Getting Started: System Requirements and PACER Registration

System Requirements

The hardware and software needed to electronically file, view, and retrieve case documents are as follows:

- A personal computer running a standard platform such as Windows or Macintosh.
- A word processing software, such as WordPerfect or Microsoft Word.
- An e-mail account.
  Note: *Make sure that our CM/ECF address (cmecf@vaed.uscourts.gov) will get through your e-mail spam filer, or you won't receive Notices of Electronic Filing (NEFs).*
- Adobe Acrobat software or some other compatible software to convert documents from the format of their native application to portable document format (PDF).
- An Internet service provider and web browser. ECF has been certified to work with Mozilla Firefox version 15.x, Internet Explorer version 9.x and Safari versions 5.1/6.x. The system may work with other browsers, but the Court will not be able to offer any support to people who use other browsers.
- A scanner to convert paper documents not in a word processing format (e.g., medical records filed as exhibits to a document) to a digital format for electronic filing in the Court's ECF system.

Note: Scanners should be used ONLY when a document cannot be electronically prepared with word processing software and converted to PDF. See page 15 of this document for detailed information regarding scanning standards. All documents should be scanned with a "black and white" setting unless the original document is in color.

PACER Registration

Before you can register as an EDVA filing user, you must have a PACER account. With a PACER account, you can view filed documents and use the Query and Report features of the ECF system.

To register for a PACER account, you can either

- Call the PACER Service Center at 800-676-6856 or 210-301-6440 or
- Go to the PACER web site at http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov.