

CM/ECF for Attorneys



A brief explanation of the Case Management/Electronic Case Filing system in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Northern District of Florida.

**U.S. Bankruptcy Court
Northern District of Florida
110 E. Park Ave., St. 100
Tallahassee, FL 32301
850/521-5001**

January 20, 2012

CM/ECF

The bankruptcy court for the Northern District of Florida "went live" on the Case Management/Electronic Case Filing ("CM/ECF" or "ECF") system in November, 2003. CM/ECF converted our court to an almost exclusively paperless office.

All attorneys who file in our court are required to be registered users of CM/ECF and are not allowed to file paper documents, with very few exceptions. Sealed documents and transcripts must be submitted either on paper or in another electronic format such as CD to be filed by a court employee.

Filers who are not represented by counsel (i.e., *pro se*), whether as a debtor or a creditor, plaintiff or defendant, are not required to file documents electronically. Creditors who file more than 20 claims per year must register and file their claims or other documents electronically.

Navigating CM/ECF

Navigation of CM/ECF is done by clicking one of the options in the blue menu bar at the top of the screen. Each selection will direct you to a page containing a hyperlink-driven set of menus specific to the selection you choose.



The **Bankruptcy** option will take you to set of menus used to file documents in the administrative (bankruptcy) case. These filing events may be used in an adversary or miscellaneous proceeding, but are primarily for use in the administrative case.

Like the bankruptcy option, the **Adversary** option will take you to a set of menus containing filing events which are primarily used in an adversary proceeding. Again, they may also be used in either the administrative case or a miscellaneous proceeding, but they are generally used in the adversary proceedings.

The **Query** option will present a set of search criteria where you may enter specific information in order to locate a particular case or group of cases.

Reports can be generated by case, date range, division, judge, or trustee and can provide broad, system wide information such as cases filed within a certain date range or very specific information on a particular case such as the filing fee amount paid. See the Reports section below for more detailed information.

Utilities events enable you to update your personal information in CM/ECF. You can change your password, update your address and select how or if you wish to receive Notices of Electronic Filing (NEFs) in cases.

The **Search** feature is a keyword search for all filing events available in CM/ECF. Searching for a phrase, word or partial word will provide you with a list of all filing events available to you which contain the criteria you provided.

Please be sure to **Logout** when you are ready to exit CM/ECF. Closing the window without exiting the program first may cause you to have difficulty the next time you login.

Bankruptcy and Adversary

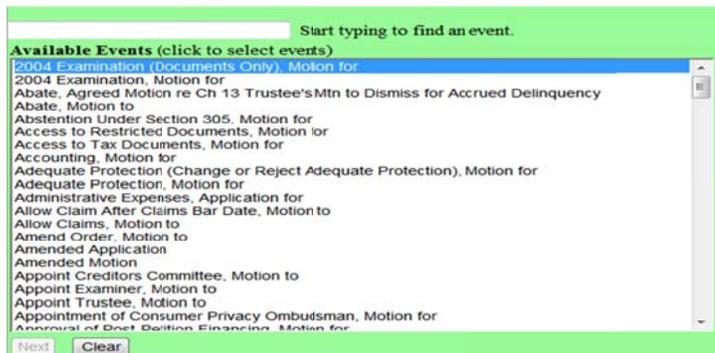
The Bankruptcy and Adversary menus are divided into categories to help filers easily locate the option they need for the task they are performing. Both contain categories for Proposed Order Submission, Case Opening, General Filing Topics (Motions, Notices, etc.) and Hearing Activity.

The Bankruptcy menu is further categorized to include the following options: Initial Filing Documents [documents which are not part of the petition that are required with the filing of a new case], Debtor Education [credit counseling and/or financial management documents], Plans & Disclosure Statements, Operating Reports, Claims & Creditor Activity [file claims, reaffirmation agreements, etc.], Most Commonly Used [a list of the 25 filing events most commonly used in this district; this list is updated quarterly], Mailing Information and Mailing Label Options.



Each of these categories contains a set of menus which directs you to a list of filing events specific to that menu, for instance, the “Motions/Applications” menu link in the *General Filing Topics* category, contains only filing events for motions or applications; the “Notices” menu link contains filing events for various notices, and so on.

Once you select one of these links, you will be prompted to enter the case number in which you are filing, then you will select from a list of available filing events. You may start typing a word to search for the filing event or you can scroll through the list of available options. The events are listed in alphabetical order. Note that the event names may be listed by keyword instead of the actual name of the document you are filing (e.g., “Compensation, Application for” vs “Application for Compensation”).



Documents and Pleadings

When filing documents or pleadings in CM/ECF, they must be in portable document format (.pdf) prior to attempting to upload. The CM/ECF system will not accept documents in word processing or picture format.

Matrices uploaded when opening a new bankruptcy case must be in plain ASCII text format (.txt). The system will not accept documents in Word or Word Perfect, PDF or picture formats.

Submitting Proposed Orders

Proposed orders are to be submitted through the links in CM/ECF. The “Submit Proposed Orders” link is located in both the Adversary and Bankruptcy menus for your convenience. This feature opens a pop-up window so please ensure that your pop-up blockers are turned off.

Proposed orders must be submitted in word processing format (Word, Word Perfect, text, etc.), however, exhibits or attachments to be included as part of the signed order may be uploaded as PDF documents.

Please take note of the following requirements for proposed orders:

- DO NOT submit a proposed order in which the signature block for the signing judge is located on a page by itself.
- DO NOT include blank spaces to be completed by Chambers or the Clerk’s Office (e.g., for future hearing dates or payment amounts).
- DO include sufficient blank space for the date (day, month and year) that the order is signed.

You may submit a proposed order at the time of filing your motion or application. The Case Administrator to whom the case is assigned will receive the proposed order and “hold” it until the appropriate time when it may be submitted to Chambers for review and signing. While submission of the proposed order at the time of filing the motion is not required, it is preferred practice in order to facilitate the most efficient processing of your pleading.

Mailing Information & Label Options

We have three options for mailing information and labels. These are located on multiple screens in CM/ECF:

- [Electronic & Manual Service Lists](#) - A case-specific report which provides an electronic mail notice list (list of parties who will receive electronic notification and their email addresses), a manual service list (those parties who will *not* receive electronic notification and their mailing addresses), and an option to generate a creditor list or a mailing matrix of all parties and creditors in the case.

- [1 - All Creditors/Parties by Case Number \(Most Commonly Used\)](#) - a list of all creditors and parties in the case in a 3-column mailing label format. Commonly referred to as the “mailing matrix.”
- [2 - Creditors Only by Case Number](#) - A 3-column address list of all creditors in the case. This list does **not** include parties or statutory entities who are included on the mailing labels provided in option 1.

Query

The Query option allows you to search the CM/ECF database for cases filed in the Northern District of Florida. You can search by Case Number, Last/Business Name (e.g., "Smith" or "Smith and Sons Construction Co."), or Social Security Number/Tax ID Number. You may also specify open (pending) or closed cases. The First Name, Middle Name, and Type fields will narrow the output but cannot be searched by themselves.

Search Clues
Case Number
Last / Business Name (Examples: Desoto, Des*t)
First Name Middle Name
SSN / ITIN Tax ID / EIN
Type Open cases Closed cases

The Query will return a list of cases which meet the criteria you entered. You should be mindful that this report is not subject to the 30-page limit on PACER charges and provide as much information as possible in order to reduce the cost of the report (e.g., searching for "J Smith" will return far fewer results than searching "Smith" and scrolling down to the J's).

Click the case number hyperlink one time to view the reports available for the case through the Query menu.

Select a Case						
There were 2 matching persons.						
There were 2 matching cases.						
Name	Case No.	Case Title	Chapter / Lead BK case	Date Filed	Party Role	Date Closed
Jasper, Susan M. (pty) (1 case)	06-40178-LMK	Susan M. Jasper	7	10/03/06	Debtor	N / A
Jasper, Susie (pty) (1 case)	06-40178-LMK	Susan M. Jasper	7	10/03/06	Debtor	N / A

Query

Alias	Party
Associated Cases	Related Transactions
Attorney	Status
Case File Location	Trustee
Case Summary	View Document
Creditor	Filing Fee
Deadline/Schedule	Corporate Parents/Affiliates
Docket Report ...	Claims Register
Filers	
History/Documents	Mailing Label Options
Judge	<i>Electronic recipients marked by + after name</i>
Motions Report	1 - All Creditors/Parties by Case Number (Most Commonly Used)
Notice of Bankruptcy Case Filing	2 - Creditors Only by Case Number

- **Alias** - A list of any/all aliases associated with the debtor(s).
- **Associated Cases** - A list of any/all other cases which have been associated with the case you are viewing. "Associated cases" may be adversary proceedings, jointly administered or consolidated bankruptcy cases, etc.
- **Attorney** - A list of all the attorneys who are affiliated with the case, whether debtor(s)' attorney(s) or other attorneys who have filed a Notice of Appearance in the case.
- **Case File Location**- This is retrieval information for paper cases which were filed prior to implementation of the CM/ECF program. Those files are stored in the National Archives & Records Administration (NARA or "archives") center in Atlanta, GA. A "current location" of "Tallahassee: default open area" indicates that the case was electronically filed and is available in CM/ECF.
- **Case Summary** - A quick glance at the statistics of the case. For instance, where the case was filed; debtor's county of residence at the time of filing; the dates the case was filed, discharged, closed (terminated), reopened, converted, dismissed, etc.; party name(s) and Social Security Number(s); debtor's attorney information, etc.
- **Creditor** - Generates a list of all the creditors in the case and their creditor ID numbers.
- **Deadline/Schedule** - A list of all the deadlines or scheduled events (hearings, etc .) which have been set in the case, the date they were set and the date they were terminated and/or satisfied.
- **Docket Report** - A list of all the documents filed in the case with links to view the PDF document attached to each docket entry and a "silver ball" to view the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) to see who received electronic service of the document when it was filed.
- **Filers** - A list of all the people, whether individuals representing themselves or attorneys, who have filed pleadings in the case, their "type" as it related to the case (e.g., Trustee, Creditor, Debtor, etc.) and the date they were added to the case or removed from the case.

- **History/Documents** - The docket at a glance containing only the filing event name (not the full docket text) the docket number and the "type" and "Subtype" of the filing event.
- **Notice of Bankruptcy Filing** - A document which can be printed by the attorneys as proof of filing the bankruptcy case (for immediate foreclosures, etc.). This document contains the case number and the date and time of filing.
- **Party** - A list of all the parties, their addresses, emails (if provided), phone number(s), and party type (debtor, creditor, trustee, etc.) associated with the case and the date they were added. It will also show by whom they are represented, if applicable.
- **Related Transactions** - Another type of docket report which lists items which have other items "linked" to them (e.g., a motion with a response linked to it).
- **Status** - The pending status of the case. For example, Awaiting Confirmation, Plan Confirmed, Awaiting Discharge, etc.. Note: This report is not correct at this time.
- **Trustee** - The trustee(s) assigned to the case, contact information and the date they were assigned or terminated.
- **View Document** - If you know the docket number for a particular document you wish to view, you may use this selection to view the document instead of having to view the docket report first.
- **Filing Fee** - See filing fees owed or paid in the case.
- **Corporate Parents/ Affiliates** - The corporate parent/affiliate information for the debtor, if applicable.
- **Claims Register** - A report of all the claims filed in the case containing the amounts claimed on each, filer information, and a link to the PDF.
- **Mailing Label Options** - Generate a full case mailing matrix or mailing labels for creditors only. This option is case specific.

Reports

The Reports menu provides several options for monitoring specific case activity or activity within the system that is not case-specific. A brief explanation of each option is listed below.

Reports		
Most Commonly Used Cases Claims Register Docket Report	Fee Related Professional Fees Applied For/Awarded Professional Fees Awarded	Mailing Label Options (Electronic recipients marked by "+" after name in Option 1) 1 - All Creditors/Parties by Case Number [Most Commonly Used] 2 - Creditors Only by Case Number
Court/Calendar Calendar Events	Opinions Opinions (Searchable)	
Case Management Claims Activity Docket Activity E-mail Summary		

- **Cases** - Search for cases filed on a particular date or in a date range. You may also search by chapter and division.
- **Claims Register** - View all claims filed in a particular case or specify by date range, creditor type, or claim number.
- **Docket Report** - View all the documents filed in the case with links to view the PDF document attached to each docket entry and a "silver ball" to view the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) to see who received electronic service of the document when it was filed. May be searched by date range or docket number range.
- **Calendar Events** - View the court calendar by case number and/or specific type of hearing.
- **Claims Activity** - View all claims filed within a specified date range. May also search by case number.
- **Docket Activity** - View the filing history of all cases or a particular case on during a specified date range.
- **E-mail Summary** - A summarized list of the Notices of Electronic Filing (NEF) emails which were sent to you during a specified date range.
- **Professional Fees Applied For/Awarded** - This report is for the financial administrator to track & report professional fees.
- **Professional Fees Awarded** - This report is for the financial administrator to track & report professional fees.

- **Opinions (Searchable)** - Search for opinions in cases filed in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Florida. This link will open a new window to an search program located on our website.
- **Mailing Label Options** - Generate a full case mailing matrix or mailing labels for creditors only. These options are case specific and may not be generated system-wide.

Utilities

You may update your address or other account information, change your password, pay filing fees and more through the Utilities menu.



- **Court Information** - This is general information about our court: our address, office hours, help desk email, phone numbers, etc.. You may also subscribe to an RSS Feed through this option to monitor activity in our CM/ECF system.
- **Change Your Password** - One click access to change your CM/ECF password.
- **Maintain My ECF Account** - Update your name, address, phone, and email information as well as noticing preferences and Filing Agents.
- **View My Transaction Log** - A summary report by date range of all filings by you or a Filing Agent on your behalf.
- **My PACER Account** - View and/or update your PACER account information.
- **Internet Payments Due** - View and/or pay outstanding fee payments.
- **Internet Payment History** - View payments made electronically through CM/ECF.
- **Mailings** - Access the menu options for generating mailing matrices or electronic and manual service lists.
- **Verify a Document** - Verifies that the electronic “signature” of a document is the same as when the document was filed. If the “signatures” do not match, the document has been altered.
- **Judgment Index** - Search for orders designated as judgments. This report is not limited to the 30-page PACER limit.

The Clerk's Office

Case Administration

As the official custodians of the Court records, one of the many duties of the Case Administrator is to ensure the accuracy of the cases and documents filed in the CM/ECF system. Each day the Case Administrator will review all items filed in CM/ECF the previous day to ensure the item was filed correctly and that the PDF document attached to the electronic entry is correct. Depending on the type of document filed, she may forward a proposed order to chambers, request that a hearing be set, provide notice of the filing to parties in the case, or take other actions as needed to facilitate efficient administration of the case.

Upon determining that a document is improperly filed, the Case Administrator will take one of the following actions: issue a Submission Error Notification ("SEN") advising the filer that the document was not filed in accordance with the Code, Rules or Local Rules and directing the filer to re-file the document; correct the error in the system and make a Corrective Entry notation on the docket to advise the filer that the entry has been corrected and no action is required on their part; or she may issue an Order Directing Immediate Compliance or an Order to File Papers in Proper Form .

The Case Administrator will also monitor pending deadlines for compliance, receive and submit proposed orders to Chambers according to specified guidelines, issue the discharge, docket signed orders, and close the case in a timely manner.

Cases filed in the Northern District of Florida are randomly assigned to a Case Administrator shortly after filing. Case-specific questions should be directed to the Case Administrator to whom the case is assigned. The Case Administrator to whom the case is assigned is indicated in the upper right of the docket in CM/ECF. **Email and phone contact information for all staff is located on our website at www.flnb.uscourts.gov on the "Contact Us" page.**

U.S. Bankruptcy Court	
Northern District of Florida (Tallahassee)	
Bankruptcy Petition #: 11-40092-LMK	
<i>Assigned to:</i> Judge Lewis M. Killian Jr. Chapter 7 Voluntary No asset	<i>Case Manager:</i> Lisa Davis, <i>Date filed:</i> 12/02/2011
Debtor Joe Schmo, Jr. 12468 Easy Street Tallahassee, FL 32301 Leon - FL SSN / ITIN: xxx-xx-0000	represented by Joe Schmo, Jr. PRO SE

The Help Desk

Our help desk staff is located in the Tallahassee office and should be your first point of contact for answers to procedural questions regarding documents filed in the Northern District of Florida. We accept help desk questions by telephone and email.

Local (Tallahassee): 850-521-5001
Toll Free: 888-765-1752
Email: CMECF_HelpDesk@flnb.uscourts.gov

We are unable to assist callers with technical questions regarding software programs installed on their computers (e.g., petition preparation software such as BestCase, EZ File, etc.). Questions regarding your software should be directed to the software vendor's technical assistance providers.

Pursuant to Fed. R. Bankr. P. 9003, we are not permitted to offer any hint of legal advice. We are not permitted to advise filers as to which chapter of bankruptcy they should file, how to complete any forms, or what type of documents should be filed (e.g., responses, motions, etc.).