

## How to Open a Civil Case in the Eastern District of North Carolina's (EDNC) Case Management/Electronic Case Filing System (CM/ECF)

Attorney filers may open civil cases directly in the CM/ECF system. To open a case, an attorney must provide the Clerk's Office with the case initiating document (Complaint, Notice of Removal, etc.), a Civil Cover Sheet (JS-44c), and any proposed summons(es). The initiating document must list the party information for the case. All documents filed electronically must be in PDF format and be flattened.<sup>1</sup>

Each party to a case shall review and comply with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 7.1 and Local Rule 7.3.

As of 2/23/23, the filing fee for a new civil case is \$402.00. Unless the case initiating document is being filed contemporaneously with a *Motion to Proceed In Forma Pauperis (IFP)* or the filer represents the federal government, the filing fee may be paid before or during the case opening process.

**NOTE: "Motions to Proceed In Forma Pauperis" are NO LONGER filed first in a case. The "Complaint" event will now be filed first to be immediately followed by a separate docket entry for the "Motion to Proceed In Forma Pauperis."**

When paying in advance, the attorney must have the name of the case to be filed.

Fees may be paid in advance by:

1. Credit Card (by phone or in person)
  - a. Raleigh Clerk's Office – Open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at 919-645-1700
  - b. Greenville Clerk's Office – Open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at 252-830-6009
  - c. Wilmington Clerk's Office – Open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at 910-815-4663
  - d. New Bern Clerk's Office – Open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at 252-638-8534

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<sup>1</sup> The recommended method for converting desktop created documents to PDF format is to create and save each original document as a Word or WordPerfect document and then, while that saved version is still open, go to the tool bar in the user's word processing program. Click on "File" > "Print" > "Print As" > Select the PDF writing program loaded on the computer. (Follow this same procedure when using fillable forms.) The document is not actually printing, it is converting and flattening the document in the background. Save this PDF version of the document for uploading into CM/ECF. Some word processing programs offer other methods for file conversion to PDF. The conversion method recommended above provides the best filing results in conjunction with CM/ECF configurations. For scanner created PDFs, set the scanner to 300 dpi, black and white, and yes to OCR(Optical Character Recognition).

2. Check or money order (by mail or in person)
3. Cash (in person)

The attorney filer will be provided a receipt or receipt number. The attorney filer will need this receipt number to complete the on-line opening of a civil case.

4. On-line, during the case opening process, via Pay.gov. The attorney filer may use a credit card. When paying online, an attorney filer may use MasterCard, Visa, Discover, or American Express.

All CM/ECF systems have some degree of file size limitations. For the Eastern District of North Carolina (EDNC) the maximum file size for any individual document is 50 megabytes. The maximum merge file size (main document plus one or more attachments) limitation is 60 megabytes.

All filers are encouraged to create and know the file size of each of their documents before they log in to CM/ECF.<sup>2</sup>

### Step 1.

An attorney filer will begin the case opening process by logging into EDNC-CM/ECF.

Make sure that you the user are logged in with the correct attorney filer's login credentials. The best practice is to always clear a user's cache/viewing history on the browser, close that browser, and re-open the browser before logging into the system. Failure to do this may result in the presentation of incomplete filing options or unavailable drop lists in CM/ECF.

Once logged into the system, click on "Civil" on the navigation bar.



<sup>2</sup> For further information regarding PDF documents, please see the "Instructional Guides" section of the CM/ECF tab at [www.nced.uscourts.gov](http://www.nced.uscourts.gov). Specifically, *Updated NextGen PDF Guidance* and *How to Make a PDF Text Searchable*.

## Step 2.

The attorney filer will click on “Atty Open CV Case.”

The screenshot shows the CM ECF website navigation menu. The logo 'CM ECF' is on the left, followed by dropdown menus for 'Civil', 'Criminal', 'Query', 'Reports', 'Utilities', and links for 'Search', 'Help', and 'Log Out'. Below the navigation bar is the 'Civil Events' section, which is divided into three columns:

- Open a Civil Case**
  - [Atty Open CV Case](#) (highlighted with a blue arrow)
- Initial Pleadings and Service**
  - [Complaints, Other Initiating Documents](#)
  - [Service of Process](#)
  - [Answers to Complaints](#)
  - [Other Answers](#)
- Motions and Related Filings**
  - [Motions](#)
  - [Responses and Replies](#)
- Other Filings**
  - [ADR Documents](#)
  - [Discovery Documents](#)
  - [Notices](#)
  - [Trial Documents](#)
  - [Appeal Documents](#)
  - [Other Documents](#)
- Sealed and Ex Parte Events**
  - [Sealed and Ex Parte Events](#)

## Step 3 – Multiple Parts. (Screen Shots on Pages 4-5.)

The “Office” field is asking for the internal division of the EDNC from which the case being filed arises. Assign the case being filed pursuant to EDNC Local Civil Rule 40.1(c).

The clerk shall assign all civil actions to a division when the action is filed or removed. If one or more plaintiffs are residents of this District, the clerk shall assign the case to the division in which the first named such plaintiff resides. If no plaintiff resides in the District and one or more defendants reside in the District, the clerk shall assign the action to the division in which the first named such defendant resides. In the event no party resides in the District but the claim is alleged to have arisen in the District or to involve real property in the District, the clerk shall assign the action to the division in which such claim is alleged to have arisen or in which the real property is situated. In all other instances, a case shall be assigned to a division in the discretion of the clerk. In removed actions, the matter will be assigned to the division in which the state court is located from which the action is removed.

**Residence of Corporation.** For the purposes of this local rule, a corporate plaintiff shall be deemed to reside in the state in which it was incorporated and in the district and division in which it has its principal office; and, a corporate defendant shall be deemed to reside in the division in which the corporation is alleged (a) to be incorporated and have its principal office, or (b) to be licensed to do business, or (c) to be doing business.

**United States as Plaintiff.** For the purposes of this local rule, in cases where the United States, its agencies or officers acting in an official capacity is the plaintiff, it shall be deemed that such plaintiff does not reside in this district.

For example:

Camden County	Select Northern Division
Craven County	Select Eastern Division
Wake County	Select Western Division
Columbus County	Select Southern Division

Please review the list of counties in the EDNC and the internal divisions to which they are assigned.



**Northern Division**

- Bertie
- Chowan
- Dare
- Hertford
- Pasquotank
- Tyrrell
- Camden
- Currituck
- Gates
- Northampton
- Perquimans
- Washington

**Eastern Division**

- Beaufort
- Craven
- Greene
- Hyde
- Lenoir
- Pamlico
- Carteret
- Edgecombe
- Halifax
- Jones
- Martin
- Pitt

**Western Division**

- Cumberland
- Granville
- Johnston
- Vance
- Warren
- Wilson
- Franklin
- Harnett
- Nash
- Wake
- Wayne

**Southern Division**

- Bladen
- Columbus
- New Hanover
- Pender
- Sampson
- Brunswick
- Duplin
- Onslow
- Robeson

The filer will use the drop list to select the correct "Office" or "Division." (Arrow 1) Choose either Northern, Eastern, Western, or Southern.

In this example, click "Northern Division."

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

**Open a Civil Case**

Office  Case type

Date filed: 2/23/2023

Lead case number

Association type

Other court name

Other court number

JPML number

Related cases

**This section continues on the next page.**

**DO NOT CLICK "NEXT" JUST YET.**

The filer will use the “Case Type” drop list to define the type of civil case this will be. (Arrow 2)  
The “Case Type” options are:

- cv = civil case
- hc = habeas corpus
- ct = prisoner civil rights
- mc = miscellaneous (This selection is not activated and cannot be selected.)

Select “cv.”

Enter any other court information that might be relevant to this new case. (Arrow 3)

Then click “Next.” (Arrow 4)

The screenshot shows the 'Open a Civil Case' form in the CM/ECF system. The navigation bar at the top includes 'Civil', 'Criminal', 'Query', 'Reports', 'Utilities', 'Search', 'Help', and 'Log Out'. The form fields are as follows:

- Office:** Northern Division (dropdown menu)
- Case type:** cv (dropdown menu) - Annotated with a blue arrow labeled '2' pointing to it.
- Date filed:** 2/23/2023
- Lead case number:** (text input field) - Annotated with a blue arrow labeled '3' pointing to it.
- Association type:** (dropdown menu)
- Other court name:** (text input field)
- Other court number:** (text input field)
- JPML number:** (text input field)
- Related cases**
- Next** (button) - Annotated with a blue arrow labeled '4' pointing to it.
- Clear** (button)

#### **Step 4 – Multiple Parts.**

The attorney filer is now presented with the “Case Opening Statistics” screen. (Screen shot on next page.) This information is also to be completed on the JS-44c (Civil Cover Sheet) and made an attachment to the case initiating document.<sup>3</sup>

**Jurisdiction:** Enter a selection.

**Cause of Action:** Enter a selection.

**Nature of Suit:** Enter a selection.

**Origin:** Enter a selection.

**Citizenship questions:** Defaults to “blank.” Change if needed for the case being filed.

**Jury Demand:** Answer as appropriate to the case being filed. If a defendant is filing a “Notice of Removal” and the plaintiff demanded a jury trial in the complaint, the removing defendant must change this field to “p (Plaintiff)” when filing the “Notice of Removal.”

**Class Action:** This field will default to “n (No Class Action Alleged).” Change if needed.

**Demand:** This field is optional. Complete this field only if there is a monetary demand in the complaint. Note the (000). The system will automatically add three zeroes to whatever numeric value is typed in this field.

Examples: 10 = \$10,000.00                      500 = \$500,000.00

**Arbitration Code:** Leave blank.

**County:** Review your case and EDNC Local Rule 40.1(c) and pages 4-5 of this guide.

**Fee Status:**    pd (paid) = Payment already made or will be made during case opening.

                  pend (IFP) = Filer will be filing a *Motion to Proceed n Forma Pauperis (IFP)*.

                  fp (in forma pauperis) = *IFP* status already granted.

                  wv (waived) = Used by federal government agencies.

                  none (no fee required) = as appropriate.

**Date Transfer:** Leave this field blank.

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<sup>3</sup> The JS-44c (Civil Cover Sheet) is available in the *Forms* section of our website at [www.nced.uscourts.gov](http://www.nced.uscourts.gov). When using any fillable form, the user must “flatten” such document before uploading it into CM/ECF. Again, the recommended process to both flatten and convert a fillable form to PDF is to enter all data on the fillable form and then: Click on “File” > “Print” > “Print As” > Select the PDF writing program loaded on the computer. The document is not actually printing. It is converting and flattening in the background. Save this version of the document for uploading into CM/ECF. For further reference, see Footnote 2 on Page 2 above.

The default statistics screen appears. Make changes as needed to correctly reflect the case being filed.

**CM ECF** Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

**Open a Civil Case**

Jurisdiction: 3 (Federal Question) [v]

Cause of action: [ ] Filter: [ ] Clear filter

Nature of suit: 0 (zero) [v] Filter: [ ] Clear filter

Origin: 1 (Original Proceeding) [v]

Citizenship plaintiff: [v]

Citizenship defendant: [v]

Jury demand: n (None) [v] Class action: n (No Class Action Alleged) [v] Demand (\$000): [ ]

Arbitration code: [v] County: BEAUFORT [v]

Fee status: pd (paid) [v] Fee date: 2/23/2023 [ ] Date transfer: [ ]

Next Clear

The following selections apply for this sample case.

**Review the data.**

Click "Next."

**CM ECF** Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

**Open a Civil Case**

Jurisdiction: 3 (Federal Question) [v]

Cause of action: 05:0075 (05:75(2) Contract - Reduction in Grade) [v] Filter: [ ] Clear filter

Nature of suit: 140 (Negotiable Instrument) [v] Filter: [ ] Clear filter

Origin: 1 (Original Proceeding) [v]

Citizenship plaintiff: [v]

Citizenship defendant: [v]


Jury demand: p (Plaintiff) [v] Class action: n (No Class Action Alleged) [v] Demand (\$000): 1000 [ ]

Arbitration code: [v] County: CHOWAN [v]

Fee status: pd (paid) [v] Fee date: 2/23/2023 [ ] Date transfer: [ ]

Next **Cl**

- fp (in forma pauperis)
- none (no fee required)
- pd (paid)**
- pend (IFP pending)
- wv (waived)





## Step 5 – Multiple Parts.

The attorney filer is now presented with the “Search Party” screen.

These fields are for name entry ONLY. Do not add titles such as Colonel or Sergeant here nor descriptions such as “on behalf of” or “in his personal and professional capacity.” Titles, aliases, and descriptive information such as this will be entered later in the process.

If a party is anything other than an individual, (i.e., a company, a university, a municipality, etc.), the entire name of the party goes in the last name field. The last name field will hold up to 200 characters.

Filers are encouraged to have a copy of the case initiating document face page open while entering names in the database. Names should be entered into the database in the same order as they are listed on the face page of the case initiating document.

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

[Open a Civil Case](#)

Add New Party Create Case

[Collapse All](#) [Expand All](#)

2:23-cv-?????

Search for a party

Last / Business Name First Name Middle Name

Search

In this example, the last name is “Plaintiff” and the first name is “John.” Enter data as shown. (Arrow 1)

Spelling and punctuation are important here as the filer is creating the face of the docket sheet.

Click “Search.” (Arrow 2)

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

[Open a Civil Case](#)

Add New Party Create Case

[Collapse All](#) [Expand All](#)

2:23-cv-?????

Search for a party

Last / Business Name Plaintiff First Name John Middle Name

Search

The system has found a party by the name of “John Plaintiff” already existing in the system.

**(If the name search had returned a negative result, the user would then click on “Create New Party” and skip to Page 22 of this guide.)**

The screenshot shows the CM ECF system interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the CM ECF logo and menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. Below the navigation bar is a link to "Open a Civil Case". The main interface is divided into two columns. The left column contains a sidebar with "Add New Party" and "Create Case" buttons, and a list of cases including "2:23-cv-?????". The right column is titled "Search for a party" and contains a search form with fields for "Last / Business Name" (containing "Plaintiff"), "First Name" (containing "John"), and "Middle Name". A "Search" button is located below the form. Below the search form is a "Search Results" box containing the text "Plaintiff, John". A blue arrow points to this result. Below the search results box are two buttons: "Select Party" and "Create New Party".

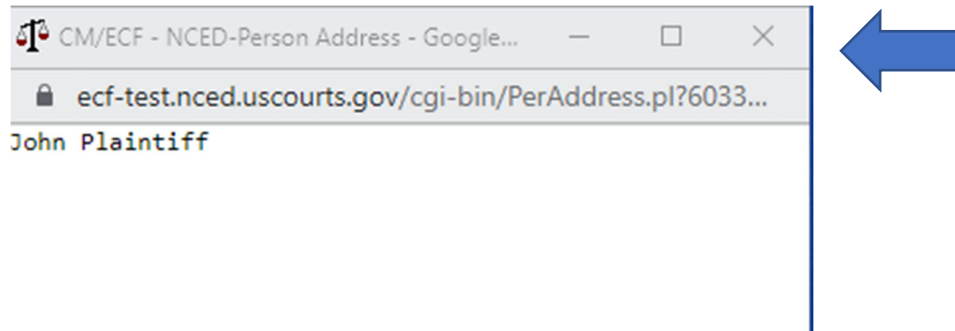
The attorney filer may investigate to determine whether this existing “John Plaintiff” is the same as the “John Plaintiff” in the case currently being filed.

The filer will do so by left clicking once (to highlight) on the “John Plaintiff” who appeared in the “Search Results” box. Once highlighted, double click and a small information window will open. (See next page.)

This screenshot is identical to the previous one, but the search result "Plaintiff, John" in the "Search Results" box is highlighted in blue. A blue arrow points to this highlighted result. The "Select Party" and "Create New Party" buttons remain visible below the search results.

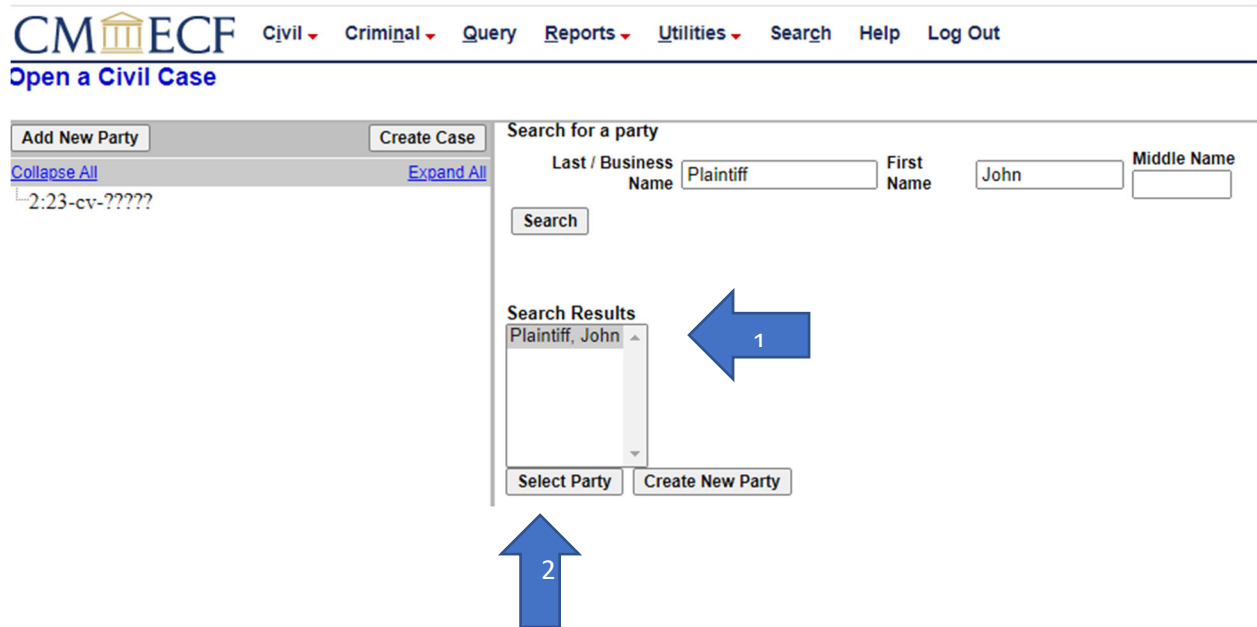
**Do not click on “select party” just yet.**

If personal identifiers of any type had been entered for the already existing “John Plaintiff” and the filer is able to determine that the existing “John Plaintiff” is the same as the “John Plaintiff” in the case currently being filed, the filer may close the information window.



The filer will now be returned to the previous screen where “John Plaintiff” is still highlighted in the “Search Results” box.

The filer may leave this name highlighted (Arrow 1) and click on “Select Party” (Arrow 2).



The "Party Information" screen will appear and the party name and any identifiers will be pulled into the shell of the new case being filed without the need to retype the information.

There are several fields on this screen that require the filer's attention.

**Title:** Enter any title such as "General," "Sergeant," "Governor" in the "Title" box.

**Role:** **THE SYSTEM WILL ALWAYS DEFAULT EVERY PARTY TO THE ROLE OF DEFENDANT!**

**The filer MUST individually define the role of every party added to the case.**

**Pro se:** This field should remain set at "No" unless the party truly is proceeding Pro se. Do not put "yes" if the attorney is just unknown.

**Party Text:** Enter information such as "A Delaware Corporation", "Commissioner of Social Security", or "On Behalf of the Estate of..." Do not use this field for aliases. This field will hold up to 255 characters.

The screenshot shows the 'Open a Civil Case' interface. At the top, there are navigation links: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. Below this is the 'Open a Civil Case' header. The main form area is titled 'Party Information' and contains the following fields and options:

- Title:** Text input field.
- Role:** Dropdown menu set to 'Defendant (dft:pty)'. A blue arrow points to this field with the text 'Always Review!'.
- Pro se:** Dropdown menu set to 'No'.
- Prisoner Id:** Text input field.
- Office:** Text input field.
- Address1, Address 2, Address 3:** Text input fields.
- State:** Text input field.
- Zip:** Text input field.
- Country:** Text input field.
- City:** Text input field.
- Prison:** Dropdown menu.
- Phone:** Text input field.
- Fax:** Text input field.
- E-mail:** Text input field.
- Party text:** Text input field.
- Start date:** Text input field with value '2/23/2023'.
- End date:** Text input field.
- Corporation:** Dropdown menu set to 'no'.
- Notice:** Dropdown menu set to 'yes'.

At the bottom of the form, there are buttons for 'Add Party' and 'Start a New Search'.

Use the drop list to scroll down and find the role of "Plaintiff." Left click on this role so that the party role is redefined in the system.

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

Open a Civil Case

Add New Party Create Case

2:23-cv-?????

Party Information  
John Plaintiff

Title

Role Defendant (dft:pty)  
Defendant (dft:pty)  
FourthParty defendant (4dft:pty)  
FourthParty plaintiff (4pla:pty)  
Garnishee (gar:pty)  
In Re (inre:pty)  
Interested Party (ip:pty)  
Interpleader (intpl:pty)  
Intervenor (intv:pty)  
Intervenor Defendant (intvd:pty)  
Intervenor Plaintiff (intvp:pty)  
Material Witness (mw:pty)  
Mediator (med:pty)  
Movant (mov:pty)  
Objector (obj:pty)  
Petitioner (pet:pty)  
**Plaintiff (pla:pty)**  
Receiver (rc:pty)  
Relator (rel:pty)  
Respondent (res:pty)  
Special Master (sm:pty)  
Trustee (trus:pty)

Unit

Show this address on the docket sheet

City

Country

Fax

Phone

E-mail

Party text


Start date

Corporation no

Notice yes

Add Party

Start a New Search



The party role has now been redefined as plaintiff. (Arrow 1)

To continue, click "Add Party." (Arrow 2)

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

Open a Civil Case

Add New Party Create Case

Collapse All Expand All

2:23-cv-?????

Party Information  
John Plaintiff

Title

Role **Plaintiff (pla.pty)** ← 1

Pro se **No**

Prisoner Id  Unit

Office

Address1

Address 2   Show this address on the docket sheet

Address 3  City

State  Zip  Country

Prison

Phone  Fax

E-mail

Party text

Start date  End date

Corporation **no**

Notice **yes**

Add Party ← 2

Start a New Search

The attorney filer is now presented with the “Party Tree” or “Summary Screen” on the left. This summary screen reflects each party that has been added to the case. Review this screen each time a party is added. Notice that party “John Plaintiff” has the notation “pla” beside his name. This is a further reminder that this party is designated as a plaintiff. If this screen shows a notation other than “pla” the filer will click on the pencil icon. This will return the previous screen where in the filer may correct the party role status. (Clicking on the red x will completely remove the party “John Plaintiff.”)

The screenshot shows the CM ECF web interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the CM ECF logo and menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. Below the navigation bar is a link to "Open a Civil Case". The main content area is divided into two sections. On the left, there is a "Party Tree" section with buttons for "Add New Party" and "Create Case". Below these buttons are links for "Collapse All" and "Expand All". The Party Tree shows a case identifier "2:23-cv-?????" and a party entry "John Plaintiff" with the notation "pla" and a pencil icon. Below "John Plaintiff" are sub-entries: "Alias", "Corporate Parent or other affiliate", and "Attorney". A blue arrow points to the "John Plaintiff" entry. On the right, there is a "Search for a party" form with input fields for "Last / Business Name", "First Name", and "Middle Name", and a "Search" button.

If changes had been made after clicking the pencil, the filer would click on “Save Changes” and then be sent to the screen shown on the following page.

The screenshot shows the CM ECF web interface with the "Party Information" form for "John Plaintiff". The navigation bar and "Open a Civil Case" link are the same as in the previous screenshot. The Party Tree on the left is the same, but the "John Plaintiff" entry is highlighted in yellow. The "Party Information" form on the right contains the following fields: Title, Role (Plaintiff (pla:pty)), Pro se (No), Prisoner Id, Office, Address1, Address2, Address3, State, Zip, City, Country, Prison, Phone, Fax, E-mail, Party text, Start date (2/23/2023), End date, Corporation (no), and Notice (yes). A blue arrow points to the "Save Changes" button at the bottom of the form. There is also a link for "Start a New Search" below the "Save Changes" button.

The filer is presented with an update advisory. **Do NOT** click on “Create Case” yet.

Instead, click “Add New Party.”

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

Open a Civil Case

Add New Party Create Case

Collapse All Expand All

2:23-cv-?????

John Plaintiff pla

- Alias
- Corporate Parent or other affiliate
- Attorney

The changes you made have been temporarily stored for processing. If you need to make more changes, use the case participant tree to navigate. You must click Update Case or Create Case to save the changes to the case.

The attorney filer may now add “Alias” or “Corporate Parent or Other Affiliate” information for this party. In this example, an alias will be entered first.

Click on the icon next to “Alias.”

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

Open a Civil Case

Add New Party Create Case

Collapse All Expand All

2:23-cv-?????

John Plaintiff pla

- Alias
- Corporate Parent or other affiliate
- Attorney

Search for a party

Last / Business Name First Name Middle Name

Search

The “Search for an Alias” screen is presented.

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

Open a Civil Case

Add New Party Create Case

Collapse All Expand All

2:23-cv-?????

John Plaintiff pla

- Alias
- Corporate Parent or other affiliate
- Attorney

Search for an alias for John Plaintiff

Last / Business Name

Search



Enter any alias for the party. In this example, the user has entered the last name "Plain." (Arrow 1)

Click "Search." (Arrow 2)

In the sample case, the system returns several possible aliases. Again, to investigate whether any of these might be the same as the alias for the case being filed, the user may left click on any particular result and then double click to retrieve the "Information Box" with any further identifiers. If a match is found, the user may close the "Information Box" and leave the same alias highlighted and then click "Select Alias." If a matching alias does not exist in the system, click on "Create New Alias." In this example, the filer has created the alias "Johnny Plain."

The screenshot shows the CM ECF interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the CM ECF logo and menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. Below the navigation bar is a link to "Open a Civil Case". The main content area is divided into two sections. On the left, there is a sidebar with "Add New Party" and "Create Case" buttons. Below these are "Collapse All" and "Expand All" links. A tree view shows a case "2:23-cv-?????" with a party "John Plaintiff" and sub-items "Alias", "Corporate Parent or other affiliate", and "Attorney". On the right, there is a search form titled "Search for an alias for John Plaintiff". The form has a text input field for "Last / Business Name" containing the text "Plain", with a blue arrow labeled "1" pointing to it. Below the input field is a "Search" button with a blue arrow labeled "2" pointing to it. Below the search button is a "Search Results" list containing several entries: "Plaintiff, Example", "Plaintiff, Ima", "Plaintiff, Intervenor", "Plaintiff, Jane", "Plaintiff, John", and "Plaintiff, One". Below the list are "Select Alias" and "Create New Alias" buttons.

Add additional information to the alias, specifically noting the "Alias Type" and any "Generation" data. Use the drop arrow to modify. (Arrow 1)

The screenshot shows the CM ECF interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the CM ECF logo and menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. Below the navigation bar is a link to "Open a Civil Case". The main content area is divided into two sections. On the left, there is a sidebar with "Add New Party" and "Create Case" buttons. Below these are "Collapse All" and "Expand All" links. A tree view shows a case "2:23-cv-?????" with a party "John Plaintiff" and sub-items "Alias", "Corporate Parent or other affiliate", and "Attorney". On the right, there is an "Alias Information" form. The form has several input fields: "Last/Business name" containing "Plain", "First name" containing "Johnny", "Middle name" (empty), "Type" containing "aka", "Generation" (empty), and "Start date" containing "3/1/2023". Below the "Type" field is a blue arrow labeled "1" pointing to it. Below the "Add Alias" button is a blue arrow labeled "2" pointing to it.

**Review the information.**

Click "Add Alias." (Arrow 2)

The alias has now been added to the “Party Tree” on the left and may be modified if needed by using the pencil icon. (If a filer uses the pencil icon, remember to SAVE any changes!!)

Continue to cycle through this process until all known aliases have been added to the case.

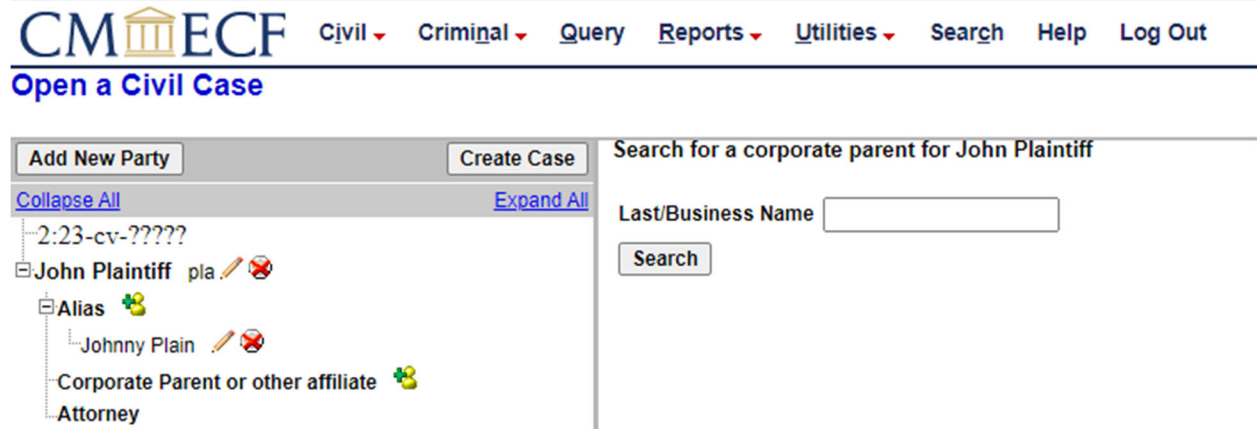
The screenshot shows the CM ECF interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the CM ECF logo and menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. Below the navigation bar is a header section with the text "Open a Civil Case". The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains a "Party Tree" with a "Collapse All" and "Expand All" link. The tree structure is as follows: 2:23-cv-????? (expanded), John Plaintiff (expanded), Alias (expanded), Johnny Plain (expanded), Corporate Parent or other affiliate (expanded), and Attorney (expanded). A blue arrow points to the "Alias" node. The right column contains a search box titled "Search for an alias for John Plaintiff" with a "Last / Business Name" input field and a "Search" button.

Corporate Parents or Other Affiliates may also be added to a case by use of the appropriate link on the “Party Tree” screen.

To do so, left click on the icon next to “Corporate Parent or Other Affiliate.”

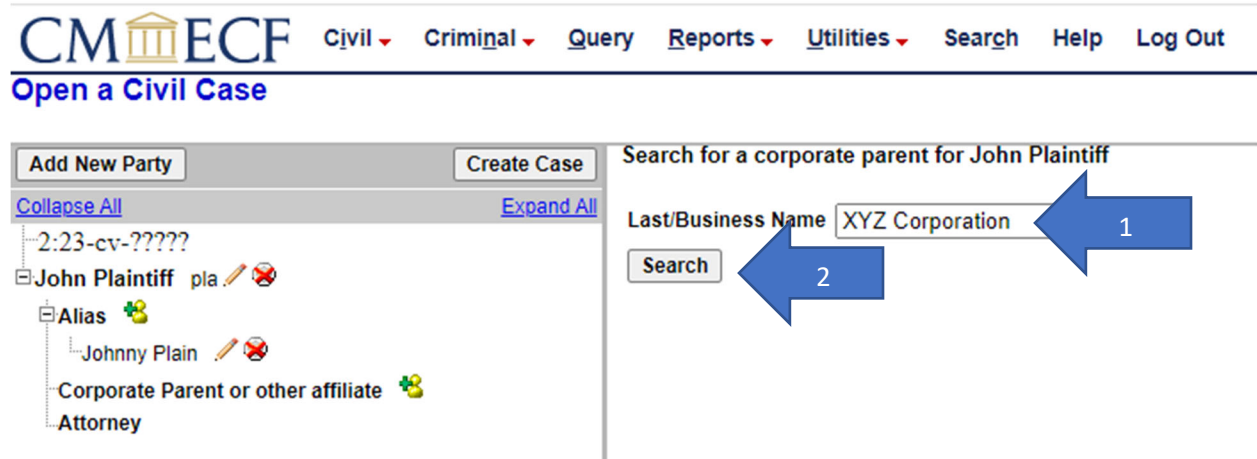
This screenshot is identical to the one above, showing the CM ECF interface. The main difference is that a blue arrow now points to the "Corporate Parent or other affiliate" node in the Party Tree, indicating the next step in the process.

The "Search for a corporate parent for John Plaintiff" screen appears.



In this example, the name "XYZ Corporation" has been entered. (Arrow 1)

Click "Search." (Arrow 2)



CM/ECF returns two positive results.

The screenshot shows the CM/ECF interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the CM/ECF logo and menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. Below the navigation bar is a link to "Open a Civil Case". The main interface is divided into two panels. The left panel, titled "Add New Party" and "Create Case", shows a tree view for case "2:23-cv-?????". Under "John Plaintiff", there are sub-items: "Alias" (with a plus icon), "Johnny Plain" (with edit and delete icons), "Corporate Parent or other affiliate" (with a plus icon), and "Attorney". The right panel, titled "Search for a corporate parent for John Plaintiff", has a text input field for "Last/Business Name" containing "XYZ Corporation" and a "Search" button. Below the search field is a "Search Results" list box containing "XYZ Corporation" and "XYZ Corporations 1-10". At the bottom of the right panel are two buttons: "Select Corporate parent" and "Create New Corporate Parent". A large blue arrow points from the right towards the search results list.

Again, to investigate whether any of these might be the same as the “Corporate Parent/Affiliate” for the case being filed, the user may left click on any particular result and then double click to retrieve the “Information Box” with any further identifiers. If a match is found, the user may follow the same procedure noted above when “John Plaintiff” was added, close the “Information Box” and leave the same name highlighted and then click “Select Corporate Parent/Affiliate.” If a match does not exist in the system(a negative search), click on “Create New Corporate Parent.” In this example, the filer is creating a new “XYZ Corporation.”

This screenshot is identical to the one above, showing the same search results. However, a large blue arrow now points from the right towards the "Create New Corporate Parent" button at the bottom of the right panel.

Be sure to define the “Type” category box. In this instance, the user has created a “Corporate Parent.” (Arrow 1)

Click “Add Corporate Parent.” (Arrow 2)

The information is now added to the “Party Summary Screen” or “Party Tree” on the left.

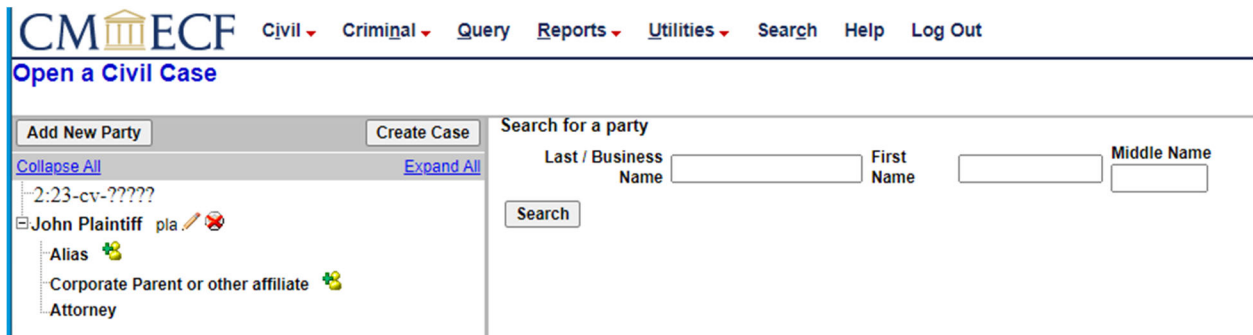
Continue cycling through this process until all corporate parents and/or affiliates have been added.

**NOTE: Parties must file separate corporate disclosures pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 7.1 and Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 12.4.**

**Review the information.**

Once complete, click on “Add New Party.”

The attorney filer is now returned to the “Search for a party” screen.

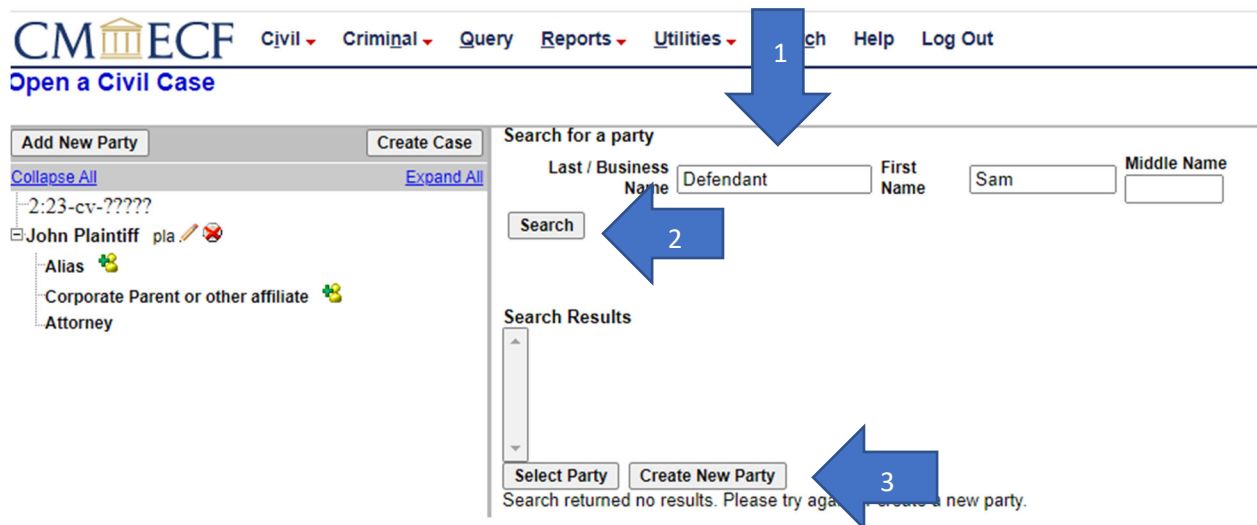


Add the party name “Sam Defendant” to the fields. (Arrow 1)

Click “Search.” (Arrow 2)

The filer is presented with a negative search result for the name “Sam Defendant.” This means that no existing party with this name is found in the database. This party must be added or created.

Click “Create New Party.” (Arrow 3)



The "Party Information" screen for "Sam Defendant" is presented.

The filer will observe a new data field that was not presented in the summary screen for John Plaintiff. This is the "Generation" field. (Arrow 1) This field is presented because the filer is creating a brand-new party for the database.

**Notice the party role has defaulted to a status of "Defendant." (Arrow 2) Again, the system will always default to the role of defendant every time a party is added. The filer must define each party's role as that party is added to the case.**

In this instance, the default role status is correct. "Sam Defendant" will be the defendant.

**Review the information screen.**

Click "Add Party."

The screenshot shows the "Party Information" form in the CM ECF system. The form is titled "Party Information" and contains the following fields and values:

- Last name: Defendant
- First name: Sam
- Middle name: (empty)
- Generation: (empty) - Arrow 1 points to this field.
- Title: (empty)
- Role: Defendant (dft.pty) - Arrow 2 points to this dropdown menu.
- Pro se: No
- Prisoner Id: (empty)
- Office: (empty)
- Address1: (empty)
- Address2: (empty)
- Address3: (empty)
- State: (empty)
- Zip: (empty)
- Country: (empty)
- City: (empty)
- Prison: (empty)
- Phone: (empty)
- Fax: (empty)
- E-mail: (empty)
- Party text: (empty)
- Start date: 2/23/2023
- End date: (empty)
- Corporation: no
- Notice: yes

At the bottom left of the form, there is an "Add Party" button. A blue arrow labeled "3" points to this button. A blue arrow labeled "2- Always Review!" points to the "Role" dropdown menu. A blue arrow labeled "1" points to the "Generation" field.

The attorney filer is now presented with an updated “Party Tree” or “Summary Screen” on the left. Notice that “Sam Defendant” has “dft” beside his name. (Arrow 1)

Again, add “Alias” or “Corporate Parent/Other Affiliate” information as appropriate to the case being filed.

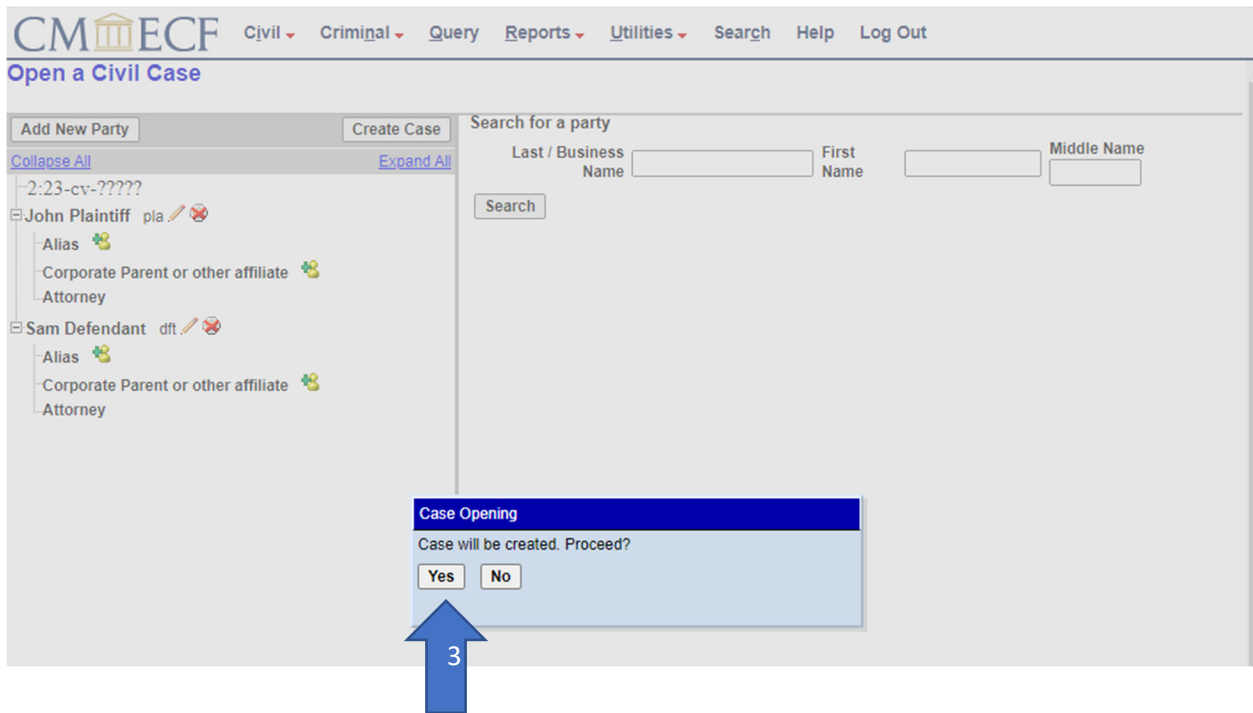


Continue to cycle through this process until all parties have been correctly added to the case.

Then click “Create Case.” (Arrow 2)

A prompt will appear inquiring whether the case should really be created.

Click “Yes.” (Arrow 3)





## Step 6 – Multiple Parts.

The attorney filer is now prompted to docket the lead event in the new case. Users are strongly encouraged to do so now instead of logging out with the intent to return later and file the initiating document. The only thing that has happened at this point is the creation of the case shell. **There is no true case until the initiating document has been entered and a Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) verifying the same has been issued by the CM/ECF system.**

To proceed, click on “Docket Lead Event.”



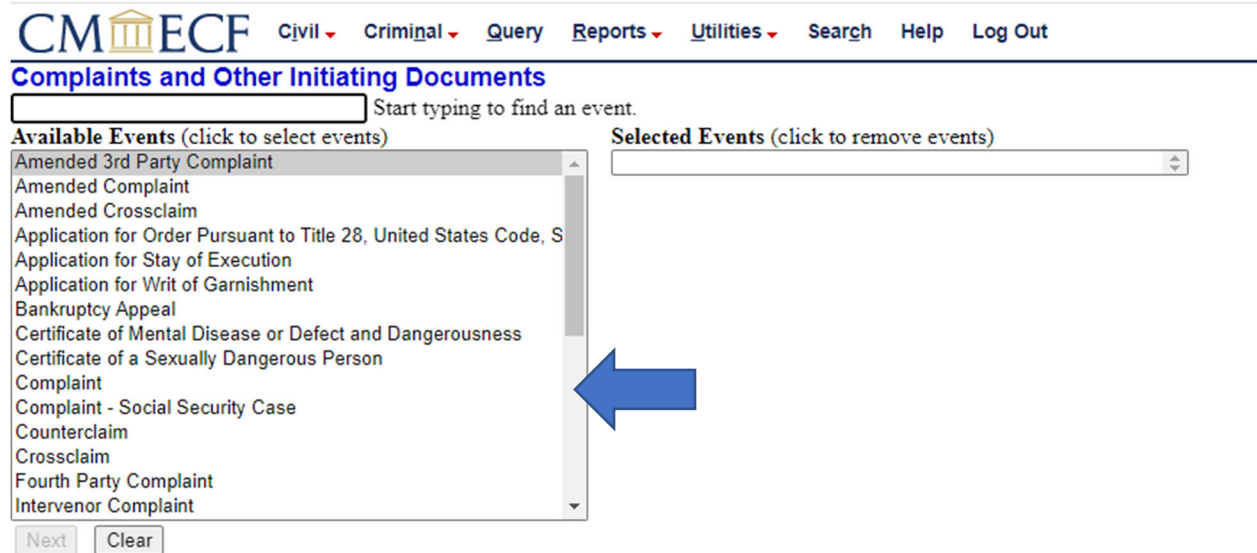
Case Number 23-43 has been opened.

[Docket Lead Event?](#)



The filer is now presented with the drop list showing possible case initiating documents.

**(Please note that “Motions to Proceed In Forma Pauperis” are no longer filed first.) Any such motion will now be filed in the case as a separate docket entry immediately AFTER the “Complaint” has been filed.)**



Scroll down the drop list to find the event “Complaint.”

Left click on “Complaint” and it will appear in the “Selected Events” box on the right. Only one event at a time should be in the “Selected Events” box. If a user selects the wrong event or selects multiple events, deselect the incorrect or extra events by clicking on the same inside of the “Selected Events” box. The wrong or extra selections will be removed.

Click “Next.”

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

### Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

Start typing to find another event.

**Available Events (click to select events)**

- Amended 3rd Party Complaint
- Amended Complaint
- Amended Crossclaim
- Application for Order Pursuant to Title 28, United States Code, S
- Application for Stay of Execution
- Application for Writ of Garnishment
- Bankruptcy Appeal
- Certificate of Mental Disease or Defect and Dangerousness
- Certificate of a Sexually Dangerous Person
- Complaint**
- Complaint - Social Security Case
- Counterclaim
- Crossclaim
- Fourth Party Complaint
- Intervenor Complaint

**Selected Events (click to remove events)**

Complaint

Next Clear

The filer is now prompted to verify the case number for this filing. Since the filer has not changed the case number from opening the shell nor logged out of CM/ECF, the system will remember the case opening number.

Users are encouraged to double-check a case number prompt every time it is presented.

Click “Next.”

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

### Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

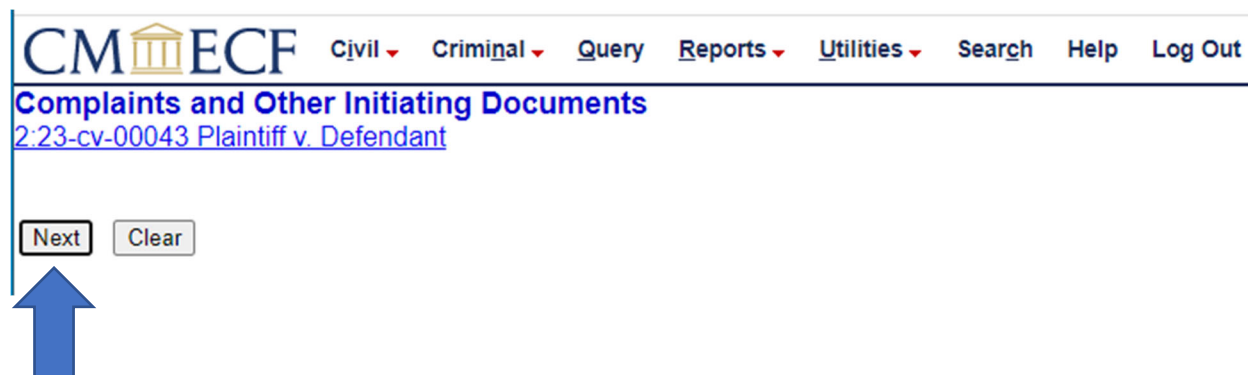
**Civil Case Number**

2:23-cv-43

Next Clear

The filer is now presented with a “ghost screen.”

Click “Next.”




The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the CM/ECF system with links for Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. Below the navigation bar is the page title "Complaints and Other Initiating Documents" and the case identifier "2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant". At the bottom of the page, there are two buttons: "Next" and "Clear". A large blue arrow points upwards to the "Next" button.

The user now has the option to select the filer of this document. (Notice that the defendant is at the top of the selection list.)

**NOTE that the defendant appears first in the party selection list!! This seems counterintuitive given that the plaintiff is bringing this action. This is an easy opportunity for the user to select the wrong “Filer.” Read the names as selections are made. Do not just rely upon a memory of the list.**

Proceed to the next page of this tutorial before taking any action.



The screenshot shows the "Pick Filer" dialog box in the CM/ECF system. On the left, there is a list of parties: "Sam Defendant dft" and "John Plaintiff pla". Above the list are "Collapse All" and "Expand All" links. On the right, there is a section titled "Select the filer." with a dropdown menu labeled "Select the Party:". The dropdown menu shows "Defendant, Sam [dft]" as the selected option, with "Plaintiff, John [pla]" listed below it. A large blue arrow points to the dropdown menu. At the bottom of the dialog box, there are three buttons: "Next", "Clear", and "New Filer".

The filer of this “*Complaint*” is the plaintiff. Select the plaintiff by left clicking once on his name. (Arrow 1)

**NOTE: If there were multiple plaintiffs in this action the user would hold down the “Ctrl” key on the keyboard and highlight each name separately by left clicking on the same. Later in the process, the system will update so that a filer might later select “all plaintiffs.”**

Click “Next.” (Arrow 2)

CM  ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

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**Complaints and Other Initiating Documents**  
[2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant](#)

Pick Filer

[Collapse All](#) [Expand All](#)

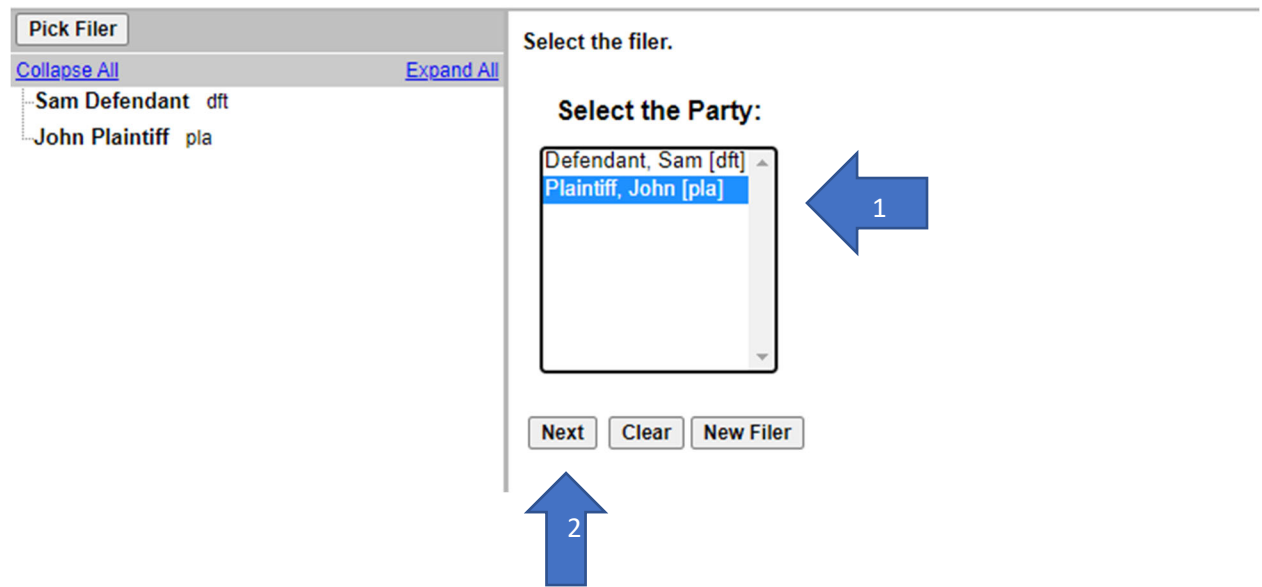
- Sam Defendant dft
- John Plaintiff pla

Select the filer.

Select the Party:

Defendant, Sam [dft]  
Plaintiff, John [pla]

Next Clear New Filer



The system now shows the “Attorney/Party Association” screen. **This IS NOT a “Notice of Attorney Appearance.”** Each attorney will file a separate “Notice of Attorney Appearance” in each case in which they participate. This screen is simply creating the association between the party and the attorney on the face of the docket sheet. The first check box creates the association. The last check box reminds the system to send electronic notices to e-filer associated attorneys. (If the first and/or third boxes are unchecked, electronic notices will NOT be issued.) The middle box simply identifies this attorney as lead if there are multiple attorneys for the party. (Arrow 1)

Click “Next.” (Arrow 2)

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant

The following attorney/party associations do not exist for the above case(s).

Please check the box on the left of the screen for associations which should be created.

If the association should *not* be created, be sure the box is *unchecked*.

John Plaintiff (pty:pla) represented by John Doel (aty)  Lead  Notice

Next Clear



The filer is now prompted to “Please select the party that this filing is against.” (Arrow 1)

**NOTE: The parties have flipped position in the “Select Party” screen list!!! It is easy to select the wrong party if the filer simply relies upon memory of the previous listing order. Make sure to look at the party names as they are selected.** (Arrow 2)

To select the defendant, left click once on “Defendant, Sam” or click on “All defendants” on the right under the “Select a Group” option.

Click “Next.” (Arrow 3)

The screenshot shows a web interface for selecting a party. On the left, a sidebar titled "Pick Party" contains a "Collapse All" link, an "Expand All" link, and a list of parties: "John Plaintiff pla" and "Sam Defendant dft". The main area has a header "Please select the party that this filing is against." with a blue arrow labeled "1" pointing to it. Below the header, there are two sections: "Select the Party:" and "Select a Group:". The "Select the Party:" section contains a list box with "Plaintiff, John [pla]" and "Defendant, Sam [dft]", with a blue arrow labeled "2" pointing to it. The "Select a Group:" section has four radio button options: "No Group" (selected), "All Defendants", "All Plaintiffs", and "All Parties". At the bottom, there are three buttons: "Next", "Clear", and "New Party", with a blue arrow labeled "3" pointing to the "Next" button.

A filer may now upload any document(s) for the case. (Screen shot on next page.)

Filers are encouraged to create, save, and convert documents to PDF before logging into CM/ECF.

There are several reasons for this suggestion. There is a maximum individual document size of 50 megabytes. Further, there is a maximum merge file (main document plus one or more attachments) size of 60 megabytes. The system does not provide reminders of the total file size used as a filer uploads documents into the system. In fact, the system will permit larger sized items to be uploaded and everything will appear normal until the filer tries to submit/commit the filing. If oversized files have been uploaded, the filer will then get the “spinning circle” and the system will advise that the filing failed.

A filer must know the file size of all documents!

If a filer must enter documents that exceed the maximum merge file size, refer to the separate instructional guide under the Court’s CM/ECF tab entitled *Managing Oversized Filings*.

The recommended way to convert desktop created documents to PDF is to create and save each original document as a Word or WordPerfect document and then, while that saved version is still open, go to the tool bar in the user’s word processing program. Click on “File” > “Print” > “Print As” > Select the pdf writing program on the computer. The document is not actually printing, it is converting and flattening the document in the background. Save this PDF version of the document for uploading into CM/ECF.

Further tips on how to successfully create and upload PDF documents can be found at [www.nced.uscourts.gov](http://www.nced.uscourts.gov) under the CM/ECF tab. Review the “Instructional Guides” section for *Updated NextGen PDF Guidance*.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Some word processing programs offer other methods for file conversion to PDF. The conversion method recommended above provides the best filing results in conjunction with CM/ECF configurations.

Begin by placing the cursor in the “Choose File” box and left clicking once.

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

### Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant](#)

Select the PDF document and any attachments.

**Main Document**

Choose File No file chosen

**Attachments** **Category** **Description**

1. Choose File No file chosen

Next Clear

The user will be pointed to their file directory.

CM ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

### Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant](#)

Select the PDF document and any attachments.

**Main Document**

Choose File No file chosen

**Attachments** **Category** **Description**

1. Choose File No file chosen

Next Clear

Open

Images (\\\nce.circ4.dcn\ral.nced) (I:) > CMECFTestDocs > CMECFTrainingDocs

Search CMECFTrainingDocs

Organize New folder

Name	Date modified	Type
13112003994.pdf	7/26/2022 3:36 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
AFFIDAVIT - FINANCIAL CJA 23.pdf	3/3/2022 5:13 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
AFFIDAVIT 2.pdf	3/4/2022 8:43 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...
AFFIDAVIT 3.pdf	3/4/2022 8:43 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...
AFFIDAVIT with metadata.pdf	12/8/2022 10:38 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...
AFFIDAVIT.pdf	3/3/2022 4:41 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
ANSWER - AMENDED.pdf	3/3/2022 3:17 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
ANSWER - SEALED.pdf	3/3/2022 3:18 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
ANSWER TO COMPLAINT.pdf	3/3/2022 3:54 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
ANSWER.pdf	3/3/2022 3:17 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
APPEAL - BANKRUPTCY.pdf	3/4/2022 1:36 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
APPEAL - INTERIM OCULTORY.pdf	3/4/2022 1:37 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...

File name: All Files (\*.\*)

Open Cancel



Navigate to the correct file and find the document to be filed. Place the cursor over the document and left click once so that the file name is highlighted. Then, right click once on the file to open the file and verify that the correct file has been selected. This is a highly encouraged best practices habit. This is the ONLY opportunity to VERIFY that the correct document is being uploaded.

The screenshot shows a web application interface for filing documents. The top navigation bar includes the CM ECF logo and menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. The main heading is "Complaints and Other Initiating Documents" with a sub-heading "2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant". Below this, there is a prompt: "Select the PDF document and any attachments." The interface has two sections: "Main Document" with a "Choose File" button and "No file chosen" text, and "Attachments" with a table structure. The table has columns for "Attachments", "Category", and "Description". The first row shows a "Choose File" button, "No file chosen", a dropdown menu, and an empty text box. Below the table are "Next" and "Clear" buttons.

Overlaid on the bottom half of the screenshot is a Windows File Explorer window titled "Open". The address bar shows the path: "This PC > Images (\nce.circ4.dcn\ral.nced) (I:) > CMECFTestDocs > CMECFTrainingDocs". The left sidebar shows the "Images" folder selected. The main pane displays a list of files with columns for "Name", "Date modified", and "Type". The file "COMPLAINT.pdf" is selected and highlighted in blue. A large blue arrow points from the right towards the selected file. The "File name" field at the bottom contains "COMPLAINT.pdf" and the file type is set to "All Files (\*.\*)". The "Open" button is visible at the bottom right of the window.

Attachments	Category	Description
1. <input type="button" value="Choose File"/> No file chosen	<input type="text" value=""/>	<input type="text" value=""/>

Name	Date modified	Type
COMPLAINT - CROSSCLAIM.pdf	3/4/2022 1:26 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
COMPLAINT - INTERVENOR.pdf	3/4/2022 1:31 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
COMPLAINT - SEALED.pdf	3/3/2022 3:18 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
COMPLAINT - THIRD PARTY.pdf	3/3/2022 3:16 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
COMPLAINT.pdf	3/3/2022 3:15 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
CONSENT.pdf	3/4/2022 1:54 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
Copyright Report.pdf	12/12/2022 1:18 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
COUNTERCLAIM.pdf	3/31/2022 9:36 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...
CROSSCLAIM.pdf	3/31/2022 10:32 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...
DISCLOSURE.pdf	3/4/2022 8:15 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...
DISCOVERY PLAN - REQUEST FOR.pdf	3/4/2022 8:20 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...
DISCOVERY PLAN.pdf	3/4/2022 8:20 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...

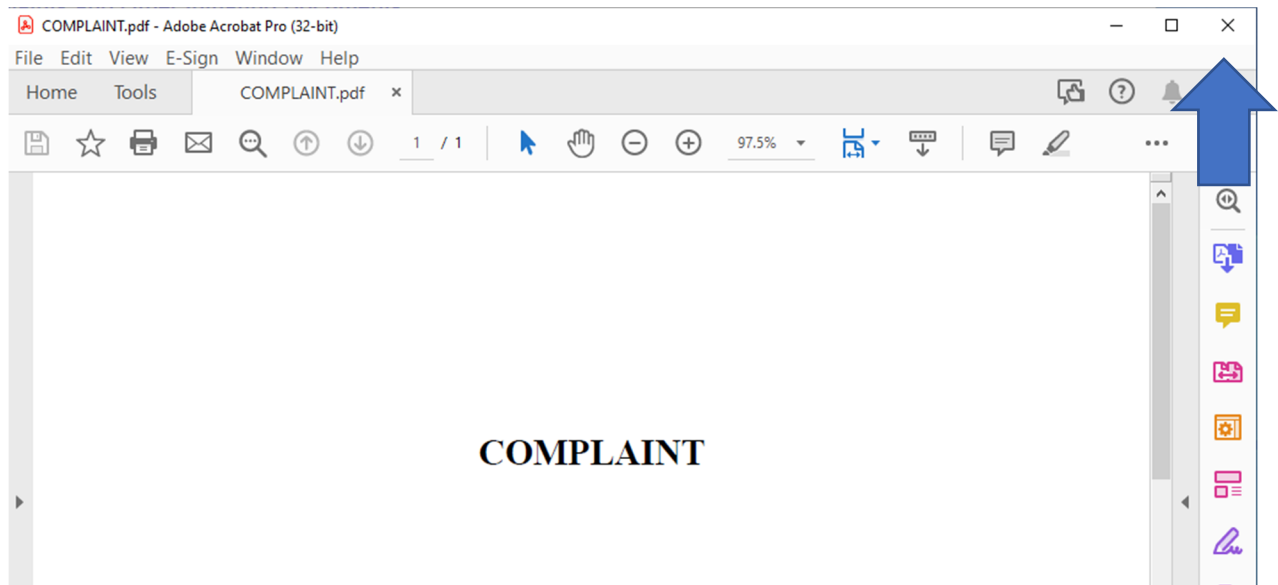
Right click on the intended document and open the same with a PDF reader to open and verify the document being filed.

The screenshot shows a web application interface for CM ECF. The top navigation bar includes links for Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. The main content area is titled "Complaints and Other Initiating Documents" and shows a case entry for "2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant". Below this, there are sections for "Main Document" and "Attachments", each with a "Choose File" button and "No file chosen" status. A "Next" and "Clear" button are also present. A file explorer window is overlaid on the interface, showing a list of PDF files in a folder named "CMECFTrainingDocs". The file "COMPLAINT.pdf" is selected. A context menu is open over the selected file, listing various actions such as "Open with Adobe Acrobat", "Print", "Share with Skype", "7-Zip", "CRC SHA", "Edit with Adobe Acrobat", "Combine files in Acrobat...", "Share using Adobe Acrobat", "Scan with Apex One", "Open with", "Restore previous versions", "Send to", "Cut", "Copy", "Create shortcut", "Delete", "Rename", and "Properties".

File Name	Date modified	Type
DISCLAIMER.pdf	3/4/2022 1:26 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
ERVENOR.pdf	3/4/2022 1:31 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
LED.pdf	3/3/2022 3:18 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
RD PARTY.pdf	3/3/2022 3:16 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
COMPLAINT.pdf	3/3/2022 3:15 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
CONSENT.pdf	4/4/2022 1:54 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
Copyright Report.pdf	12/12/2022 1:18 PM	Adobe Acrobat D...
COUNTERCLAIM.pdf	3/31/2022 9:36 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...
CROSSCLAIM.pdf	3/31/2022 10:32 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...
DISCLOSURE.pdf	3/4/2022 8:15 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...
DISCOVERY PLAN - REQUEST FOR.pdf	3/4/2022 8:20 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...
DISCOVERY PLAN.pdf	3/4/2022 8:20 AM	Adobe Acrobat D...

The document will open. If the wrong document has been selected, close the file and return to the directory in order to select the correct file. If this is the correct file, close the window by clicking on the (X) on the upper right.

The user will be returned to the previous file directory with the previewed document still highlighted.



Click "Open" to upload the file.

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant

Select the PDF document and any attachments.

Main Document

Choose File No file chosen

Attachments

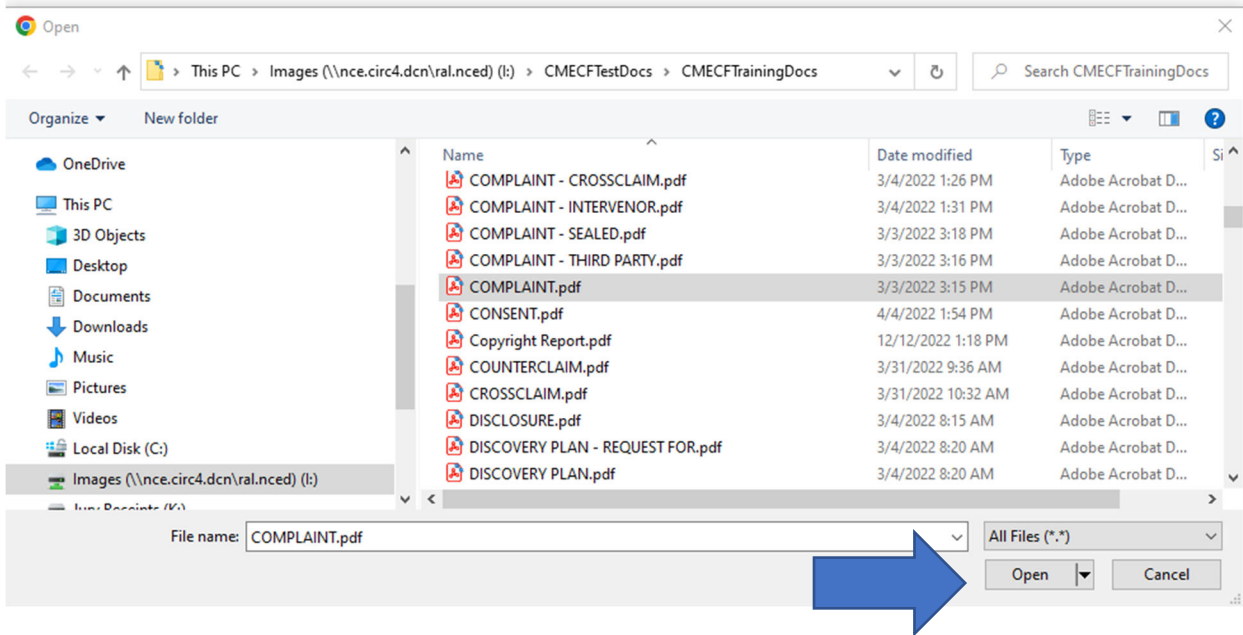
Category

Description

1. Choose File No file chosen

Next

Clear




The file has now been uploaded.

CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

**Complaints and Other Initiating Documents**  
[2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant](#)

Select the PDF document and any attachments.

**Main Document**  
Choose File COMPLAINT.pdf 

Attachments	Category	Description
1. Choose File No file chosen	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Next Clear

Proceed in this same manner to upload any attachments to the main document. Remember to “Categorize” and/or “Describe” each attachment separately. (Arrow 1) If there are (5) or more attachments to any main document, the first attachment must be an index. (Remember the maximum merge file size.)<sup>5</sup>


Click “Next.” (Arrow 2)


CM/ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities Search Help Log Out

**Complaints and Other Initiating Documents**  
[2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant](#)

Select the PDF document and any attachments.

**Main Document**  
Choose File COMPLAINT.pdf

Attachments	Category	Description
1. Choose File CIVIL COVER SHEET.pdf	Civil Cover Sheet	<input type="text"/> Remove 
2. Choose File SUMMONS ...POSED.pdf	Proposed Summons	Defendant (Name) Remove
3. Choose File No file chosen	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Next  2

<sup>5</sup> If a user must enter a file that exceeds the maximum merge file size of 60 megabytes, please review the Instructional Guide *Filing Over Sized Documents Tips* under the CM/ECF tab on this court’s website at [www.nced.uscourts.gov](http://www.nced.uscourts.gov).

Answer the following question as appropriate for the case being filed.

If you are filing an “*Application to Proceed Without Payment of Fees*” or if you represent the federal government, answer “Yes” on this screen. If you are paying the filing fee, answer “No.”

**NOTE: “*Motions to Proceed in Forma Pauperis*” are now filed separately immediately AFTER the “Complaint” or other initiating document.**

For this example, “No” will be selected. (Arrow 1)

Then, click “Next.” (Arrow 2)

The screenshot shows the CM/ECF web interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the CM/ECF logo and links for Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. Below the navigation bar, the page title is "Complaints and Other Initiating Documents" and the case number is "2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant". The main question is "Is this filed with an Application to Proceed Without Prepayment of Fees?" followed by "or" and "Is this application filed on behalf of the USA?". There are two radio buttons: "Yes" (unselected) and "No" (selected). A blue arrow labeled "1" points to the "No" radio button. Below the radio buttons are "Next" and "Clear" buttons. A blue arrow labeled "2" points to the "Next" button.

If the filing fee has already been paid, enter the receipt number in the receipt field, click “Next” and skip the following three pages of this tutorial.

If the “*Application to Proceed Without Prepayment of Fees*” or the “*Application filed on behalf of the USA*” was selected on the previous screen, click “Next” and skip the next three pages of this tutorial.

If paying with a credit card, click on “Next” and the user will be directed to PACER so that a payment may be processed.

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**CM ECF** [Civil](#) [Criminal](#) [Query](#) [Reports](#) [Utilities](#) [Search](#) [Help](#) [Log Out](#)

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**Complaints and Other Initiating Documents**  
[2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant](#)

**Please Read:**

**If you have prepaid enter receipt number, if you have not prepaid click "next" to go to pay.gov**

Receipt #:  Fee: \$402 



The attorney filer will be prompted to log into PACER again.

An official website of the United States government. Here's how you know. Log in to PACER Systems

**PACER**  
Public Access To Court Electronic Records

## Manage My Account

TRAIN ... TRAIN ... TRAIN ... TRAIN ... TRAIN ... TRAIN ... TRAIN ... TRAIN ... TRAIN ... TRAIN ... TRAIN

Enter your PACER credentials to update personal information, register to e-file, make an online payment, or to perform other account maintenance functions.

**Login**  
\* Required Information

Username \* jdoel0001

Password \*

[Not jdoel0001? Click here to login as a different user](#)

[Need an Account?](#) | [Forgot Your Password?](#) | [Forgot Username?](#)

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Complete the information screen and click "Next."

**Review this information to make sure that the credit card data matches the attorney filer!!**





### Pay Filing Fee for North Carolina Eastern District Court (test)

**\* Required Information**

#### Payment Amount

Amount Due \* **\$402.00**

#### Enter Payment Method

Account Holder Name \*  ?

Card Type \*  ▾

Account Number \*  ?

Card Expiration Date \*  ▾ /  ▾

Use billing address

Address \*


City \*

State \*  ▾ ?

Zip/Postal Code \*

Country \*  ▾

**Note: We protect the security of your information during transmission using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) software, which encrypts information you submit.**



Continue completing the information screen.

Make sure to authorize the billing.

Click "Submit."

**NOTE: Click the "Submit" button once. The program is a bit slow at this point. Clicking "Submit" more than once may result in a double billing to your credit card.**

**Review the summary once more!**

### Court Specific

Provide Attorney Filer's Name *	<input type="text"/>
Provide the Attorney's Phone Number *	<input type="text"/>
Provide Date of Payment Authorization *	<input type="text"/>
Restate Payment Amount Authorized *	<input type="text"/>


### Email Receipt

Email	<input type="text" value="johndoel@atty.com"/>
Confirm Email	<input type="text" value="johndoel@atty.com"/>
Additional Email Addresses	<input type="text"/>

### Authorization

I authorize a charge to my credit card for the amount above in accordance with my card issuer agreement. \*

**Note: We protect the security of your information during transmission using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) software, which encrypts information you submit.**



The filer will now see the “Summary Screen.” Filers are encouraged to stop here and review the information presented. Verify that this filing is being made in the correct case number, that the document is named correctly, and that all attachments have been included.

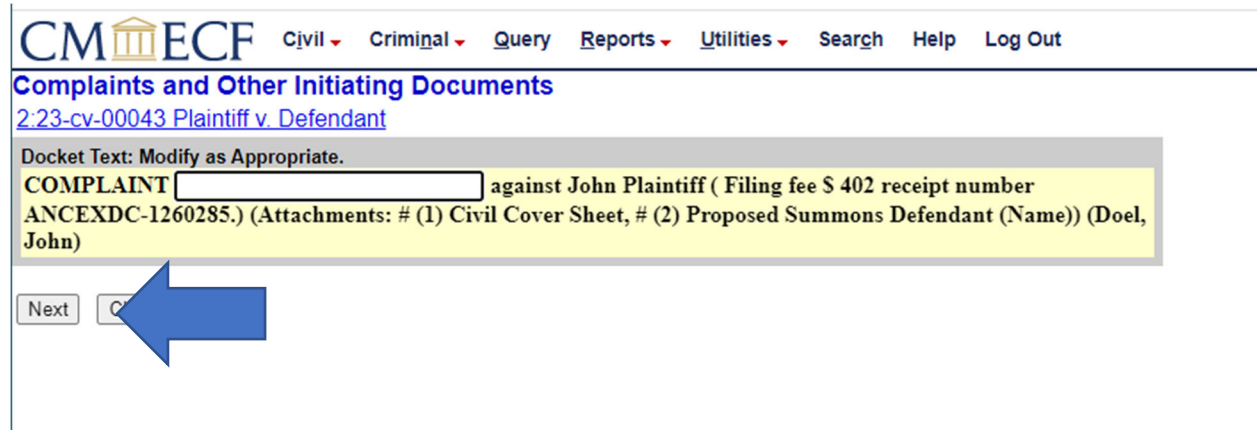
If this information is not correct click on “Civil” on the navigation bar and select “Complaints, Other Initiating Documents” and begin anew. (In this scenario, a user would continue using the existing case number and the user would enter the same receipt number. Remember, the system provided the case number just before it prompted the user to file the lead/initiating document!)

Do not use the “back arrow” on the browser in order to back up in the system and make corrections. Doing so may result in double-billing to a user’s credit card.

**NOTE: The free text field is used only for docket entry clarification purposes. This field is not to be used to enter any separate documents such as “and motion for...” A filer will NOT combine unlike events.** The free text field allows 250-character spaces, and anything typed here will appear on the public docket sheet in italics. There is no spell check program for this field.

**Review the information summary.**

Click “Next.”



The screenshot displays the CM/ECF web interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the CM/ECF logo and several menu items: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, Search, Help, and Log Out. Below the navigation bar, the page title is "Complaints and Other Initiating Documents" followed by the case number "2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant". The main content area shows a docket entry with the text: "Docket Text: Modify as Appropriate. COMPLAINT [redacted] against John Plaintiff ( Filing fee \$ 402 receipt number ANCEXDC-1260285.) (Attachments: # (1) Civil Cover Sheet, # (2) Proposed Summons Defendant (Name)) (Doel, John)". At the bottom of the docket entry, there are two buttons: "Next" and "Cancel". A blue arrow points to the "Next" button.

The filer is now presented with the “Point of No Return Screen.” This is a filer’s last opportunity to abort the filing of the complaint in this matter. To do so click on “Civil” on the navigation bar and begin anew by selecting “Complaints, Other Initiating Documents.” (In this scenario, a user would continue using the existing case number and the user would enter the same receipt number. Remember, the system provided the case number just before it prompted the user to file the lead/initiating document!)

The text shown below in yellow is exactly what will appear on the public docket entry.

**Review the summary once more!**

Click “Next” to proceed and commit this filing.

---

**CM ECF** Civil ▾ Criminal ▾ Query Reports ▾ Utilities ▾ Search Help Log Out

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**Complaints and Other Initiating Documents**  
[2:23-cv-00043 Plaintiff v. Defendant](#)

Docket Text: Final Text

**COMPLAINT against John Plaintiff ( Filing fee \$ 402 receipt number ANCEXDC-1260285.)  
(Attachments: # (1) Civil Cover Sheet, # (2) Proposed Summons Defendant (Name)) (Doel, John)**

**Attention!! Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue.  
Have you redacted?**

*Source Document Path (for confirmation only):*  
C:\fakepath\COMPLAINT.pdf pages: 1  
C:\fakepath\CIVIL COVER SHEET.pdf pages: 1  
C:\fakepath\SUMMONS - PROPOSED.pdf pages: 1

Next  

The filer is now presented with the Notice of Electronic Filing or NEF.

The NEF will provide the full case number and the document number assigned to the filing by the CM/ECF system.

This same information will be sent to the filer via email. The email will contain the link for accessing the filer's ONE FREE LOOK at the file stamped version of the document and any attachments thereto.

To access the one free look via the email notice, click on the "Document Number" NOT the docket number.

Open and print or save a copy of each document/attachment. If a user forgets to print/save the item and closes the one free look, that user will be prompted to log into PACER and will be charged for viewing the documents(s) a second time.

The free look link in the email notice will expire after the first use or (15) days, whichever happens first. After this, the user will be billed to view the document(s).

**U.S. District Court**

**EASTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**Notice of Electronic Filing**

The following transaction was entered by Doel, John on 02/23/2023 at 11:34:10 AM EST and filed on 02/23/2023

**Case Name:** Plaintiff v. Defendant

**Case Number:** [2:23-cv-00043-D](#)

**Filer:** John Plaintiff

**Document Number:** [1](#)



**Docket Text:**

**COMPLAINT against John Plaintiff ( Filing fee \$ 402 receipt number ANCEXDC-1260285.)  
(Attachments: # (1) Civil Cover Sheet, # (2) Proposed Summons Defendant (Name)) (Doel, John)**

**2:23-cv-00043-D Notice has been electronically mailed to:**

John R Doel JDoe11995@gmail.com

**2:23-cv-00043-D Notice has been delivered by other means to:**

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

**3.21.23 Revised**