

## OPENING A NEW BANKRUPTCY CASE

There are three different methods to opening a new bankruptcy case in the CM/ECF system in the Northern District of Florida. The manual case opening method allows the user to input information directly into the CM/ECF system. The other methods are available to attorneys using bankruptcy software for preparing and uploading a new case.

### Manual Case Opening

- Go to our website at [www.flnb.uscourts.gov](http://www.flnb.uscourts.gov).
- Click on the link for either the LIVE or TRAIN database. **Remember: the LIVE database is only for real cases.**
- Log in using your ECF login and password.
- Select “**Bankruptcy**” from the blue menu bar. A list of bankruptcy events will appear.
- Click on “**Open Voluntary BK Case.**”
- On the next screen, select the correct chapter number by clicking on the drop-down arrow and highlighting the chapter number. Select yes [“y”] or no [“n”] for joint petition. If you are filing an incomplete petition (one that does not contain all of the required schedules and statements) be sure to check yes [“y”] for deficiencies. Click “**Next**”.
- The ECF system will prompt you to search for a party to see if they are already in the computer. You can search by social security number, tax ID number, last name or business name. Enter the search criteria and click “**Search**”.
- The next screen will tell you if the party is found. If no person is found, click “**Create new party**”. You will then enter the party’s information. If the party has an alias, click on “**Alias**” to add. Click “**Submit**” when finished.

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

Case type bk  
 Date filed 11/29/2006  
 Chapter 7  
 Joint Petition n  
 Deficiencies y

Next Clear

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

Search for a debtor

SSN  Tax Id

Last/Business name

First Name

Middle Name

Search Clear

**Debtor Information**

Last name Citizen First name John  
 Middle name Q Generation Title  
 SSN 111-11-1111 Tax ID 222-11-1234  
 Office Address 1 7654 Debtor Lane  
 Address 2 Address 3  
 City Pensacola State FL Zip 32502  
 County Escambia Country  
 Phone Fax  
 E-mail  
 Party text

Alias... Corporate parent... Review... Add all aliases and corporate parents before clicking the Submit button.  
 Submit Cancel Clear

#### PRACTICE TIP:

- Not all fields need to be completed. We do not need “country” or “phone” or “fax” or “email” for the debtor.
- The “party text field” is for additional information contained in the complete legal name of the debtor. (e.g., “A Florida Corporation”; or “As Trustee for the Estate of John Doe”).

- At the next screen, you will be asked to add a joint debtor if you selected joint debtor on the first screen. If you did not select joint debtor on the first screen, you will not see this screen.
- The next screen will notify you of the divisional office selection for the case based on the county code provided. You will not be able to change the division.
- After clicking “Next”, the screen will ask for statistical information about the debtor. Make the appropriate selections and click “Next”.

**PRACTICE TIP:**

- Chapter 7 cases should be opened as no-asset cases.
- Chapter 11, 12 and 13 cases should be opened as asset cases.

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

Prior filing within last 8 years:

Fee status:

Nature of debt:

Asset notice:

Estimated number of creditors:

Estimated assets:

Estimated debts:

Type of debtor:  
☐ Individual  
☐ Corporation (includes LLC & LLP)  
☐ Partnership  
☐ Other

Nature of business:  
☐ Health Care Business  
☐ Single Asset Real Estate  
☐ Railroad  
☐ Stockbroker  
☐ Commodity Broker  
☐ Clearing Bank  
☐ Other  
☐ Tax-Exempt Entity

Next Clear

- The following screens will prompt you to input dollar amounts from certain schedules and from Summary and Statistical Summary.

Enter the full dollar amounts from the schedules, summary of schedules and appropriate form(s) as indicated.

**SUMMARY OF SCHEDULES**

Report the totals from Schedules A, B, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z, and Transfers/Debits to the forms provided.

NAME OF SCHEDULE/FORM	ASSETS	LIABILITIES	OTHER
A - Real Property	2,400,000.00		
B - Personal Property	40,000.00		
C - Creditors Holding Secured Claims		272,124.48	
D - Creditors Holding Unsecured Priority Claims			
E - Creditors Holding Unsecured Nonpriority Claims		16,073.00	
Average Secured (From Schedule C, Line 10)			1,111.00
Average Unsecured (From Schedule E, Line 10)			1,111.00
Current Monthly Income			1,111.00
Monthly From Line 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000			

Next Clear

**Practice Tip:**

- If the dollar amount for any field is zero, please enter 0.00 in that field.
- If you are missing schedules at the time of filing the petition, please leave the field blank. You will be prompted to enter the information when the remaining schedules are filed.

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

Schedule C: Total value of exempt property:

Schedule D: Total value of secured claims:

Schedule E: Total value of unsecured claims:

Schedule F: Total value of priority claims:

Schedule G: Total value of secured claims:

Schedule H: Total value of unsecured claims:

Schedule I: Total value of priority claims:

Schedule J: Total value of secured claims:

Schedule K: Total value of unsecured claims:

Schedule L: Total value of priority claims:

Schedule M: Total value of secured claims:

Schedule N: Total value of unsecured claims:

Schedule O: Total value of priority claims:

Schedule P: Total value of secured claims:

Schedule Q: Total value of unsecured claims:

Schedule R: Total value of priority claims:

Schedule S: Total value of secured claims:

Schedule T: Total value of unsecured claims:

Schedule U: Total value of priority claims:

Schedule V: Total value of secured claims:

Schedule W: Total value of unsecured claims:

Schedule X: Total value of priority claims:

Schedule Y: Total value of secured claims:

Schedule Z: Total value of unsecured claims:

Next Clear

- If you previously indicated that you are filing a petition with missing documents, you will be prompted to indicate which required documents were missing during the case opening process. Check the box for each missing document. If you did not previously indicate that deficiencies exist, you will not see the screen containing the deficiency list. Click “next” when finished with this step.

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

Case type bk:

Date filed: 8/17/2007

Chapter:

Joint Petition:

Deficiencies:

Next Clear

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

**Deficiency List**

Check item(s) NOT included in the petition

☐ Schedule A

☐ Schedule B

☐ Schedule C

☐ Schedule D

☐ Schedule E

☐ Schedule F

☐ Schedule G

☐ Schedule H

☐ Schedule I

☐ Schedule J

☐ Attorney Signature on Exh. B

☐ Attorney Signature Page 2

☐ Summary of Schedules

☐ Schedule Declaration

☐ Statistical Summary (B6)

☐ Statement of Financial Affairs

☐ Attorney Disclosure Statement

☐ Emp Inc Rcds / Stmt No Emp Inc

☐ Chapter 7 Means Test

☐ Credit Counseling Certificate

☐ Corporate Ownership Statement

☐ Statement of Intent

Next Clear

- The next screen will prompt you to attach the .pdf file containing your petition, schedules and statements. Click on the “browse” button and navigate to the location on your computer where your .pdf file is stored. If you have additional attachments to file with your petition (such as a real estate appraisal) click on the “Yes” button next to “Attachments to Documents” and continue to load .pdf files. Click “Next” when finished.

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

Select the pdf document (for example: C:\199cv501-21.pdf).

Filename

Attachments to Document: ☒ No ☐ Yes

Please see “Filing Guidelines” on the court’s web page for information on the preferred order of documents and the minimum required documents to open a new case.

**Practice Tip:**

You should always open and view the .PDF file before attaching to ensure you are filing the correct, legible .PDF document. Incorrectly filed documents cannot be removed from the system.

- The next screen will inquire as to whether the Means Test form (Form 22A) is filed as part of the voluntary petition document. Select “Yes” or “No” from the drop-down menu.

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

Is the Form 22A - Statement of Current Monthly Income - included in the petition PDF?

If you select “Yes”, the next screen will ask you to confirm whether the Means Test form includes a Presumption of Abuse. This information is located in the upper right corner of the Statement of Currently Monthly Income and Means Test form. Select the appropriate statement and click “Next.”

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

Presumption Arises

- The docket text screen will give you the opportunity to modify the docket text, if necessary. In some pleadings you may want to add additional text to enable the docket text to be more descriptive. Generally, this is not necessary in case opening. If you want to modify the text, you can add additional text in the blank field. Click “Next” when finished.

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate.

Chapter 7 Voluntary Petition and Statement of Currently Monthly Income  Fee Amount \$306 filed by John Q Citizen . Last date to prevent auto-dismissal under Sect. 521(i)(1): 12/19/2011. Incomplete Filings due by 11/17/2011.

- The next screen is very important! You will see a warning that says: **“Attention!! Submitting this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this submission if you continue.”** Read the text completely (this is how it will appear on the docket sheet) and if it is correct, click **“Next”**.

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

Docket Text: Final Text

**Chapter 7 Voluntary Petition and Statement of Currently Monthly Income Fee Amount \$306 filed by John Q Citizen. Last date to prevent auto-dismissal under Sect. 521(i)(1): 12/19/2011. Incomplete Filings due by 11/17/2011.**

**Attention!! Submitting this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this submission if you continue.**

- The next screen gives you the “Notice of Electronic Filing”, which gives you the new bankruptcy case number and document number. You will notice that the case number and document number are underlined. Those are hyperlinks to that case. You may click on those and login into Pacer to view the document or docket sheets.

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

U.S. Bankruptcy Court  
Northern District of Florida

[Notice of Bankruptcy Case Filing](#)

The following transaction was received from entered on 11/3/2011 at 10:36 AM EDT and filed on 11/3/2011

Case Name: John Q Citizen  
Case Number: 11-30067  
Document Number: 1

Docket Text:  
Chapter 7 Voluntary Petition and Statement of Currently Monthly Income Fee Amount \$306 filed by John Q Citizen. Last date to prevent auto-dismissal under Sect. 521(i)(1): 12/19/2011. Incomplete Filings due by 11/17/2011.

The following document(s) are associated with this transaction:

Document description: Main Document  
Original filename: C:\Users\kevin\Desktop\Document.pdf  
Electronic document Stamp:  
[STAMP bicedStamp\_ID=1042227419 [Date=11/3/2011] [FileNumber=55655-0]  
[172bfbce5144e7a5a986fedc716669d2b487eb03b331669829e0653a8c930135de  
2e9b07d88c62c12394a0e3f5becb98766814adacee3d87afb7caa790a0e]]

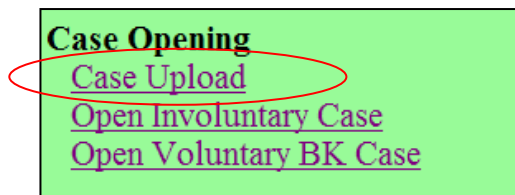
- The final step in the case opening process is payment of the filing fee. For instructions on electronic payment of filing fees, please see page 59.

## Opening a New Case Using Case Upload (For Chapter 7 and 13 Cases Only)

Case upload is a feature available to attorneys using commercial bankruptcy software to prepare bankruptcy cases. The process of entering information into the bankruptcy program creates electronic files containing debtor information, voluntary petition and list of creditors. Those files can be uploaded directly into the ECF system without having to manually re-enter the information.

- Go to our website which is [www.flnb.uscourts.gov](http://www.flnb.uscourts.gov).
- Click on the link for either the LIVE or TRAIN database. **Remember: the LIVE database is only for actual cases.**

- Log in using your ECF login and password.
- Select “**Bankruptcy**” from the blue menu bar. A list of bankruptcy events will appear.
- Click on “**Case Upload.**”

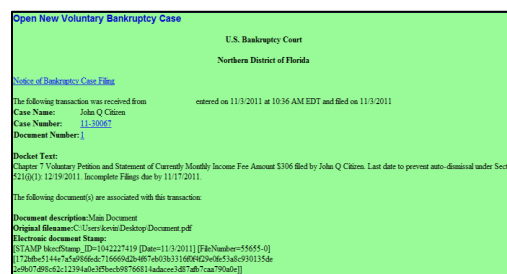


- The next screen will contain several blank fields (boxes). You will populate the appropriate fields with the path and file name of those files created by your commercial bankruptcy software.
- To successfully open a case using this feature you should click on each applicable “**Browse**” button and locate the appropriate file for that field. The files for each field will have the following characteristics:
  - Case Information. This file is a .TXT file and contains information about the debtor(s) (e.g., name, SSN, address, etc.).
  - Petition. This file is a .pdf file and contains the voluntary petition, schedules and statements.
  - Creditor matrix. This file is a .TXT file and contains the list of creditors.
  - Chapter 13 plan. This file is a .pdf file and contains the chapter 13 plan, if appropriate.
  - Exhibit D. This file is a .pdf file and contains the Exhibit D Statement Regarding Credit Counseling. Separate fields are available for each participant in a joint case.
  - Statement of Monthly Income (Form 22). This file is a .pdf file and should be used to upload the Statement of Monthly Income, if appropriate.
  - Debtor Employment Income Records. This file is a .pdf file contains either the debtor’s income records or a Statement of No Employer Income (Local Form LF-16). Separate fields are available for each participant in a joint case.

 A screenshot of the "Open New Bankruptcy Case" form. It contains several sections, each with a text input field and a "Browse..." button. The sections are: "Case information" (with a file path "c:\Debtor.txt"), "Petition" (with "c:\Petition.pdf"), "Creditor matrix" (with "c:\Creditor.txt"), "Chapter 13 plan (chapter 13 only)" (with "c:\Plan.pdf"), "Exhibit D - Dbtr Stmt re Credit Counseling" (with "c:\Exhibit D.pdf"), "Exhibit D - Jt Dbtr Stmt re Credit Counseling" (with "c:\Exhibit D.pdf"), "Stmt of Current Monthly Income - Form 22" (with "c:\Means Test.pdf"), "Dbtr Emp Income Records OR Stmt of No Emp Income" (with "c:\paystub.pdf"), and "Jt Dbtr Emp Income Records OR Stmt of No Emp Income" (with "c:\paystub.pdf"). At the bottom are "Next" and "Clear" buttons.

At a minimum, you must load the case information file, the voluntary petition and the creditor matrix. The system will not accept a case for filing without at least those three files.

- After populating the applicable fields, click “**Next.**”
- The ECF system will upload the information from the files you attached. For example, the information contained in the “debtor information file” will be used to add the debtor names, address, social security number(s), attorney name and division location. The petition will be filed and will create a docket entry for the petition and any schedules included in the file. The list of creditors (matrix) will be also be loaded into the system.
- If you include other files (Chapter 13 Plan, means test, income records), those documents will also be filed and separate docket entries will be created for each.
- The next screen gives you the “**Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF)**” which includes the case number and document number. You will notice that the case number and document number are underlined. Those are hyperlinks to that case. You may click on those and login into Pacer to view the document or docket sheets.



- The final step in the case opening process is payment of the filing fee. For instructions on electronic payment of filing fees, please see page 59.

## Opening a New Case Using Commercial Bankruptcy Software

Some versions of commercial bankruptcy software have incorporated into their programs the ability to file cases in ECF without manually entering debtor information or loading electronic files into the ECF system. Instead, the bankruptcy software has a “one-touch” or single-button process that uploads the information with a single click of the mouse.

- Check the settings in your commercial bankruptcy software to make sure you are filing in the correct database. Some software applications default to the TRAIN database and must be re-set to file in the LIVE database.
- Depending on the software you are using, you may be prompted to enter your ECF login and password. (Some programs save your login and password for you).
- When you begin filing process using your commercial bankruptcy software, you will see the system quickly going through each screen as the information is imported and automatically uploaded into ECF. If you indicated that there are deficiencies in the case, the system may stop temporarily and ask you to select which documents are omitted from the filing.

The U.S. Bankruptcy Court has tested multiple commercial bankruptcy software programs to verify the compatibility with the CM/ECF system in the Northern District of Florida. The Clerk's Office does not endorse the use of any software application and does not offer training or support of commercial software applications.

- After the files have finished loading into ECF you will see the **"Notice of Electronic Filing"** which gives you the new bankruptcy case number and document number. You will notice that the case number and document number are underlined. Those are hyperlinks to that case. You may click on those and login into Pacer to view the document or docket sheets.

**Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case**

U.S. Bankruptcy Court  
Northern District of Florida

[Notice of Bankruptcy Case Filing](#)

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The following document(s) are associated with this transaction:

Document description: Main Document  
Original filename: C:\Users\jva\Desktop\Document.pdf

**Electronic document Stamp:**  
[STAMP: kkecfStamp\_ID=1042227419 [Date=11/3/2011] [FileNumber=55655-0]  
[172b0e5144e7a5a9866edc71666942b4057eb03b331606029a0fe53a8c930135de  
2ef607d98c62c12394a0e3f5becb98766814adace3d87ab7caa790a0e]]

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