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# CM/ECF Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## 1. What is CM/ECF?

The federal judiciary's [Case Management/Electronic Case Files \(CM/ECF\)](#) system enables the electronic filing of case documents with the Court.

## 2. Is CM/ECF mandatory in the Southern District of Georgia?

All documents submitted for filing in the Southern District of Georgia Bankruptcy Court regardless of the filing date of the case, shall be filed electronically using the [CM/ECF](#) system, unless otherwise permitted by the Court's [Mandatory CM/ECF Administrative Procedures](#) or by the assigned judge. Absent good cause shown, attorneys in good standing admitted to practice before the Bar of this Court, including attorneys admitted *pro hac vice*, trustees or examiners serving in any case pending in the Court, and the United States Trustee must file all documents electronically using the [CM/ECF](#) system. Please review the Court's [Mandatory CM/ECF Administrative Procedures](#) at [www.gasb.uscourts.gov](http://www.gasb.uscourts.gov) for more information.

## 3. Who may file documents in the CM/ECF system?

In order to file documents in the CM/ECF system, an individual must [register for a PACER account](#), and request filing access from the Court.

**(a) CM/ECF Full Filing Privileges.** Attorneys in good standing admitted to practice in the Southern District of Georgia, [attorneys appearing pro hac vice](#), trustees or examiners serving in any case pending in this Court, and the U.S. Trustee must review [GASB ECF Registration for Attorney Filers](#) from the Court's website ([www.gasb.uscourts.gov](http://www.gasb.uscourts.gov)) as well as the [GASB Attorney Filer Terms and Conditions](#) before requesting filing access with the Court via [PACER](#).

**(b) CM/ECF Limited Filing Privileges.** Attorneys not admitted to practice in the Southern District of Georgia, and other limited filers such as creditors, must review [GASB ECF Registration for Limited Filers](#) from the Court's website ([www.gasb.uscourts.gov](http://www.gasb.uscourts.gov)) as well as the [GASB Limited Filer Terms and Conditions](#) before requesting filing access with the Court via [PACER](#).

The Clerk's Office will review requests for filing access transmitted from [PACER](#) and grant permission to the user to file in [CM/ECF](#), and he/she may then access [CM/ECF](#) to file pleadings electronically.

## 4. Are there any documents that can be filed electronically without registering for CM/ECF access?

Yes, there are two Court-approved programs for electronically filing documents that do not require registration for access to the CM/ECF system:

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- (a) **Electronic Proof of Claim (ePOC)**: A filer may use the ePOC program to file, amend, and withdraw proofs of claims without registering for CM/ECF access. Access to ePOC is available from the Court's website at [www.gasb.uscourts.gov](http://www.gasb.uscourts.gov).
- (b) **Electronic Financial Management Certificate (eFinCert)**: An approved financial management course provider can file a certificate concerning a debtor's completion of a financial management course through the eFinCert program, which does not require registration for CM/ECF access. Access to eFinCert is available from the Court's website at [www.gasb.uscourts.gov](http://www.gasb.uscourts.gov).

The filing of a document via ePOC or eFinCert constitutes the filer's signature for all purposes.

## 5. What are the technical requirements for filing documents in CM/ECF?

- A computer with a current operating system and updated virus protection software.
- An Internet connection: the faster the Internet connection, the easier CM/ECF is to access and use. It is recommended that users obtain fast access to the Internet using DSL, cable, or T-1 lines.
- A scanner: documents that are not prepared using word processing files on the user's computer must be scanned and converted to PDF (*portable document format*) before filing electronically.
- A printer.
- A word processing application; the Court standard is [Microsoft Word](#), which allows documents to be converted to PDF (*portable document format*). Other word processing programs, such as WordPerfect, also have this capability.
- [Adobe Acrobat](#).
- An Internet browser: CM/ECF has been tested with Firefox 78.0.2-80.0.1, Edge 84.0.522.40-85.0.564.51, Chrome 84.0.4147.89-85.0.4183.102, and Internet Explorer 11. **Note:** *Safari is supported but was not tested in NextGen Release 1.6 due to constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.*
- An individual [PACER](#) account to access documents and reports in the [CM/ECF](#) database, in addition to permission to file electronically in this Court.
- A valid credit card or debit card acceptable for payment of filing fees in [CM/ECF](#).
- **Please note:** petition preparation software with the case upload feature, while not required, may justify the additional cost with the increased productivity it provides.

## 6. Who may view documents in the CM/ECF system?

Subject to Court orders in specific cases, policy, or other individual Court limitations, the public may view dockets and documents in the CM/ECF system via the [Public Access to Court Electronic Records \(PACER\)](#) program. Logins are available to the public at the [PACER](#) website ([www.pacer.uscourts.gov](http://www.pacer.uscourts.gov)).

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## 7. Are there fees associated with CM/ECF?

To electronically file a document, a CM/ECF user must pay any applicable Court filing fee(s) as set forth in the [Bankruptcy Miscellaneous Fee Schedule](#). There are no additional fees associated with electronically filing documents in the CM/ECF system.

The [PACER](#) program is used to access docket sheets and filed documents. Litigants receive one free copy of documents filed electronically in their cases through a link in the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) that is emailed to them via CM/ECF. Copies are available to the public for viewing or downloading at the current [PACER](#) costs of ten cents (10 ¢) per page with a maximum cost per document of \$3.00. Transcripts of Court proceedings and docket sheets are not subject to the fee limit. There is no charge to view Court opinions and Court calendars. As directed by Congress, the judiciary's electronic public access program is funded entirely through user fees set by the Judicial Conference of the United States.

## 8. Is there a required format for documents filed electronically in CM/ECF?

Yes. Documents must be in PDF (portable document format) to be accepted for filing in CM/ECF. This format was chosen because it allows a document to retain its pagination, formatting, and fonts, regardless of the type of computer used to view or print the document. It is also an open standard format. Several word processing programs contain features for converting documents to PDF.

PDF files should be no more than four (4) megabytes (MBs), which is approximately 30-50 standard business type pages.

## 9. How can users learn to file documents in CM/ECF?

Filing documents in CM/ECF is easy. Generally, only a minimal amount of training is necessary. [CM/ECF User Manuals](#) have been created to assist filers with finding the appropriate docket events, filing documents, and paying fees in CM/ECF. While the entire manuals contain useful information for filers, each filer requesting filing access in CM/ECF must review at least the following sections of the manuals before obtaining filing privileges with our Court:

- Technical Requirements
- Preparing for Electronic Filing
- Scanning/Converting Docs to PDF
- Navigating CM/ECF
- Fees and Payments
- Orders

The Bankruptcy Court Clerk's Office also offers CM/ECF training at no cost to attorneys, paralegals, secretaries, and other professionals in the Southern District of Georgia. To get started with training, please visit the Court's website at [www.gasb.uscourts.gov](http://www.gasb.uscourts.gov) and click [CM/ECF Information](#).

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There are also several Electronic Learning Modules (ELMs) available online at <https://pacer.uscourts.gov/help/>.

## 10. How do I add additional email addresses to my CM/ECF account?

Log in to [CM/ECF](#) and click *Utilities > Maintain Your ECF Account*. Click *Email information* and input the secondary email address(es) in the boxes provided. Check the box to indicate whether notices should be emailed to the secondary address(es), click *Return to Account screen*, and then click *Submit* to complete.

## 11. What is a Filing Agent?

A filing agent is an individual designated by a registered attorney or trustee in the CM/ECF system to file documents on behalf of that attorney or trustee. When a filing agent uses his/her login and password to file a document, it constitutes the signature of the attorney or trustee on whose behalf the agent is filing, for all purposes. A filing agent must register for a [PACER](#) account, then submit a request for a non-attorney e-file account in the appropriate court(s). For more information regarding filing agents, please view the [Filing Agent User Guide](#) on the Court's website ([www.gasb.uscourts.gov](http://www.gasb.uscourts.gov)).

## 12. I did not receive my Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) email report. How can I retrieve the missing NEF?

The NEF Summary Report allows attorney and trustee filers to run a summary report of their CM/ECF filing activity for any given day since they began electronically filing with the Court. The NEF Summary Report is located in two places in [CM/ECF](#): it may be found in the *Reports* menu, and under *Utilities > Your Account > NEF Summary Report*.

## 13. For what period of time is my CM/ECF “free look” available after a document has been filed?

For each CM/ECF registered case participant and any secondary email recipients listed under the registered user's e-filing account, one “free look” of the electronically filed document is available. The “free look” will be available until such time as the document has already been viewed via the active hyperlink contained in the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF), or fifteen (15) days after receipt of the NEF, whichever is earlier. Thereafter, the user will be prompted to enter a [PACER](#) login and will be charged to view the document. All users are encouraged to print and/or save the document during the initial viewing period in order to avoid future charges.

To enable confirmation of Free Look Use to verify your one free look will be used when a document link is clicked from CM/ECF emails (NEFs), log in to [CM/ECF](#) and go to the *Utilities* menu and click *Maintain Your ECF Account > Email Information*, and check the box to enable. Click *Return to*

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*Account screen*, then click *Submit* to complete. This prevents anti-virus software from using the free look when it checks the links in the email for viruses. If this check box is not selected, the free look is used whenever the link is accessed.

## 14. How can I tell whether a party is registered to receive electronic notice through CM/ECF?

In [CM/ECF](#), go to the *Utilities* menu. Click *Mailings*, then *Mailing Info for a Case*. After entering a case number, a mailing information report will be generated, listing all parties currently receiving electronic notice and those parties for which manual/paper noticing will be required.

## 15. How do I pay an outstanding fee?

When you log in to [CM/ECF](#), a pop-up window will display with a summary of current charges. Click *Pay Now* and complete the payment process via [PACER](#). You may also view fees due for payment in [CM/ECF](#) by clicking *Utilities > Internet Payments Due*.

## 16. I filed a pleading that incurred a fee but was not prompted to pay. Why?

Most likely, you have a pop-up blocker enabled on your web browser. Disable the pop-up blocker in your browser settings, and then log in to [CM/ECF](#) and click *Utilities > Internet Payments Due* to begin the payment process.

## 17. Which docket event do I use in CM/ECF?

On the menu bar in [CM/ECF](#), click *Search*. The Search feature assists users in quickly locating the correct docket event for filing. After clicking *Search*, a small pop-up window appears for entering the text to be searched. Once a user enters text such as a key word (*e.g., relief, dismiss, employ*) in the search box and clicks the magnifying glass icon (*or presses Enter*), the results are displayed on the screen, with the search string characters highlighted.

Each item displayed is a link to the corresponding menu item or event, so the user can go directly to it. Only letters and numbers are searched; other characters are ignored. For example, if a user enters **judge-trustee** in the search field, **Judge/Trustee** appears in the results since **-** and **/** are not considered in the search.