
agent	agent of
aka	also known as
assin	as assignee of
dba	doing business as
div	a division of
est	estate of
exrel	ex rel
fdba	formerly doing business as
mnr	minor
fka	formerly known as
nee	born (usually refers to maiden name)
nka	now known as
obo	on behalf of
other	other (use if the alias type in the caption does not exist)
pro	personal representative of
rpi	real party interest
suc	successor in interest
ta	trading as

An example of how to enter an alias is below:

Party Name	Enter Party As
Attention to Detail Inc, a foreign corporation licensed to operate in the State of Washington, and doing business as Evergreen Landscaping, and formerly doing business under Evergreen Services	<p>Last Name: Attention to Detail Inc</p> <p>Party Text: a foreign corporation licensed to operate in the State of Washington</p> <p>Alias: Evergreen Landscaping (dba)</p> <p>Alias: Evergreen Services (fdba)</p>

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Generations, Ranks, and Titles

Enter generations in the **Generation** field. This field only displays after selecting [Create New Party](#). If a match to the party name already exists, but does not include a generation, select **Create New Party** to add the generation.

Last name	<input type="text" value="Smith"/>	First name	<input type="text" value="Earl"/>
Middle name	<input type="text" value="L"/>	Generation	<input type="text" value="Sr"/>

Do not enter an periods or commas in the **Generation** field. CM/ECF automatically inserts a comma between the party's last name and generation, as shown in the example. Select the name with a generation from the **Search Results** if it matches the initiating document.

Search Results
<input type="text" value="Defendant, Test, Jr"/>
<input type="button" value="Select Party"/> <input type="button" value="Create New Party"/>

Enter any ranks and/or titles in the **Party text** field. "Lieutenant," "Captain," and "Sergeant" are examples of rank. Do **not** use the **Title** field in CM/ECF as this can create duplicate records.

Party text	<input type="text" value="Lieutenant"/>
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NOTE: Do not enter "Mr" or "Mrs/Ms" to a party's name. If listed in the caption, omit entirely.

Minors' Names

Pursuant to [LCR 5.2\(a\)\(2\)](#), filers must redact the names of minor children to the initials only (unless deceased or currently over the age of 18). Enter both initials in the **Last name** field.

Parties identified only by their initials and no accompanying last name are an exception to the no periods rule: enter "JA" as "J.A." This exception applies to minors and to any other party identified by initials only.

Add minor parties as an **alias** (using the mnr type) to the party who is initiating the lawsuit/being sued on their behalf (if one exists) and not as a separate party:

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
Gerald Erickson as guardian on behalf of minor J.A.	Last name: Erickson First name: Gerald Party text: as guardian on behalf of Alias (mnr): Last name: J.A.

If the minor is the party initiating the lawsuit, or is a defendant without guardian, enter the minor with both initials in the **Last name** field (with periods).

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If there is more than one minor in a case with the **same** initials, add a number after the initials in the **Last name** field. Begin with “1” and enter a space between the initials and the number.

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
Gerald Erickson as guardian on behalf of minor children A.B. and A.B.	Last name: Erickson First name: Gerald Party text: as guardian on behalf of Alias (mnr): Last name: A.B. 1 Alias (mnr): Last name: A.B. 2

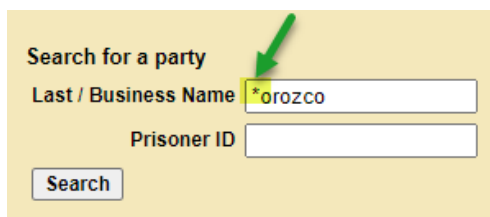
Last Name Standards

Hyphenated Last Names

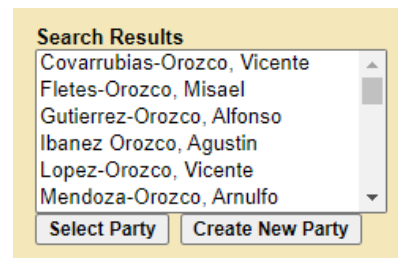
Enter both last names in the **Last name** field, if they are separated by a hyphen.

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
Jesus Adolfo Villegas-Navarro	Last name: Villegas-Navarro First name: Jesus Middle name: Adolfo

TIP: When searching for a hyphenated name in CM/ECF, use the asterisk as a wild card to ensure that the name returns in the **Search Results**. If a party is named “Vicente Covarrubias-Orozco” and you enter “Orozco” in the **Last name** field, there will be no results. Adding “*” before the name will return all versions of the name:



Search for a party
Last / Business Name
Prisoner ID



Search Results
Covarrubias-Orozco, Vicente
Fletes-Orozco, Misael
Gutierrez-Orozco, Alfonso
Ibanez Orozco, Agustin
Lopez-Orozco, Vicente
Mendoza-Orozco, Arnulfo

Multiple Last Names – Suggested Guidance

This standard includes guidance to follow when you are unsure whether to enter a party’s name in the **Middle name** or **Last name** field. If a party has multiple last names and it is clear which should be entered in the **Middle/Last name** fields, disregard this guidance.

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If a party has multiple names or last names and it is unclear which are last vs middle names, enter the first two names in the **First** and **Middle name** fields respectively. Enter all additional names beyond the first two in the **Last name** field.

Exception: If either the first name or last name is hyphenated, enter the entire hyphenated name in the **First name** or **Last name** field, as appropriate (see [Hyphenated Last Names](#)).

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
Jesus Adolfo Villegas Navarro	Last name: Villegas Navarro Middle name: Adolfo First name: Jesus
Sergio Lopez-Hernandez	Last name: Lopez-Hernandez First name: Sergio

Nicknames

Enter **nicknames** as **aliases** using the aka type. Enter nicknames as you would other party names, using the **First** and **Last name** fields as appropriate.

- If the party has multiple nicknames, enter each one as a separate alias.
- If the nickname is an alternate first name, include both the alternate **First name** and the party's **Last name** in the appropriate fields when entering it as an alias. Do not reenter any middle name/initial.
- If the nickname is a standalone name (e.g., "Prince" or "Madonna"), enter the standalone name in the **Last name** field

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
Alexandria (Trina) Y. Ridley	Last name: Ridley First name: Alexandria Middle name: Y Alias (aka): Last name: Ridley First name: Trina

Parties Identified with First/Last Name Only

- If the party is identified by first name only, enter the first name in the **Last name** field.
- If the party is identified by last name only, enter the last name only (in the **Last name** field).
- Leave the **Title** field blank and add any title or party text (if included) in the **Party text** field.

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Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
Officer Jones, Seattle Police Department	Last name: Jones Title: -blank- Party text: Officer, Seattle Police Department
Ellen, Kitchen Staff	Last name: Ellen First name: -blank- Title: -blank- Party text: Kitchen Staff

Parties Sued/Suing in Their Individual and Official Capacity

If a party is sued in both their individual and official capacities or is suing on both their individual and official capacities (e.g., suing on behalf of themselves and on behalf of a minor), only enter the party once.

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
John Smith, individually and as guardian on behalf of A.S., a minor	Last name: Smith First name: John Party text: individually and as guardian on behalf of Alias (mnr): Last name: A.S.
John Smith, individually and as the Sheriff of Townsville	Last name: Smith First name: John Party text: individually and as Sheriff of Townsville

Unknown/Doe Parties

If parties whose names are unknown are listed in the caption, you must add them to the case. These parties are often identified by the names “John” or “Jane Doe,” or by “Unknown Corporations XYZ,” for unknown companies. These unknown parties should be entered as indicated below.

- When a party is identified only by the name “John” or “Jane Doe,” enter “John” or “Jane” in the **First name** field and “Doe” in the **Last name** field;

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- For cases with multiple “Doe” parties, enter “Doe” and the number of parties in the **Last name** field.
- If Doe parties are listed as “John/Jane Does 1-10,” this indicates that there are 10 unknown (“Doe”) parties whose gender is unknown. Add this as one party.
- Enter companies whose names are unknown as usual in the **Last name** field, with any differentiating numbers or letters in the **Last name** field as well.

NOTE: If the caption includes multiple Doe parties and spells out each word (“Does One through Fifty”), it is acceptable to either match the caption OR to abbreviate (“Does 1-50”).

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
John Does 1-5, in their official capacity	Last name: Does 1-5 First name: John Party text: in their official capacity
Does One through Fifty	Last name: Does 1-50 OR Last name: Does One through Fifty
John/Jane Does 1-10	Last name: Does 1-10 First name: John/Jane
Unknown Corporations XYZ	Last name: Unknown Corporations XYZ

Vessel Names

Enter the vessel designation (e.g., “M/V,” “F/V” etc) before the name of the vessel in the **Last name** field.

Name on Complaint	Select or Enter in CM/ECF
The M/V Sally Anne	Last name: M/V The Sally Anne
The Jackson Pollock, F/V	Last name: F/V The Jackson Pollock

Related Information to Entering Party Names

Address Standards

Only enter addresses at case opening for parties who have already appeared pro se in the case (see [Create New Party](#) and [Select Party](#) sections for more information). The Court uses the address as entered to serve any pro se parties, so addresses should follow USPS standards:

- If the address has a street location of NE, NW, SW, or SE use the abbreviation (without periods). Do not spell out “West,” “East,” etc.

STANDARDS FOR ENTERING PARTY NAMES INTO CM/ECF

- Use the street abbreviations as listed on the USPS [site](#): AVE, CIR, DR, ST, etc.
- Do not use commas or periods in addresses.

Party Address	Enter Address As
1234 Main Street NE, Ste 200	1234 MAIN ST NE STE 200
100 W. Holly Blvd., North Tower, Ste 51	100 W HOLLY BLVD NORTH TOWER STE 51

Party Text

Party text is any text describing an individual or business as listed in the caption of the initiating document. This includes ranks and/or titles. For more detailed information on how to add party text, please see the [Attorney's Guide to Opening a Civil Case](#) (Section VI).

Repetitive Party Text

If the caption contains party text that is descriptive of the party and that applies to multiple parties, add it to each party.

Party Name	Enter Party As
ABC Corporation and XYZ Corporation, Washington corporations	<p><u>Party 1</u></p> <p>Last name: ABC Corporation</p> <p>Party text: a Washington corporation</p> <p><u>Party 2</u></p> <p>Last name: XYZ Corporation</p> <p>Party text: a Washington corporation</p>