

HOW TO PREPARE PDF DOCUMENTS TO FILE IN CM/ECF

CONTENTS

Filing Preparation	1
Why Prepare Your PDFs	1
How to Test Your PDFs	1
How to Prepare Your PDFs	2
Fillable Forms and Non-Scanned PDFs.....	2
Scanned PDFs (Created via scanner/copier)	3
Scanned PDFs: Further Troubleshooting	4

Filing Preparation

Review the following technical requirements before you begin to file:

- [ECF User Manual](#) Section II: Technical Requirements
- [CM/ECF FAQs: Technical](#)

Why Prepare Your PDFs

When filing in CM/ECF, all PDFs that you upload should undergo one of the two below preparation procedures, including fillable forms provided on the Court’s website. Following these procedures will ensure:

- CM/ECF successfully uploads your document(s).
- All parties can successfully download and view the document(s) from CM/ECF.
- Your document(s) are more secure.

How to Test Your PDFs

CM/ECF has a utility that allows you to test your PDFs to ensure they meet the technical requirements prior to filing them in your case. Go to **Utilities > Miscellaneous > Check PDF Document** and upload your PDF. The system will notify you if the PDF meets or does not meet the technical requirements. If your PDF fails, follow one of the steps below.

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How to Prepare Your PDFs

The following instructions are specific to Adobe when discussing PDFs as this is the most commonly used software. If you use different PDF software, the procedure may be different. You will want to research how to “flatten a PDF” with your specific software.

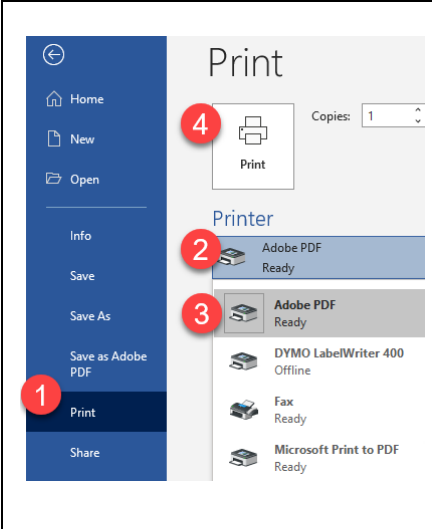
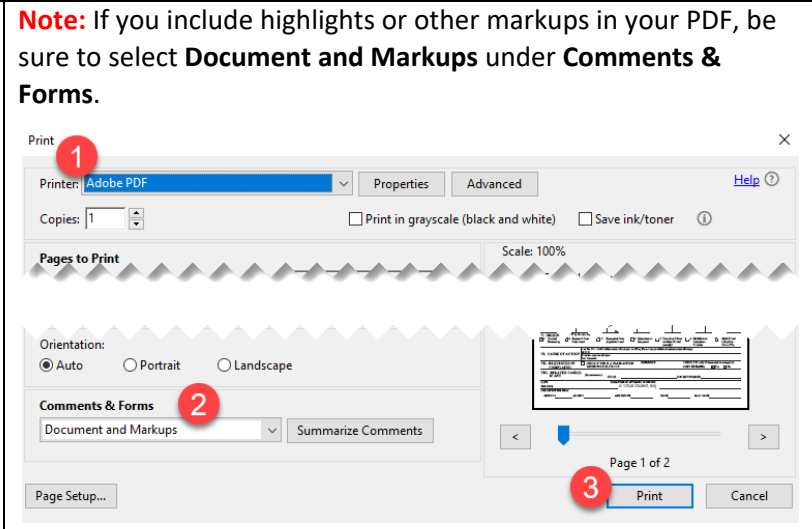
Fillable Forms and Non-Scanned PDFs

This process is for forms and documents in both Word and (Adobe) PDF format that were not created by scanning.

1. Create or open your form or document.
2. Fill in your form or document with all the required information.
3. Once your form or document is complete, select **File**.



4. Select **Print > Printer > Print to PDF or Adobe PDF**, then click **Print**.

Word to PDF	PDF to PDF
 A screenshot of the Microsoft Word 'Print' dialog box. The 'Print' button is highlighted with a red circle and the number 1. The 'Printer' list shows 'Adobe PDF' selected with a red circle and the number 2. The 'Print' button is highlighted with a red circle and the number 3. The 'Print' button is highlighted with a red circle and the number 4. The 'Copies' field is set to 1.	<p>Note: If you include highlights or other markups in your PDF, be sure to select Document and Markups under Comments & Forms.</p>  A screenshot of the Adobe PDF Print dialog box. The 'Printer' dropdown is set to 'Adobe PDF' with a red circle and the number 1. The 'Comments & Forms' section is expanded, and 'Document and Markups' is selected with a red circle and the number 2. The 'Print' button is highlighted with a red circle and the number 3. The 'Page 1 of 2' indicator is visible at the bottom.

5. Select where you want to save the new PDF to your computer, then click **Save**.
6. You have now created a more secure PDF you can successfully upload to CM/ECF.

Note: Be sure to select the correct version of the PDF when uploading in CM/ECF. It may be helpful to save the new PDF as **PrinttoPDFComplaint** to differentiate the versions.

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Scanned PDFs (Created via scanner/copier)

If you uploaded your document to your desktop by a scanner (or you received a document that was scanned from a scanner/copier rather than created from Word or from PDF creation software) and it was not scanned at our recommended settings, you will need to follow the below procedure to ensure the document conforms to our resolution requirements (see [ECF User Manual](#) Section II: Technical Requirements).

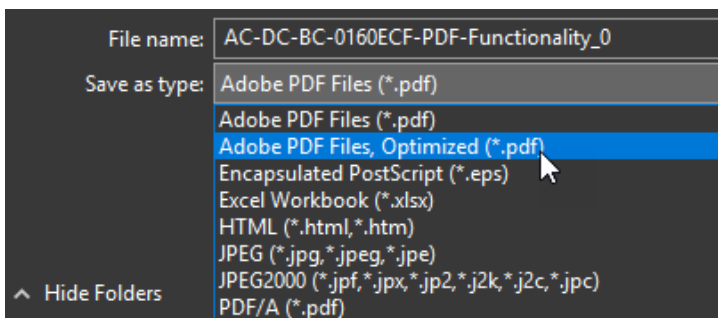
1. Open the PDF from your desktop in Adobe Reader or some other PDF reader - not in your browser.

Note: Many computers auto default to opening PDFs and other documents in your browser if you open them from your desktop/File Explorer. If you are unsure what are your computer's default settings, first open the software in which you would like the document to open, i.e. Adobe Reader, then go to **File > Open** and navigate to where you saved the document. This will ensure it opens in the correct software.

2. Select **File > Save As**.

3. Name the new version of your PDF under **File name**:

Note: We strongly recommend you save the document under a new name in case this process over optimizes your document making it illegible.



4. Select **Adobe PDF Files, Optimized (*.pdf)** under **Save as type**:

5. Click **Save**.

6. Your document is now optimized. Open the new version and check to make sure you can still read the PDF. This option can sometimes over optimize and make some scans unreadable. If you determine you cannot adequately read the document, return to your original version and attempt [Scanned PDFs: Further Troubleshooting](#).

7. Once you verified that you can read the document, you can now upload that version into CM/ECF.

HOW TO PREPARE PDF DOCUMENTS TO FILE IN CM/ECF

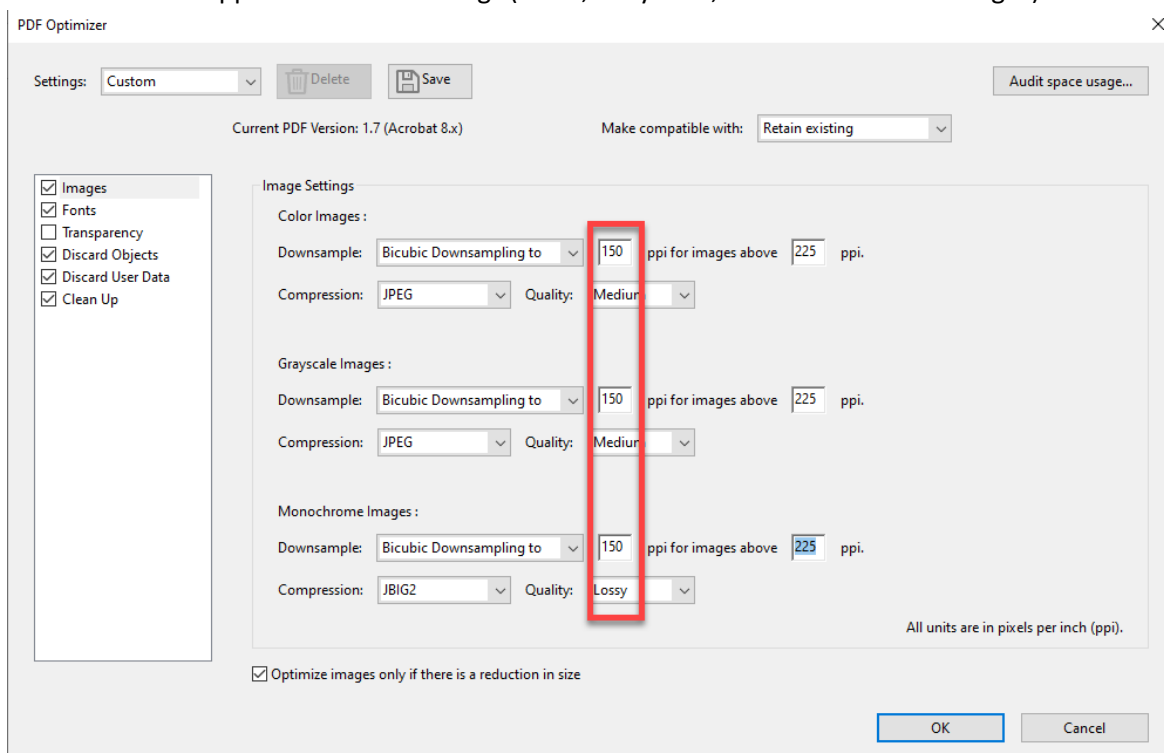
Scanned PDFs: Further Troubleshooting

If you performed the process in [Scanned PDFs \(Created via scanner/copier\)](#) and you still cannot upload your document, you can further optimize your PDF by performing the following:

1. Open the original PDF (it is not recommended to perform this process on the already optimized PDF from the previous step) from your desktop in Adobe Reader or some other PDF reader, not in your browser.

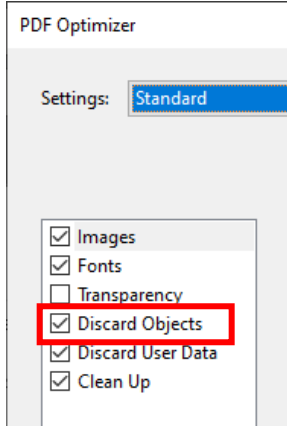
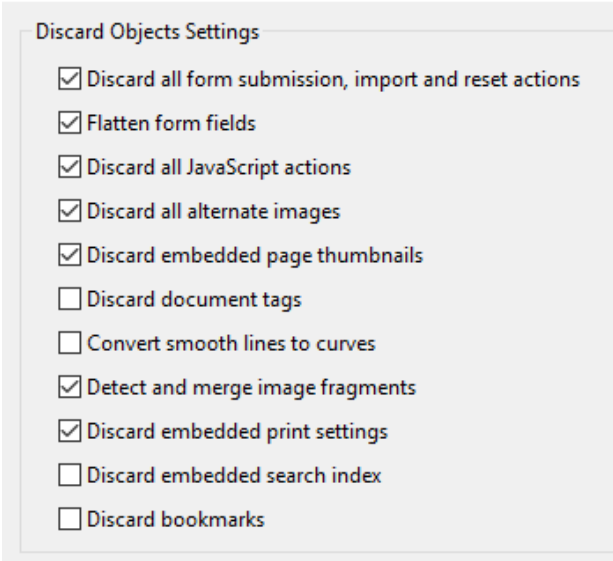
Note: Many computers auto default to opening PDFs and other documents in your browser if you open them from your desktop/File Explorer. If you are unsure what are your computer's default settings, first open the software in which you would like the document to open, i.e. Adobe Reader, then go to **File > Open** and navigate to where you saved the document. This will ensure it opens in the correct software.

2. Select **File > Save As Other > Optimized PDF**.
3. When you see the popup screen (**PDF Optimizer**), ensure the **Image Settings** are set between 150 and 200 ppi for all three settings (Color, Greyscale, and Monochrome Images).

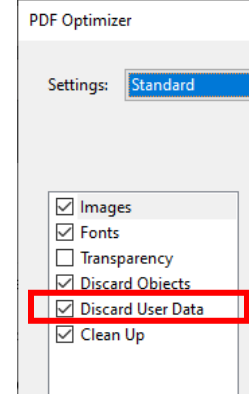
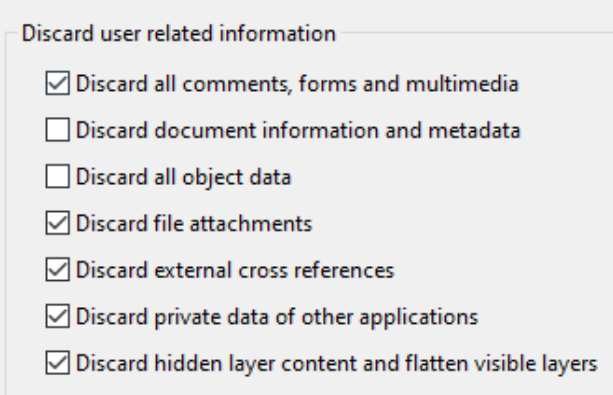


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4. Select **Discard Objects** in the selection box on the left side of the screen, then select the following boxes that appear on the right side of the screen under **Discard Objects Settings**:

 <p>The screenshot shows the PDF Optimizer interface. The 'Settings' dropdown is set to 'Standard'. A list of options is shown with checkboxes: Images (checked), Fonts (checked), Transparency (unchecked), Discard Objects (checked and highlighted with a red box), Discard User Data (checked), and Clean Up (checked).</p>	 <p>The 'Discard Objects Settings' panel is shown with the following options checked: Discard all form submission, import and reset actions; Flatten form fields; Discard all JavaScript actions; Discard all alternate images; Discard embedded page thumbnails; Detect and merge image fragments; Discard embedded print settings. Other options like 'Discard document tags', 'Convert smooth lines to curves', 'Discard embedded search index', and 'Discard bookmarks' are unchecked.</p>
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5. Select **Discard User Data** in the selection box on the left side of the screen, then select the following boxes that appear on the right side of the screen under **Discard user related information**:

 <p>The screenshot shows the PDF Optimizer interface. The 'Settings' dropdown is set to 'Standard'. A list of options is shown with checkboxes: Images (checked), Fonts (checked), Transparency (unchecked), Discard Objects (checked), Discard User Data (checked and highlighted with a red box), and Clean Up (checked).</p>	 <p>The 'Discard user related information' panel is shown with the following options checked: Discard all comments, forms and multimedia; Discard file attachments; Discard external cross references; Discard private data of other applications; Discard hidden layer content and flatten visible layers. Other options like 'Discard document information and metadata', 'Discard all object data', and 'Discard embedded search index' are unchecked.</p>
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6. Click **OK** to return to the main **PDF Optimizer** screen.
7. Then click **OK** to optimize your PDF.
8. Open the new version and check to make sure you can still read the PDF. If you cannot read the document, you must split the document up into sections and upload as separate attachments.
9. Once complete, you can now upload to CM/ECF.