



CM/ECF Newsletter

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CM/ECF Attorney Survey

Please take a few minutes to complete a [survey concerning the CM/ECF system](#). The results of the survey will assist the Clerk’s Office in determining what filers find to be helpful as well as areas that may need to be improved.

Free Pre-Bankruptcy Credit Counseling Agency

The Executive Office of the United States Trustee has approved a credit counseling agency, [ConsumerBankruptcyCounseling.info](#), which does not charge a fee for its services and offers a free pre-bankruptcy credit counseling certificate to consumer debtors. This agency is listed as an approved credit counseling agency on the United States Trustee’s web site, viewable at:

http://www.justice.gov/ust/eo/bapcpa/ccde/cc_approved.htm

The Bankruptcy Court does not evaluate or make recommendations concerning credit counseling agencies. In addition, the above reference to a credit counseling agency does not constitute an endorsement of that agency or any affiliated organizations.

Location of Hearings

Electronic filers are reminded to select the Bankruptcy Courtroom in Erie during the filing of a Notice of Hearing in an Erie case. When the hearing applies to a Pittsburgh or Johnstown case, the appropriate courtroom must also be chosen.

Bankruptcy Inns of Court

The Bankruptcy Inns of Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania is seeking applicants interested in joining the Inn. The deadline for applications is October 15, 2010. For additional information concerning the Bankruptcy Inns of Court, please contact Mike Moore at 412-644-4060 extension 127 or Michael_Moore@pawb.uscourts.gov (with BKR INN in the subject line).

NEED ASSISTANCE?

Technical Problems

- Logins/passwords
- Missing menu items
- Unexpected error messages

Direct these and similar issues to PAWBHelpdesk@pawb.uscourts.gov

Other Assistance

Call 412.644.2700 (Pittsburgh cases) or 814.464.9740 (Erie cases)



Documentary Proof of Payment – Chapter 13s

Attorneys must follow the instructions attached to the Order issued on the Chapter 13 Trustee's Certificate of Default Requesting Dismissal of Case by filing an appropriate Documentary Proof of Payment, along with (1) a Notarized Affidavit or Declaration or (2) a Notice of Proposed Modification to Confirmed Plan and an Amended Plan. The instructions clearly state that the proof of payment must include a copy of the Trustee's printout of the Debtor(s)' payment history of receipts (available on the Trustee's website) indicating the amounts and dates of payments received by the Trustee, as well as a copy of a money order, cashier's check, earnings statement(s), or pay stub(s) showing payroll or benefit deduction(s) used to make the plan payment. Please redact personal identifiers on any documents filed with the Court.

Mailing Matrix –

Duplicate Creditors and “Petition **Completed**”

Electronic filers must not include duplicate creditor addresses on the mailing matrix as this takes unnecessary space in the CM/ECF system. The mailing matrix must be reviewed and edited for duplicates prior to uploading into the creditor database. The matrix should not include any titles or other descriptions, only address information.

When filing a “Petition Completed,” it is critical that creditors who were already uploaded when the case was filed *not* be added again at this time. Only creditors that have not been added to the case initially should be added at the time the “Petition Completed” is filed.

Amendments to Schedules

New creditors being added to the schedules must be added to the creditor database by the electronic filer in order for those creditors to receive notices. The Clerk's Office does not add the additional creditors. Also, the amended schedules should include a clear description of the material added or deleted.

Certificates of Service

Certificates of service must contain the names and addresses of the parties served. If the certificate of service only contains the name of the party, a corrective entry will be issued asking that the certificate of service be refiled. In addition, the certificates of service must indicate all documents that were served.

Also, certificates of service are sometimes linked to the wrong document. Please link the certificate to all documents being served.

Opening New Adversary Proceedings

Attorneys are reminded to add themselves as attorney for plaintiff during case opening.



For more detail on creating PDFs that are both text-searchable and flattened, see the "Creating PDF Files" module in the Court's Online Attorney Training Manual.

Proper Document Formats

Text-Searchable Documents

All documents electronically filed that have been created, authored or customized by the electronic filer must be filed in a format that allows the Court, or anyone else viewing the document, to perform a full text search in accordance with ECF Procedure #13. If a document is filed that is not fully text-searchable, a corrective entry will be issued advising the electronic filer to refile the document. Any document that is scanned is most likely not searchable. For instructions on creating a PDF in the proper format, you may refer to the online Attorney Training Manual on the Court's website.

Flattening PDF Files

Adobe Acrobat and other PDF conversion programs offer the ability to create a PDF containing fillable fields. The CM/ECF system requires "flat" PDFs, that is, those containing text only. A PDF with fillable fields is not flat. To flatten a PDF file:

- Enter or complete the appropriate fields.
- Save the completed file as a non-flat PDF on your computer.
- From your PDF program's Main Menu, select File.
- On the File Menu select Print.
- In the Printer Dialog Box, or popup, select the entry for your PDF conversion program in the available printers list.
- Click OK or Print and a flattened PDF will be created, which can be uploaded in CM/ECF.

PDF Quality

PDFs that are attached to Court entries must be crisp, clear and completely legible, otherwise the Court may enter a corrective entry advising the filer that the document must be refiled.

Metadata

Metadata is data, or information, stored in a PDF file that identifies the author, those who have opened the file, keywords describing the contents of the file, and other similar items. This data is not part of the contents of the file, but is stored in what is referred to as the "file header." Additional information can transfer from a word-processing document during conversion to PDF, including changes made to the document prior to conversion. Examples include Social Security and account numbers prior to their redaction and draft language removed before conversion. Metadata can be viewed by anyone opening the PDF file. The Clerk's Office recommends that you disable metadata creation in your PDF conversion program as well as "flattening" the PDF file before uploading it to CM/ECF. See your PDF conversion program's manual or Help text to determine how this can be accomplished.

Exhibits

Exhibits must be completely legible. Attorneys and their staff are reminded to open and review each page of a document prior to submitting an entry into the CM/ECF system to ensure that it is of good quality. If the exhibits are not legible, a corrective entry will be done asking that the document be refiled. When filing a document, such as a motion, and attaching an exhibit, please remember to select "Exhibit" as the document type and provide a brief description of the exhibit in the "Description" field. Descriptions must clearly and concisely identify the content and/or type of document being attached. This allows CM/ECF users to identify and/or locate specific attachments without having to open each one.